



Cabinet

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| Date: | Thursday, 1 October 2009 |
| Time: | 6.15 pm |
| Venue: | Council Chamber - Wallasey Town Hall |

Contact Officer: Brian Ellis
Tel: 0151 691 8491
e-mail: brianellis@wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting have been printed and published. Any matters called in will be reported at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: That the minutes be approved and adopted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The members of the Cabinet are invited to consider whether they have a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any of the items on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

3. **RELOCATION OF GILBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL - CONSULTATION (Pages 1 - 24)**
4. **REVIEW OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES - PHASE 5 PLANNING AREAS AND COMMENCEMENT OF PHASE 5 (Pages 25 - 140)**
5. **REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 2 (Pages 141 - 162)**
6. **REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1 (Pages 163 - 238)**

7. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following item contains exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

8. AIMING HIGHER (Pages 239 - 252)

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

To consider any other business that the Chair accepts as being urgent.

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION ON POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF GILBROOK SPECIAL SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To report on statutory consultations which have been held for the proposal to relocate Gilbrook Special School to the former site of Arrowe Hill Primary School and enable Cabinet to decide whether to publish statutory notices for the proposal.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Governing body of Gilbrook School, a special school with 50 places for primary age pupils with emotional and behavioural issues, has expressed an interest in relocating to larger premises with improved facilities to carry out additional behaviour support work to mainstream schools. The school is currently located in a semi-industrial area on Pilgrim Street, Birkenhead, but serves pupils from the entire Wirral area. A Sports Barn is located on the Gilbrook site.
- 1.2 The closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School, Glebe Hey Road, Woodchurch, resulted from Phase 4 of the Primary Places Review. The school will formally close on 31st August 2009.
- 1.3 Relocating to the former Arrowe Hill building would increase the net floor area available to Gilbrook by a third, and although the school would no longer have access to the Sports Barn, the total site area available to the school would triple including a substantial increase in hard and soft play area. The Authority would retain the former Infant building for storage purposes.
- 1.4 At its meeting of 28th May 2009 Cabinet instructed that a formal consultation should be carried out with various stakeholders. This consultation ended on 31st July 2009 and the outcome is the subject of this report.

2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 In order for all stakeholders to have access to relevant background information and have the opportunity to comment and respond, the following methods of consultation have been employed :
 - (i) A consultation leaflet and comments form to all parents/carers of pupils attending Gilbrook School. The information was also provided to trade union representatives, relevant Ward and parliamentary representatives and other persons specified by guidance. The consultation leaflet is attached as Appendix A.
 - (ii) A dedicated web-site on the Wirral Learning Grid was established and advertised on the council web-site, the council Intranet, and in the parents' consultation leaflets and the standard letters to schools. This site provided access to all the information produced in paper form and allowed e-mail responses to a dedicated e-mail address. Woodchurch T.R.U.S.T residents association was contacted and has advertised the consultation on their website, www.woodchurchtrust.com.
 - (iii) The consultation leaflet was made available and advertised at Woodchurch and Upton libraries, the central libraries, Woodchurch community centre, The Lauries community centres and at the Conway Centre One-Stop shop.
 - (iv) A meeting for all interested stakeholders was held at Gilbrook School. This comprised a short presentation on the option, followed by audience comments, feedback and questions. The meetings were attended by parents, carers and staff. The date of the

meeting was in the parents' leaflets and on the specific web-site and a general notice was published in the local press.

(v) Opportunities have been provided for other means of response. Submissions have been received in paper and e-mail formats – all of which will be made available before and at the Cabinet meeting, in addition to the summaries contained in this report.

(vi) All of the relevant LA documentation produced for the consultation has been shared with the Diocesan Bodies.

3.0 Outcome of the Consultation

3.1 Ten written responses to the consultation were received. Eight of these were from parents/carers of pupils at the school, the remaining two from other interested people. Anonymised comments are attached as Appendix B.

3.2 The meeting held on 24th June 2009 was attended by 16 people – 11 were parents/carers, four were staff members (including the headteacher) and 1 was an interested person. 20% of pupils attending the school were represented by at least one parent/carer. The comments and views made at this meeting were recorded in writing. The notes are attached as Appendix C.

3.3 All written responses received were positive regarding the proposed relocation. Respondents cited the benefits of moving to a larger building and site in a more central location within Wirral with better car parking and outdoor play facilities. The Governing body believes the potential benefits to include:

- More classrooms, which should help reduce class sizes even further
- Better quality accommodation for the exclusion base
- More meeting spaces for various agencies including social care, health, education and parents, as well as one to one sessions with pupils
- More capacity to provide extended services – parents weekly workshops, for example
- More car parking and a larger staffroom
- More space to carry out additional behaviour support training and advice to mainstream schools.

As would be expected, some concerns were raised, particularly at the meeting, in relation to the transition to the new site, principally around the logistics of moving furniture and other equipment, the security of the new site, staffing issues, access to indoor play facilities and potential for new uniforms.

3.4 It should be noted that travel to school arrangements would continue as specified in the Authority's information booklets for parents, which are that the Authority would pay the travel costs of children attending Gilbrook either by providing a travel pass for pupils able to travel by public transport, or by arranging travel on the Authority's own or contracted vehicles, including providing an escort if necessary.

3.5 The long-term benefits of relocating to the former Arrowe Hill site appear to outweigh any short-term disruption to the school caused by the move. The proposal is recommended to proceed as a statutory proposal.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The 2009/10 Schools Capital programme approved by Cabinet on 28th May 2009 includes £200,000 to facilitate the move to the former Arrowe Hill building.

4.2 If the proposal is approved, as a change in place of employment beyond their control, Gilbrook staff (teaching and non-teaching) may be entitled to claim Disturbance and Travelling Allowance for four years, equivalent either to weekly or monthly train/bus fare or additional travel mileage allowance for essential car users.

5.0 Staffing Implications

5.1 As a relocation, it is expected that all current staff will transfer to the new building. The only effect upon the staff will be in terms of them having to work in a new location (See 4.2 above).

6.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

6.1 It is essential to plan school provision across the Authority so that it is both efficient and effective in the interests of all pupils.

6.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out in relation to this report.

7.0 Community Safety Implications

7.1 Rationalisation and refurbishment of schools allow the most vulnerable accommodation to be removed and other security improvements carried out.

8.0 Local Agenda 21 Statement

8.1 The provision of efficient and effective education is a vital part of serving local communities; inefficient use of resources is wasteful both in educational and physical resource terms.

9.0 Planning Implications

9.1 Any proposals that may arise from school re-organisation would be subject to the usual planning processes.

10.0 Anti-Poverty Implications

10.1 The redistribution of funding released by school reorganisation, in combination with the Authority's intention to realign the schools budget to give higher levels of funding to schools with high levels of deprivation, as well as improved accommodation, goes towards raising aspirations and narrowing the attainment gap for vulnerable groups.

11.0 Social Inclusion Implications

11.1 School re-organisation and transforming accommodation through the Primary Capital Programme and other schemes, provides opportunities to promote joint agency work to promote co-ordinated solutions for pupils and their families. There is scope for community participation in the design process of any new school buildings, raising the school's profile within the community.

12.0 Local Member Support Implications

12.1 Special school provision has relevance to all Wards.

12.2 Gilbrook School and the Wards in which the two sites are situated, which are Birkenhead and Tranmere and Upton.

Recommendations

- (1) That statutory proposals be published in respect of the statutory alteration to transfer the site of Gilbrook Special School to the former site of Arrowe Hill Primary School
- (2) That the Director of Children's Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to publish these proposals, ensure the prescribed procedures are followed, including requesting permissions from the Secretary of State in furtherance of the proposal.

Howard Cooper

Director of Children's Services

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Relocating Gilbrook School to the former site of Arrowe Hill Primary School

Re-locating Gilbrook School to the former site of Arrowe Hill Primary School Consultation

This leaflet

- describes the option
- outlines the timetable for consultation and possible implementation
- tells you how to respond to consultation

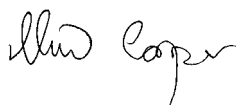
Dear Consultee

Some of you may be aware that the Council has been carrying out a review of primary schools across Wirral over the last few years. One of the outcomes of this review process is that Arrowe Hill Primary School in Woodchurch will close as a primary school from 31st August 2009. The Governing body of Gilbrook School had asked the Council to look at moving Gilbrook to a larger building with more outdoor space. The possibility of relocating Gilbrook to the former Arrowe Hill site has now been discussed between the Local Authority and the Governing body of Gilbrook School, and so far all are agreed that relocation would be beneficial.

Because the proposed site is more than 2 miles away from Gilbrook's existing site, we are consulting more widely with parents, staff, governors and other people related to Gilbrook School in order to help decide whether Gilbrook should relocate to the former Arrowe Hill site.

Your views are important to us. Please take this opportunity to have your say.

Yours sincerely



Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

The Consultation

We have tried to think of questions you may have about the option to relocate Gilbrook School. We are also sure you will have plenty more! Please ask your headteacher, or write to the Local Authority at the address at the end of this leaflet.

What is Gilbrook School?

Gilbrook School is a local authority maintained community special school with 50 places for boys and girls aged 5 to 11, who have statements of special educational needs because of emotional or behavioural difficulties. Some have additional learning needs, such as ADHD, Autism, Moderate Learning Difficulties and Specific Learning Difficulties.

Gilbrook is located on Pilgrim Street, Birkenhead, but serves the whole of Wirral.

Pupils are admitted at different times during the school year, sometimes with a history of non-attendance and extreme behaviour, which in some cases has led to exclusion from their mainstream school. Consequently, many learners have considerable gaps in their skills and knowledge, particularly in terms of communication, language and literacy. When pupils reach the end of Year 6, some return to mainstream secondary education every year.

The school also provides an Outreach Service offering advice and training for teaching and non-teaching staff in mainstream primary schools.

When last inspected by Ofsted in 2007, Gilbrook was found to be an “outstanding” school.

Why move? What are the benefits?

At present, Gilbrook occupies a single storey school with six teaching rooms, an assembly hall and a sports hall.

Arrowe Hill’s building is two storey, with eight teaching spaces in the main building, an assembly hall, and a linked single storey building currently used as an ICT, community and before/afterschool club facility.

Relocating to the former Arrowe Hill building would increase the net floor area available to Gilbrook by a third, and although the school would no longer have access to the Sports Barn, the total site area available to the school would triple including a substantial increase in hard and soft play area. The Authority would retain the former Infant building for storage purposes.

The Governing body believes that the benefits would be as follows:

- More classrooms, which should help reduce class sizes even further
- Better quality accommodation for the exclusion base
- More meeting spaces for various agencies including social care, health, education and parents, as well as one to one sessions with pupils

- More capacity to provide extended services – parents weekly workshops, for example
- More car parking and a larger staffroom
- More space to carry out additional behaviour support training and advice to mainstream schools

Would any building work be needed?

The Arrowe Hill building has very recently been renovated, but there are likely to be changes needed to the building and site, and on this basis the Local Authority has already set aside £200,000 of capital funding in this years budget to assist with the move to Arrowe Hill, if the final decision is that the relocation is the best way forward.

Exactly what would be required would be worked out after the final decision is made but could include an extension to the existing car park, some new windows, making a safe drop-off for the minibuses and installing a panic alarm system.

This work would be carried out before Gilbrook move in, so that there is no disruption to children and staff.

What is the legal process?

By law, a school can't relocate more than 2 miles in a straight line from the original site without publishing a "prescribed alteration" notice. The legal process involves a consultation with stakeholders before a decision is made whether to publish the legal notice for the transfer of site.

After the legal notice is published, at both sites and in local newspapers, there is another 6 weeks for people to make comments about the proposal to relocate the school.

This means that the final decision would be made by Council's Cabinet during the Autumn term. The earliest a move could take place would be Easter 2010.

Would admissions change?

The process for admission to Gilbrook would be the same as now. The new buildings would be bigger, but there is no intention to create additional places, so there would be about 50 children at any time, just as now.

Travel to school arrangements would continue as specified in the Authority's information booklets for parents, which are that the Authority would pay the travel costs of children attending Gilbrook either by providing a travel pass for pupils able to travel by public transport, or by arranging travel on the Authority's own or contracted vehicles, including providing an escort if necessary.

Would the school have a new name or uniform?

No, not unless the Governing body decide to do so.

What about existing staff?

As a relocation, all existing staff would transfer to the new site, unless they move to another school or retire, just as in any other school.



The Consultation

It is important for you to understand that a decision has not already been made. The Council's Cabinet will want to see the comments made during consultation before making any decision about what happens next.

Finding out more

If you want more information about the options, you can find out more on the Internet. Go to www.wirral-abc.gov.uk, and click on **More Information** under Latest News in the **Special School Review** box (purple). You will find:

- This consultation leaflet
- Site and building information on Gilbrook and Arrowe Hill
- How to send your comments to the Director

If you do not have access to the Internet at home, you can go to your local library where staff will help you log on and print out the information.

The Consultation leaflet will also be available to read at the following places:

Libraries

Woodchurch

Birkenhead Central

Wallasey Central

Community Centres

Woodchurch

The Lauries

One Stop Shops

Conway Centre

You can also look at the documents at Wallasey Town Hall. If you want more printed copies, please contact the Asset Management Team, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD, 0151 666 4351, or by e-mail at specialreview@wirral.gov.uk.

What are the next steps?

Step 1. The first step is to distribute the consultation leaflet and ask for views and comments.

There will be a session at Gilbrook School on Wednesday 24th June at 10 o'clock in the morning.

The meeting is an opportunity for parents, staff, governors and other people directly related to the school to find out more information and talk to representatives of the Children and Young People's Department.

People associated with other local or special schools, and members of the public who want to, can write in with their views. **Anyone who wants to can write and say what they think.**

When the Consultation ends, all the views and opinions received in writing and at the consultation meeting will form part of a report to the Council's Cabinet. Cabinet members will read the report and decide what to do next. They may decide not to go further with this option at this stage. Members might make changes, consider other options put forward as part of the consultation, or they could decide to do more consultation.

Step 2. If Council's Cabinet decides to go ahead with this option, the Local Authority will publish a prescribed alteration notice. This notice is followed by six weeks for formal written objections and comments to be sent to the Director of Children's Services.

Step 3. After the six week representation period ends, the proposal, with the objections and comments, is sent to the Council's decision making body, which is Council's Cabinet. Cabinet can decide to:

- Approve the proposal
- Approve the proposal with changes
- Approve the proposal subject to other factors, such as obtaining planning permission
- Reject the proposal.

If Cabinet can't agree a decision, the Schools' Adjudicator will make the final decision. The Adjudicator is independent, and is appointed by the Government to make decisions on school proposals.

Step 4. If the proposal is approved, either by Cabinet or by the School's Adjudicator, it will be put into practice.

HAVING YOUR SAY

What do you think? Please make sure your response is received by **Friday, 31st July 2009**.

You can write on your own, or you can join together with other people to write a joint letter.

Your comments can be sent by post, by handing them in at your school or by e-mail. If you

find it helpful you can complete and return the **feedback form** on the next page. There is

also a feedback form on the Consultation website: www.wirral-mbc.gov.uk/primaryplaces/

The postal address for return of feedback forms or written comments is:

Gilbrook Consultation

Director of Children's Services

Hamilton Building

Conway Street

Birkenhead

CH41 1FD

Or by e-mail to specialreview@wirral.gov.uk

Please note: To make sure the Consultation is fully open and transparent, all the responses to this consultation will be made available for inspection.

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | | | | |
| Other (please say which one) | | | | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

Please tell us your name and address, and e-mail address if you have one. We will not use your personal information for anything other than this consultation.

Name

Address

Postcode

e-mail

Please note: In order to ensure that this process is fully open and transparent, other people will be able to read all the responses to this consultation.

Address: Gilbrook Consultation
 Director of Children's Services
 Hamilton Building
 Conway Street
 Birkenhead
 CH41 4FD

Make sure your response is received by:

FRIDAY 31st JULY 2009

E-mail specialreview@wirral.gov.uk

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | ✓ | | | |
| Other (please say which one) | | | | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

My child is in tr6 so the move won't affect him but as the staff do such a good job in their current premises, a move to a larger site can only be of benefit to all the children and staff.

Also, the proposed site is in central Wirral so the travelling time for ^{some of} the children will be reduced.

29 III 2009

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Other (please say which one) | | | | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

I believe this move will benefit the children having more support services and larger space for recreation and smaller class sizes. As children are mostly transported to school by train or buses provided there is no additional cause for concern as far as travel is concerned.

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Other (please say which one) | | | | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

The Staff at Gilbrook provide excellent support to the pupils, often working on a one to one basis. However the limited space at the current site results in children being taught in staff rooms etc. The new site will alleviate this problem & further improve the great work being done.

The new site also benefits from a large outdoor area, including grassed areas. Again this will be of great benefit to the children.

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Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Other (please say which one) | | | | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

When my son came to this school it seemed there was no hope for him to get better. Within the 4 yrs he has been here, he has improved beyond our expectations so much so that my son had the confidence to sit the 11+ and has now been given a place at kebington high Sports collage. This is all down to the hard work and dedication of all the staff I feel if they had more space to work with children like my son it can only be a good thing. They deserve a bigger school the work they do is often unsung I am totally in favor of the move

Hi

My name is xxx and I am a parent of a child who attends Gilbrook School. I would like to put my opinion across about the relocation of Gilbrook to Arrowe Hill Primary School.

I think that this relocation would be a really good idea because at the moment they have their dinner hall, their ICT and science lessons in the same room because of the lack of space in the building that they use now. They also use the same room for parent groups.

Also they do not have a real playground because it is also a carpark so if a parent has their car in there, they have to wait until the children come in from their break before they can get their cars back out.

I really think that they need to relocate to give them more room and space for the children to enjoy their time at school.

24/10/07

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Other (please say which one) | | | | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Gilbrook School | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please say which one) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

Dear Sally Gibbs

Thanks for your email and the policy document on Gilbrook. I can see lots and lots of advantages of Gilbrook being relocated. But I am concerned about the travel arrangements. Will all those families who request transport to the new school gain that service free please?

With best wishes

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | | | | ✓ |
| Other (please say which one) | GRAND PARENT | | TRUSTEE | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

A LARGER BUILDING WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO BOTH PUPILS AND STAFF. VISITORS WOULD HAVE EASIER PARKING. THE CHILDREN WOULD NOT HAVE TO PLAY OUTSIDE IN WHAT IS NOW A CAR PARK. PARENTS GROUP COULD HAVE A SEPARATE ROOM INSTEAD OF SHARING WITH THE COMPUTERS AND DINING ROOM. A LARGER STAFFROOM AND OFFICES WOULD BE AVAILABLE. GILBROOK SCHOOL PROVIDES EXCELLENT TEACHING AND CARE AND THE MOVE TO LARGER PREMISES WOULD GREATLY ENHANCE THE EDUCATION AND FACILITIES NEEDED FOR CARING FOR ALL PUPILS.

29 III 2009

Gilbrook Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

| School | Parent | Member of staff | Governor | Other person |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Gilbrook School | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Other (please say which one) | | | | |

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Gilbrook School to the former Arrowe Hill site? Tick one box only.

YES

NO

Comments

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

I believe this move will benefit the children having more support services and larger space for recreation and smaller class sizes. As children are mostly transported to school by train or buses provided there is no additional cause for concern as far as travel is concerned.

APPENDIX C
Notes from parents meeting at Gilbrook
24th June 2009

Present – David Armstrong, Sally Gibbs, Graham Mount

Headteacher – Two years ago the governing body began thinking about moving to larger premises. The Governing body wrote to the local authority to ask if we could be considered if a suitable site came up. Arrowe Hill closes on 31st August this year and was offered as an option. A group of staff, governors and parents made a visit earlier this year, the general consensus was that a move would be beneficial for many reasons. The governing body wrote to DA to say yes.

- We have 50 places, but have had more than 50 pupils for some time. Classes should be 8-9 children maximum, but we only have 6 classrooms. Staffing has increased, there is an impact on our limited car parking. Cars park on the playground.
- Outreach services have produced more admin and staffing requirements. We support 40 mainstream schools, and this means more visitors to school.
- The Exclusion base is very small, used to be a small library.
- We do loads of work with other agencies to meet childrens needs. There are meetings going on every day but we have no space for it, end up using the foyer, the kitchen, offices, it's not really appropriate.
- Although we've done our best, there is very little green space.

Q. Is the Arrowe Hill site secure?

A. It has only two ways in, and security fencing all the way round, overlooked by houses all the way round too. We intend to finish the window replacement scheme and extend the car park.

Gilbrook have asked for the alarm system to be relocated/reinstalled. The security at Arrowe Hill is probably better than here although we don't often have runners.

Q. Does it have more than one Hall?

A. Only one hall. Although no separate Sports hall, there is far more outside space, and more rooms inside that could be used.

Q. Will the number of places be expanded?

A. No, will stay 50 places but never say never. We also may have visiting children for various reasons.

Q. Could we get another Sports Barn?

A. There are plenty of sporting facilities in Woodchurch, so it would be unlikely to be approved.

Q. It seems like long term there is more scope for alteration at Arrowe Hill if we need to.

A. There is a substantial site, with more rooms and secluded safe facilities. Once settled in, you would have a better idea of what needs to be altered.

Q. Could we use the hall in the old Junior building?

A. Possibly, although the junior building is used by the LA for storage.

Q. What happens to staff?

A. All the staff can move en bloc to the school with no change to their contracts.

Q. Is the entrance way wide enough to get a minibus through?

A. Yes. We will also arrange for a drop-off area for the minibuses.

Q. Will the uniforms change? Fender (nearby school) has the same coloured jumper.

A. Not intending to change uniform, or the name as we have a good reputation built up with the name.

DA – During the gap between the decision being made and the move, we will do all building work while the site is empty. We are keeping the caretaker and a cleaner on to keep the building occupied until then.

Q. What happens to the furniture and equipment?

A. Schools taking pupils from Arrowe Hill will get first choice of the IT and other equipment, furniture. After this Gilbrook will get the opportunity to make the best of the two sets of equipment etc. and decide what to keep.

Q. Would the school get any special closure days to help with the move?

A. This is considered an unavoidable closure, would have to be agreed with parents due to childcare etc. We would normally ask schools to move during a school holiday, for example, Easter, but it is possible to get additional closure days by agreement with the authority.

Q. Can parents help with the move?

A. Yes if they want to.

Q. Are there likely to be any objections?

A. You can never make everybody happy. The Arrowe Hill site will not be sold and will remain a school, with fewer pupils, and less traffic due to minibuses so hopefully this move will not cause many objections.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 1st OCTOBER 2009

REVIEW OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES: OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS ON OPTIONS PUT FORWARD FOR THE PHASE 5 PLANNING AREAS AND COMMENCEMENT OF PHASE 6

Executive Summary

- 1.0 This report advises the Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation process which has taken place in the North Birkenhead planning area, in respect of the options for consultation agreed at Cabinet on 28th May 2009. This report describes the responses to the various options put forward for discussion, including additional suggestions put forward during the consultation process, and makes recommendations with regard to statutory proposals in this area. The report also introduces the beginning of Phase 6 of the Review and asks for approval of an amendment to this phase.

Background

2.0 Context Of The School Organisation Plan

Until March 2005, School Organisation Committees (SOC) were required by law to have regard to the School Organisation Plan (SOP) when considering statutory proposals for changes to schools' provision. The plan itself was approved on a regular basis by the SOC. However the SOP was one of seven statutory plans repealed by the Children Act 2004. The SOC itself has now been abolished by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 with effect from 25th May 2007. Nevertheless the policies and principles set out in the SOP remain an important context in which the Wirral Primary Review was set, and continue to be key guidance for the consideration of statutory proposals.

2.1. DCSF guidance on the School Organisation Plan states that

"The key purpose of the School Organisation Plan is to set out clearly how the Local Education Authority (LEA) plans to meet its statutory responsibility to secure sufficient education provision within its area in order to promote higher standards of attainment. It should be designed to help the key stakeholders – LEA, schools, promoters, parents and local communities, understand what school places are needed at present and in future, and how they are provided. Importantly it will be the starting point... in considering statutory proposals for changes to schools".

- 2.2 As indicated above, the plan contains the policies and principles proposed by the LA and agreed by the former SOC for the planning of school provision. These policies and principles are set out at Appendix 1 to the report. It will be seen that the intention (prior to the abolition of the requirement to consider the plan) was that any proposal should be considered within the context of the principles set out in paragraphs 3 to 5 of the Policies and Principles. There is an over-riding requirement that overall provision is effective and efficient, i.e. that there should be an appropriate balance between school places and the following principles/criteria:

- parental preference
- delivering the curriculum
- meeting statutory and desirable goals on class sizes
- maintaining or promoting diversity
- SEN
- standards

- accessibility
- (secondary schools only) post 16 provision
- contribution to the community.

Paragraph 4 of the Policies and Principles adds the issue of overall school size within the primary sector and paragraph 5 deals specifically with the objectives of the Diocesan authorities.

2.3 View of the Wirral Schools Forum

Members should note that in June 2005 the Schools Forum passed the following resolution:

“Resolved - That Wirral Schools Forum recognises that the local education authority has a duty to maintain and fund schools in an efficient and effective manner. This implies that the number of schools should reflect the pupil population and the needs of Wirral communities, which could mean the amalgamation or closure of schools for the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.”

2.4 Following the presentation of the Review of Primary School Places report on 16th October 2008, Cabinet instructed that six Area Reviews be carried out within Phase 5 of the Primary Places Review: Prenton, Beechwood, North Birkenhead, Central Birkenhead, South Birkenhead and Noctorum. These areas equate to the small planning areas in the Authority’s School Organisation Plan. The outcomes of these area reviews were reported to Cabinet on 28th May 2009 and a copy of this report is attached as Appendix 2.

2.5 Following consideration of that report, Cabinet agreed that no options would be brought forward for the Prenton, Beechwood, Central Birkenhead, South Birkenhead and Noctorum small planning areas at this time, although numbers and place provision would be kept under review. A number of options for consultation were proposed in respect of the North Birkenhead area.

2.6 In relation to community school provision, the options were:

- A1 Closure of Cathcart Street Primary School
- A2 Closure of Cole Street Primary School
- A3 Amalgamation of Cathcart Street Primary School and Cole Street Primary School at either an existing or a new site.

In relation to Aided school provision the following option was suggested:

- B Closure of St Laurence’s Catholic Primary School

These options were approved for consultation.

2.7 The options were within the context set out by the Director of Children’s Services, of the need to reduce the growing number of primary school surplus places and took account of Audit Commission guidance on surplus places against a continuing fall in the number of primary age pupils, and issues identified in the recent Joint Area Review. In addition to removing unnecessary surplus places, the options were intended to make more effective use of resources, take account of patterns of parental preference, reflect the additional challenges of maintaining small schools in an urban area and contribute to the wider standards agenda through the more efficient use of resources.

2.8 In order for all stakeholders to have access to relevant background information and have the opportunity to comment and respond, the following methods of consultation have been employed :

- a) A range of documentation has been produced and distributed. This comprised:
 - (i) the full consultation document sent to all schools in the North Birkenhead area; St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School in the South Birkenhead planning area; Birkenhead High School for Girls (Junior Division); local One-Stop shops, Bidston and St James library and the Central Libraries; Wallasey Town Hall and relevant community centres;
 - (ii) a review pack comprising all the relevant background information sent to all the locations in (i) above;
 - (iii) parents'/carers' consultation leaflets and comments forms to all parents/carers, via the three schools named in the options;
 - (iv) standard letters to all the schools in the small planning area, one format for schools named in the options and one for other schools in the small planning area and for parents of pupils at St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School and Birkenhead High School for Girls (Junior Division).
- b) A dedicated web-site on the Wirral Learning Grid was established and advertised on the council web-site, the council Intranet, and in the parents' consultation leaflets and the standard letters to schools. This site provided access to all the information produced in paper form and allowed e-mail responses to a dedicated e-mail address.
- c) Meetings were arranged for all interested stakeholders at each of the schools named in options for closure or amalgamation. These meetings followed the same format, with a presentation on the overall position and the school specific position followed by around ninety minutes of time for audience comments, feedback and questions. The meetings were attended by parents, carers, staff, governors, Ward members and various other interested persons and bodies, including Diocesan representatives where appropriate. Each meeting was chaired by the Cabinet member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning. The dates for the meetings were in the parents' leaflets and on the specific web-site and a general notice was published in the local press.
- d) Opportunities have been provided for other means of response. Submissions have been received in paper and e-mail formats – all of which will be made available before and at the Cabinet meeting, in addition to the summaries contained in this report.
- e) All of the relevant LA documentation produced for the consultation has been shared with the Diocesan Bodies.

2.9 The importance of eliciting the views of pupils is sometimes raised and this is an issue which is taken very seriously. We are sensitive to the fact that school re-organisation is by its nature upsetting and potentially stressful, particularly for children. Throughout the review, discussions with headteachers have taken place as to whether pupils should be formally consulted, and if so, how this could be carried out with minimum impact. The professional opinion of headteachers involved in this Phase of the Review was that any formal consultation would be unnecessarily distressing to children, nevertheless, the consultation may include responses received from individual children.

2.10 The consultation process and the presentation of LA, small planning area and school data to this wider audience does appear to have persuaded most people of the need to reduce the number of school places, though understandably people wish to advocate the case for their school in respect of closure or amalgamation options.

2.11 In addition to the detail set out below, further records of views put forward during the consultation period are attached as Appendix 3. Feedback is set out school by

school. The record for each school brings together the responses from the meeting held at the school, together with any points raised in written or e-mail submissions to the Authority.

Outcome of the Consultation

3.0 Further suggestions in relation to primary school provision in the North Birkenhead area were made as part of the consultation process:

- Reduce the size of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School and use the surplus space for other purposes
- Amalgamate Cathcart Street Primary and The Priory CE (Aided) Primary

Further discussion of these suggestions is given with the related consultation options below.

3.1 There were several key themes in the combined responses from consultees:

- General understanding of the falling rolls situation
- Effect of proposed housing and demographic changes on pupil numbers
- Respect for school staff in their skills and relationships with pupils and parents
- Educational standards and quality of provision
- Concern for the fate of closed buildings and sites
- Travel distance to school and the effect on traffic and road safety
- Disruption to pupils' education and confidence
- Class sizes
- Importance of small schools
- Effect of any change on children with special educational needs
- Importance of out of hours facilities, such as adult learning and breakfast clubs
- Importance of early years provision, including day care facilities
- Relationship between school and community
- Keeping friends and siblings together
- Staff redeployment
- Continuity of school over several generations.

3.2 Responses from the Anglican and Roman Catholic Diocese

The Diocese of Chester and the Diocese of Shrewsbury are key partners along with the LA in making provision for the education of children in Wirral. Both Diocesan Authorities were provided with the consultation documentation with an opportunity to respond.

3.3 Views of the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury

The consultation response from the Diocese of Shrewsbury is attached as Appendix 4.

The Diocese recognise that numbers on roll at St Laurence's are low, and that the Council must consider reductions in surplus places. Their response emphasises the good standards achieved by St Laurence's in an area of social deprivation and asks that this, and the presence of community facilities such as the Children Centre satellite be taken into account before any decision is made.

Finally, the Diocese asks for confirmation that the Authority intends to liaise, along with the governing bodies of St Werburgh's and Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary Schools in order to provide a place at one of these two schools for any former St Laurence's parent who wishes to transfer in the event of the closure of St Laurence's. This may include additional accommodation. The Diocese believes that August 2010 would be the most appropriate date for any proposed closure.

Role of the Diocesan bodies in school re-organisation

- 3.4 Until the SOC's abolition on 25th May 2007, each Diocese was represented by a voting group on the SOC. Under the new guidance on school re-organisation proposals, each Diocese has the ability to object to any statutory proposal decided by the Local Authority Decision Maker, thereby referring the proposal to the School's Adjudicator. This is not a significantly different position to their former roles on the SOC. Full guidance has now issued by the DCSF and is available to read or download on-line at <http://www.DCSF.gov.uk/schoolorg/index.cfm> Key points of the guidance and a commentary in relation to Phase 5 options for North Birkenhead is included within the report at Appendix 5.

Commentary on small schools

- 3.5 The Authority funds its schools through the operation of its local funding formula. The formula is designed so as to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to schools for the pupils they have to teach. The formula ensures that, however small a school, it will have sufficient resources. One would not therefore expect any school, simply through smallness, to become financially unviable. What does happen is that small schools draw in a greater share of the resource per pupil from the total available for distributing among all schools.

Since the total sum available for spending on all our children does not increase if we choose as an Authority to organise our children in more schools than is necessary for the efficient and effective delivery of education, it follows that the maintenance of small schools, where this is not necessary, comes at the expense of all other children.

The key questions therefore in terms of use of resources are:

- i) How small does a school need to be within the context of Wirral before it would be considered as contributing to an ineffective use of resource?
 - ii) Are there reasons in specific cases why individual schools although "small" by Wirral standards should continue to be maintained even though they are relatively expensive?
- 3.6 With regard to Wirral's policy on small schools, the School Organisation Plan (agreed in 2003) contained the proposal that the LA "should consider the implications of an increasing number of primary schools with less than one form of entry – 30 pupils and therefore primary schools with fewer than 210 pupils i.e. 7 x 30". That review was carried out in great detail and with the involvement of a wide range of Headteachers, and culminated in the policy document "The Pursuit of Excellence", extracts of which are included in Appendix 7. This policy adopted in 2004 suggests that a school should have at least 180 pupils in order to be viable. The guidance to Decision Makers (Appendix 5a) makes no mention of school size. DCSF guidance says that "Schools with fewer than 150 pupils may be educationally and financially sustainable only through substantial subsidies via their local authorities funding formula" :

www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/fallingschoolrolls/schools/educational_decisions

One problematic issue which is discussed in some detail in Appendix 7 is the potential difficulty of mixed age teaching, especially across key stages.

3.7 With regard to organisational viability there can be no question that small schools face greater challenges. This of course does not mean that at any one time a particular small school cannot produce excellence through having outstanding teachers. Furthermore it is often the case when small schools are considered nationally that many small schools enjoy a number of advantages as a result of their location and are attractive to staff. In many parts of the country it is a clear necessity to maintain small schools because the alternative would be that children be transported, perhaps for a number of miles, to the nearest school. Authorities who have such schools receive additional sparsity funding from the government which enables them to spend more on these schools without it being at the expense of others, in order for them to be organisationally viable. Wirral does not receive this element of grant.

3.8 Our experience in Wirral, has been that while overall until quite recently we have had few primary schools that have fallen into one of the Ofsted categories of concern, those that have done so have generally been among our smaller schools. We do not believe that this is coincidence: it arises because of the inevitable requirement on individual staff in small schools to take on wider burdens of responsibility and from the disproportionate impact which one weaker member of staff will have on the school as a whole.

4.0 **Commentary on options**

The next section of the report comments on the agreed options, discussing individual schools separately where appropriate. Numbers on roll are from the January 2008 School Census.

A1 Closure of Cathcart Street Primary School

4.1 Cathcart Street Primary is a small school with 101 pupils on roll, about half the number on roll just 10 years ago (205). This is largely the result of the falling population, although 59% of potential community school parents living in the catchment zone choose to send their children elsewhere, principally to The Priory CE Primary School (34%, 45 pupils). Set against this “outflow”, 52% of pupils on roll in Summer 2008 came from outside the school’s catchment zone, however overall there was a small net loss to other community/CE primary schools of 12% (16 pupils). There are a large number of surplus places (52%, 109). This is predicted to rise to 53% (112 places) by 2014. In 2006-2007, expenditure per pupil was £5,089 compared with the Wirral average of £3,249.

4.2 The contextual value added score (99.9) for Key Stage 2 in 2008 shows that pupils at Cathcart Street Primary School are making progress in line with similar pupils in other schools (see Appendix 6).

4.3 All current and projected pupils from Cathcart Street Primary could be accommodated at primary schools within a reasonable distance without requiring any new build classroom provision, dependant on a particular pattern of parental preference. As stated in 4.1 above, large numbers of parents living within Cathcart Street’s zone choose The Priory CE Primary School, and there are 28 alternative primary schools within a 2 mile radius of the school. The catchment zone of Cathcart Street Primary School would be allocated to Cole Street Primary School. Parents currently in-zone for Cole Street Primary would continue to be in-zone and would be unaffected by this change.

4.4 Respondents from Cathcart Street Primary raised the school’s excellent attainment record, and the quality of the relationships between parents, pupils and staff. There were concerns that children would not “fit in” at other local schools, disruption to children’s education, about additional expense in purchasing new uniforms and the impact on travel and transport.

- 4.5 The quality of the site, the security of the location and its green environment were strongly featured. Respondents believed that Cathcart Street has scope for expansion and redevelopment if chosen as the site for a combined school, possibly incorporating a Children's Centre and other extended services. The proximity of the site to the Wirral Waters development was also raised.
- 4.6 The on-site "CATS" club, which provides before and after school care, as well as holiday clubs, was highly regarded. Respondents felt strongly that the facility should be retained in some form in any re-organisation of schools in the area.
- 4.7 Consultees allied to Cole Street Primary School were in favour of the closure of Cathcart Street either alone, or in conjunction with an amalgamation at the Cole Street site.
- 4.8 New housing in the area was mentioned as a potential source of additional pupils to fill surplus places. New housing either under construction or with planning approval in the area includes 5 flats converted from an existing building on Cole Street, 14 new 3 bed houses on Fox Street, 14 two bed flats on the former Livingstone public house site on Livingstone Street, 7 three bed houses on Bentinck Street, 6 three bed houses on Knowles Street, 5 two bed flats and a 3 bed house at St Anne's Place and 5 converted flats on Grange Road West. In total within half a mile of Cathcart Street Primary School the North Birkenhead area 57 properties will be or have recently been built or converted. Even treating flats as houses, these developments are projected to produce 13 primary age pupils, of whom 3-4 are likely to attend a Catholic primary school, with a similar number opting for a Church of England primary school such as The Priory CE. Also, the additional pupils are likely to be existing Wirral residents and may already live locally, in which case they may continue to attend their existing school. Local housing changes are unlikely to make a significant impact on the issue of surplus places in this area.
- 4.9 If this option were to proceed, depending on parental preferences, there may be a requirement for relatively modest capital works at the Cole Street Primary site, to which Cathcart Street's catchment zone would be transferred. The capacity of the Cole Street building as it is currently organised is 210 pupils. In the event that the new capacity at Cole Street following any required internal adaptations and building works reached 350 pupils or more, a statutory expansion notice would be required.

A2 Closure of Cole Street Primary School

- 4.10 Cole Street Primary has 124 pupils on roll, having last had more than 210 pupils on roll in 2002 (218). The roll peaked at 277 in 1997 and has experienced a long decline. 75% of potential community school parents living in the catchment zone choose to send their children elsewhere, principally to The Priory CE Primary School (18%, 59 pupils), Christ Church CE Primary School (Birkenhead, 12%, 40 pupils), Woodchurch Road Primary School (12%, 40 pupils) and Cathcart Street Primary School (12%, 38 pupils). 30% of pupils on roll in Summer 2008 came from outside the school's catchment zone, however overall there was a net loss of 63% (204 pupils) to other community and CE primary schools.
- 4.11 The school has 41% (86) surplus places, and this is projected to rise to 47% (99 places) by 2014. While the surplus is, as identified by respondents, slightly lower than that at Cathcart Street Primary, this is well above the 5-10% surplus identified by the Audit Commission, beyond which money is being wasted, and it is right to look at ways of reducing this surplus.
- 4.12 In 2006-2007, expenditure per pupil was £4,466 compared with the Wirral average of £3,249.

- 4.13 The contextual value added score (100.1) for Key Stage 2 in 2008 shows that pupils at Cole Street Primary School are making progress in line with similar pupils in other schools (see Appendix 6).
- 4.14 All current and projected pupils from Cole Street Primary could be accommodated at primary schools within a reasonable distance without requiring any new build classroom provision, although dependant on parental preference and with the agreement of the governing body and Diocese of Chester, there may be additional accommodation needs at The Priory CE (Aided) Primary School. While this may meet the requirement to consider the expansion of popular and successful schools, such a proposal has not been discussed with the Diocese of Chester. There are 31 alternative primary schools within a 2 mile radius of the school. The catchment zone of Cole Street Primary School would be allocated to Cathcart Street Primary School. Parents currently in-zone for Cathcart Street Primary would continue to be in-zone and would be unaffected by this change.
- 4.15 Respondents from Cole Street Primary raised the quality of the relationships between parents, pupils and staff and good standards at the school. There were concerns about the impact on travel and transport, crossing busy roads and on disruption to children's education.
- 4.16 Respondents believed that the Cole Street building, while older, was more suitable for retention as a school due to its solid construction and large classrooms. The restrained site was seen as a positive, as the roof top playground was popular with children, secure, and made the school "special". Suggestions to expand the building and site included: utilising a small strip of grass at the front of the school which could be brought inside the school fence; using the schools car park as playground, reproviding the staff car park either in Birkenhead Park or elsewhere in the neighbouring area; building a conservatory on top of the flat roof; or for the Council to purchase buildings to the rear of the existing school in order to expand the playground.
- 4.17 Consultees allied to Cole Street Primary School were not in favour of this option. Many were in favour of either the closure of Cathcart Street Primary (Option A1) with more children attending Cole Street Primary, or of the amalgamation of Cole Street and Cathcart Street at the Cole Street site. One respondent suggested that if closed, the building could be offered for use by other local community groups.
- 4.18 If this option were to proceed, depending on parental preferences, there may be a requirement for internal alterations at the Cathcart Street or The Priory CE Primary sites. Statutory expansion notices at either school might be required at a later date.

A3 Amalgamation of Cole Street Primary School and Cathcart Street Primary School at either site or on a new site

- 4.19 The two schools taken together have a combined roll of 225 pupils, which is not large in Wirral terms, being around 1 form of entry. The pattern of parental preference in this area indicates a high level of mobility between catchment areas facilitated by high levels of surplus places, as well as overlap between the pupil populations of the two schools, with more children from Cole Street's zone attending Cathcart Street Primary School than making the reverse journey.
- 4.20 The CVA scores for both schools indicate that pupils are making progress in line with similar pupils at other schools. Good standards were cited by some respondents as a reason not to amalgamate the two schools, on the basis that the ensuing disruption would impact upon the quality of education and threaten standards. A minority of parents indicated that they would not want their children to be educated with children from the other school due to a perceived difference in background; however geographical analysis of where parents live indicates that there is an overlap between

the pupil populations of the two schools. Staff from both schools have strongly expressed their commitment to ensure that all pupils would be welcomed in any setting, whatever the outcome of the consultation.

- 4.21 Respondents allied to both schools were concerned that the site for any amalgamated school should be carefully chosen. Issues around parking and safe drop-off areas were raised around both sites.
- 4.22 Birkenhead Park lies between the sites of the two existing schools. Opened in 1847, the Park was declared a Grade 1 listed landscape by English Heritage in 1995 and was recently subject to an £11.5 million renovation. Preliminary discussions with the national lead expert on the Park and Joseph Paxton, who was also the consultant on the recent renovation, indicate that proposals for a primary school on land on the edge of the Park between the internal carriage drive and Park Road East could be viable, as long as the school did not encroach upon the Grand Entrance, and the playing fields remained in public use as part of the Park.
- 4.23 However, respondents allied to both schools expressed reservations about a new school sited in Birkenhead Park. Concerns were raised about litter, particularly broken glass and drug paraphernalia, “stranger danger”, general safety of children travelling to and from school, vandalism, security and potential for increased truancy. In general, few consultees from either school were in favour of an amalgamation into a new build primary school on a new site, rather that an existing site should be used, in particular that an existing building be renewed rather than rebuilt.
- 4.24 If all pupils from both former schools attended an amalgamated school, it is estimated that either existing site would require relatively modest capital works. Whichever site were chosen, the other building could be utilised to accommodate pupils whilst construction work was underway.
- 4.25 Comparison of the two sites indicates that Cathcart Street is the larger of the two sites, at 7,351 m², compared with 2,698 m² at Cole Street. The proportion of “green” space at Cathcart Street is 52%, compared with 11% at Cole Street. Both schools already utilise Birkenhead Park for outdoor activities which would be expected to continue, whichever option is implemented. Cathcart Street is a more recently constructed building, single storey, with more scope for extension, including the possibility of housing additional services on site and embedding the well respected CATS club in a new build or extension, removing the temporary mobile currently on the site.

Foundation and Community schools

- 4.26 In an amalgamation, both existing schools close and a new school opens. Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all new primary schools, as has been the case for some time in secondary schools, are subject to a “competition” where the Authority invites bids to establish the best provider for the new school. The Authority can enter its own proposal into the competition, and in many cases, particularly in primary school competitions, is likely to be the only entrant. Other possible proposers could include faith organisations, businesses, universities, colleges or a charitable organisation. A new school would be a Foundation school, not a community school. The Secretary of State can, however, decide to grant permission for Wirral LA to propose a new community school within a competition. The criteria that would be used are given in Appendix 5b. An application could also be made to the Secretary of State for permission to establish a new school without holding a competition. While each case is different, examples in the guidance do not appear to apply if Cole Street and Cathcart Street were to amalgamate. Reaching a decision under the statutory competition process is likely to take at least 6 months longer than would be the case without a competition.
- 4.27 The differences between community and Foundation schools are as follows:

- In a community school, the Local Authority owns the land, buildings and all the other assets of the school, employs the staff, and decides the admission criteria for the school. The running of the school is delegated to the governing body.
- In a Foundation school, as well as running the school, the governors own the land and buildings, employ the staff, and decide the admission criteria. The governors have greater freedom to spend money on building projects, and can choose to set their own term dates.

Pupils at Foundation schools follow the same national curriculum as those in community schools, and staff are employed on the same nationally agreed terms and conditions. Funding for Foundation schools comes from the Authority in exactly the same way as for community schools. While the governing body of a Foundation school could decide to have different admission criteria, the school still has to follow the same admissions code as community schools.

Other than the land and buildings, which must be conveyed from the Authority to the Foundation governing body or Trustees, other assets in the school (books, equipment etc.) remain the Authority's property. Excellent relationships continue to be maintained with Wirral's Foundation secondary schools, and there is no reason to believe that this position would differ in the case of a Foundation primary school.

- 4.28 Option A3 does not fall into any of the categories that would be highly likely to receive an exemption from the Secretary of State to hold a competition, e.g. an Infant and Junior amalgamation or reorganisation of schools with the same religious nature. Holding a competition will add 6 months to the decision making process, with extended levels of uncertainty about the future of primary schools in the local area which could have a destabilising effect on primary school rolls, and a case could be made for the need for expediency to resolve community uncertainty, however, it seems unlikely that approval to establish a school without a competition would be granted in this case. Amalgamation, whilst offering an opportunity for the staff in particular, but also the pupils of both schools to start afresh in a "new school", albeit in existing buildings, may not be the most appropriate solution in this instance.

Other suggestions raised during consultation for these schools

4.29 Amalgamate Cathcart Street Primary and The Priory CE Primary

As in any amalgamation, both schools would close, and a new school then established on one of the two sites.

Legally, however, it is not possible to combine community and Aided provision into a single school. Neither site is large enough to form a "campus" of separate schools, which would in any case be costly and unlikely to resolve surplus place issues in the area. Another alternative which would achieve the same end would be to propose closure of Cathcart Street Primary School, linked with relocating The Priory CE into the Cathcart Street building, which would require a statutory alteration, not a statutory competition, however the Diocese of Chester would need to approve this move.

This suggestion is not recommended for further consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

- 4.30 **Option A2 for the closure of Cole Street Primary School is recommended to proceed as a statutory proposal with effect from August 2010, with a proviso to guarantee all former Cole Street pupils on roll at the time of the school's closure a place at Cathcart Street Primary School.**

Former Cole Street parents who did not wish to take up the guaranteed place at Cathcart Street Primary would be offered the opportunity to express a preference for an alternative primary school. Places at these schools would

then be allocated based on the admission criteria published in the Authority's booklets for parents, within the limitations of the Infant Class Size limit.

The proposed implementation date of August 2010 will allow for any works required at Cathcart Street Primary School to be carried out ahead of Cole Street's closure.

B Closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School

- 4.31 St Laurence's Catholic Primary has 75 pupils on roll, having last had more than 210 pupils on roll in 1998 (211), followed by a long decline. The school serves the St Laurence's Parish which is part of the wider parish of St Laurence and St Werburgh's, also served by St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School.
- 4.32 There were a total of just 80 Catholic choice pupils living within the St Laurence's Parish in Summer 2008. Of these, 61% (49 pupils) attended St Laurence's Catholic Primary School. The remaining 39% (31 pupils) principally attended St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School (16%, 13 pupils), Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School (13%, 10 pupils) and St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Birkenhead) (6%, 5 pupils). 31% of pupils on roll in Summer 2008 came from outside the school's catchment parish, however overall there was a small net loss of 8% (6 pupils) to other Catholic primary schools.
- 4.33 The school has 64% (135) surplus places, and this is projected to rise to 74% (155 places) by 2014.
- 4.34 In 2006-2007, expenditure per pupil was £5,520 compared with the Wirral average of £3,249. This was the highest expenditure per pupil for any Wirral primary school that year.
- 4.35 The contextual value added score (101.4) for Key Stage 2 in 2008 shows that pupils at St Laurence's Catholic Primary School are making more progress than similar pupils in other schools (see Appendix 6).
- 4.36 All current and projected pupils from St Laurence's Catholic Primary could be accommodated at primary schools within a reasonable distance without requiring any new build classroom provision. The Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Local Authority have agreed in principle to work co-operatively to provide Catholic primary places for every former St Laurence's pupil whose parents wish them to attend a Catholic primary school. A £406,000 four classroom extension will shortly be completed at Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School, funded by the Primary Capital Strategy, and depending on parental preference, there may be other accommodation needs, including at St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School. There are 28 alternative primary schools within a 2 mile radius of the school, of which six are Catholic primary Schools.
- 4.37 Respondents from St Laurence's Catholic Primary raised the quality of the relationships between parents, pupils and staff. The contribution of the school to the community over several generations was raised, with particular reference to high levels of deprivation in the area. Restrictions caused by the small size of the school were, respondents felt, offset by the hard work and dedication of the school's staff who went "above and beyond" to ensure a good quality education and nurturing environment.
- 4.38 Concerns were raised about the quality of education and class sizes at alternative schools, also whether children attending non-Catholic primary schools would retain their priority admission to Catholic secondary schools. The distance to alternative schools and availability of places and the future of the St Laurence's site were also raised as issues.

- 4.39 Appendix 6 shows the CVA score for schools in the North Birkenhead area, and also for St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School. Pupils at all schools are making at least the expected rate of progress, with four schools making more than the expected rate of progress. Standards at alternative school provision are not in question.
- 4.40 In terms of class size, the arrangement of classes is a matter for individual governing bodies to decide, within the confines of the school's budget and accommodation. There is little correlation between overall school size, class size, and educational standards. As discussed in 3.4 to 3.7, larger schools can afford to employ more staff, to enable more small group and one to one teaching outside the traditional classroom setting, which can be of great benefit to some children, particularly those with special or additional needs.

| DCSF | School | On roll | Number of classes | Average Class size | Vertical groups? | Staff:Pupil ratio |
|------|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | Wirral Average | 264 | 10.1 | 25.0 | | 1:8 |
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 411 | 14 | 29.4 | No | 1:6 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 101 | 7 | 15.3 | No | 1:14 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 124 | 7 | 18.1 | Yes (1) | 1:10 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 182 | 9 | 20.6 | Yes (1) | 1:10 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic Primary | 249 | 9 | 27.7 | Yes (1) | 1:8 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 176 | 8 | 24.5 | Yes (1) | 1:10 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 75 | 4 | 20.8 | Yes (all 4) | 1:9 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 208 | 7 | 29.7 | No | 1:11 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 192 | 8 | 27.0 | Yes (1) | 1:9 |

The table above shows the number on roll aged 4 to 11 at January 2009, with the number of classes (excluding F1 classes), average class size and whether any vertical grouping occurred (number of classes in brackets). Staff : Pupil ratio includes Full Time Equivalents for teaching and non-teaching education-based staff (e.g. excluding administrative/bursars and clerical staff).

Another measure of "class size" is the Staff to Pupil ratio. The Wirral average is one member of teaching/support staff to every 8 pupils on roll, where the average school size is 264 pupils. Bidston Avenue, although the largest school in this planning area, with nearly the highest average class size, also has the lowest staff to pupil ratio, with one member of teaching/support staff to every 6 pupils on roll.

On this measure, St Laurence's has 1 member of teaching/support staff to every 9 pupils on roll – the same as St Werburgh's which is almost three times larger, however it should be borne in mind that this is achieved by funding St Laurence's at the highest level of any Wirral primary school, effectively at the expense of every primary school child in Wirral.

- 4.41 The Diocese has indicated that all pupils wishing to transfer to a Catholic primary school in the event of closure, will be guaranteed a place. In terms of retaining their priority status for admission to Catholic secondary schools if children transfer to non-Catholic primary schools, the Diocese have stated that an exception to the admission policies of Catholic secondary schools will not be made in this instance. It may be worth noting that over the last five years of Year 7 admissions (2003 to 2008), on average 25% of pupils admitted to Catholic secondary schools had attended a non-Catholic primary school. The breakdown by school is as follows:

St John Plessington : 29%

St Anselms College: 28%

Upton Hall School: 27%

St Mary's College: 21%

- 4.42 In terms of distance to alternative schools, the distance between the St Laurence's site and other Catholic primary schools are not great. St Werburgh's is half a mile away – about 12 minutes walk. Our Lady and St Edward's is 0.8 miles away (about 16 minutes walk). Wirral policy on transport to schools says that pupils are entitled to free transport if the nearest appropriate school is more than 2 miles away for children aged under 8, and more than 3 miles away from children aged 8 and over. Within the 2 mile distance are also St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Birkenhead) at 1.3 miles (29 minutes walk), St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Wallasey) at 1.4 miles (30 minutes walk) and Holy Cross Catholic Primary School at 1.8 miles (35 minutes walk). The exact travel distance for any individual pupil would depend on their home address.
- 4.43 St Laurence's is the site for a satellite to the Birkenhead and Tranmere Children's Centre based at St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School. The LA also leases part of the building for use by its Adult Learning team. Both services would require rehousing in the local area if this option were to proceed.

Other suggestions raised during consultation for this school

- 4.44 **Maintain St Laurence's as a small school, reducing surplus places by other uses of the building**

There are currently 75 pupils on roll, projected to fall to 55 pupils by 2014. The number of surplus places is projected to rise from 135 to 155. This means the school would be 75% empty by 2014.

The rationale for this suggestion is that a reduction of surplus places could be achieved by further usage of the building for "non-school" purposes.

The capacity of St Laurence's, measured by the DCSF Net Capacity method, is 210 places. The school has already given over former classroom spaces for use as: a Conference room; a Parents room; a Foundation resource; an additional Foundation 1 room; two classrooms (plus additional facilities) are now in use by a Children's Centre Satellite, and the Annexe is currently used by the Authority's Adult Learning team. Had these alterations not been carried out, the capacity at St Laurence's would now be 381 pupils – which would mean 306 surplus places.

The Authority seeks to co-locate children's services with schools wherever possible, and has done so at St Laurence's. The viability of any school chosen as a co-location site must be taken into account when decisions are made regarding extended schools. Any further reduction in surplus places would not, however, address the issues faced by the school due to its small size, and there is little prospect of numbers on roll at the school increasing.

This option is not recommended to proceed as a statutory proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

- 4.45 **Option B for the closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School is recommended to proceed as a statutory proposal with effect from August 2010, with a proviso to guarantee all former St Laurence's pupils on roll at the time of the school's closure a place at a Catholic primary school if this is their preference.**

Former St Laurence's parents would be offered the opportunity to express a preference for any primary school. Places at these schools would then be allocated based on the admission criteria published in the Authority's booklets for parents, within the limitations of the Infant Class Size limit.

The proposed implementation date of August 2010 will allow for works required at neighbouring Catholic primary schools to be carried out ahead of St Laurence's closure.

5.0 Amendments to Phase 6 of the Primary Places Review

5.1 At its meeting of 16th October 2008, Cabinet approved Phase 6 of the Review, to include the following small planning areas: South Wallasey, North Wallasey, Leasowe, Moreton, Upton and Greasby. At its meeting of 19th March 2009 Cabinet made an allowance for an amendment to Phase 6:

(404, item 4) Should the Joint Church school be approved and implemented as in (2), the Leasowe area be moved from Phase 6 of the Primary Places Review to Phase 8 accordingly.

The minutes of this meeting are attached as Appendix 8.

5.2 Following the 19th March 2009 Cabinet meeting, the Diocese of Shrewsbury and Diocese of Chester applied to the Secretary of State for consent to waive competition in relation to the establishment of a Joint Church school in Leasowe on 7th April 2009. Approval for the waiver was received on 17th July 2009.

5.3 The next stage in this process is for a meeting to take place between the Local Authority and the two Diocesan bodies, prior to formal statutory notice publication during Autumn 2009, which begins the legal process for closing the existing school (Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School) and establishing the new Joint Church school.

5.4 While the Joint Church school has not been approved and implemented as per the recommendation made on 19th March 2009, it is recommended that the Leasowe area be removed from Phase 6 of the Review, to be reviewed in due course in Phase 8 of the Review.

Manor Primary School

5.5 A further amendment is sought to include a review focused on Manor Primary School in Beechwood. Manor Primary School formed part of Phase 5 of the Review, however, none of the options included in the 28th May 2009 report involved Manor Primary. Following the Cabinet meeting Ofsted placed Manor Primary School in Special Measures, the most serious category of concern on 3rd June 2009. Schools are placed in special measures if they are deemed to be failing to provide learners with an acceptable standard of education and where the people responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. The Ofsted report is attached as Appendix 9.

5.6 Under Section 15 of the Education Act 2005, as amended by Part 1 of Schedule 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Local Authority has a duty to provide a Statement of Action within 10 working days of a school being placed into an Ofsted category of concern and has met this requirement. The Statement of Action must set out:

- the action the local authority has taken so far;
- the additional support the local authority will commission to help the school address the areas of weakness identified by Ofsted;
- what arrangements the local authority has made to inform parents and carers about the actions planned for the school, and how it will gather and take into account their views;
- what specific steps are needed to build the leadership and management capacity of the school, including at middle management level;

- whether there is scope for partner organisations to be brought in to support the school (including other schools, trusts, colleges, or non-educational organisations), and how this collaboration will be facilitated;
- the scope for the school to be closed or federated, taking into account the number of surplus places in better-performing local schools, and – if such a course of action is appropriate – when this might happen;
- the scope for the school to become a Trust school or an Academy;
- whether the authority intends to use its intervention powers to appoint additional governors, require the school to enter into arrangements, withdraw delegation of the budget, or replace the governing body with an Interim Executive Board (IEB);
- if the school is not to be closed or federated, or the authority’s intervention powers will not be used, why none of these actions is considered appropriate; and
- a plan of future action, including resource implications, quantified targets to evaluate the effectiveness of external support, target dates for key actions, and progress review points.

5.7 The Local Authority has a duty to consider various intervention options listed above when a school enters Special Measures, accordingly, these will be considered in relation to Manor Primary School during Phase 6 of the Review.

5.8 A map showing shaded areas representing the Phase 6 review areas, and a list of schools included in each small planning area, is attached as Appendix 10.

6.0 Implications of the Review Process for Pupils

Admission Arrangements: present and future pupils

6.1 The closure and/or amalgamation of primary schools will have implications for the Authority’s admission arrangements. The DCSF have advised that there is no requirement to consult separately on any changes to admission arrangements as long as full details are provided to parents in the statutory public notices on the proposed alterations to the school provision. This would include details on how the Authority would propose to manage the transfer of pupils to alternative schools, and also deal with applications from parents living in the areas concerned for places in Foundation 2.

Re-zoning of areas

6.2 In the event of any reorganisation, school catchment areas would have to be reviewed. In the case of an amalgamation it might be assumed that the catchment areas of the schools involved could simply be merged but it is likely that we would take the opportunity to consider any other necessary adjustments. In the case of a school closure, zones of neighbouring schools would have to be re-drawn. Changes would need to take into account consideration of home address in relation to nearest appropriate schools, the new capacity of schools in the area, and other factors such as planned housing development.

In relation to the potential transfer of existing pupils to alternative schools, the Authority would invite parents to indicate a preference. If their preference was for a placement in a community or controlled school, then the Authority would seek to meet that preference, within the admission criteria set out in the Authority’s booklets for parents.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

6.3 If any pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs then the Statement will be amended to reflect the new school, and the provision specified in the Statement will be delivered appropriately. Any pupils who are currently placed in designated special provision such as a Special Needs Class would be transferred to an alternative placement according to parental preference. For all those pupils on the SEN register who are affected, the Authority would deploy an element of any savings to provide enhanced support at their new school. Details of how such a scheme may operate would need to be developed.

7.0 Staffing Implications

7.1 Closure of Schools

If a school closes, staff would technically be redundant. However, the neighbouring schools to which pupils relocate will require additional staff, and these schools would be requested to give prior and preferential treatment to redundant staff.

7.2 Redeployment

In previous years, Wirral has had an excellent record of finding alternative employment for school staff. When posts are advertised in Wirral, schools are requested to give redundant staff who meet the advertised criteria, either a prior and preferential interview or an interview in competition with other candidates.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The recommendations contained in this report have capital implications in respect of the re-location of current pupils and the re-allocation of future pupils to schools. The level of capital required will depend upon the final, approved proposals and will require further, detailed development work. An amount of £250,000 is included in the 2009/10 Schools Capital Programme for "scheme development resulting from primary reviews" which was approved at the Cabinet meeting of 28th May 2009. This will allow schemes to be drawn up, costed and tendered, with any balance contributing to build costs. The balance of the capital build costs would need to be drawn from the following sources: DCSF Primary Capital Programme, DCSF Modernisation Grant, council capital including capital receipts from the disposal of surplus assets, Prudential Borrowing and capital forming part of other national initiatives. It is a requirement that funding is clearly identified when proposals are submitted to the decision maker for approval.

8.2 The recommendations contained in this report include the closure and amalgamation of schools, which in turn will produce revenue savings, to the benefit of other schools as the funding is re-distributed. In the short term the Authority could be required to fund any staff severance costs following closures and amalgamation but they may be partly or entirely offset by savings.

9.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

9.1 An equality impact assessment will be carried out on this report.

10.0 Human Rights Implications

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

11.0 Local Agenda 21 Statement

11.1 The removal of old, inefficient accommodation contributes to Council principles and targets in respect of Agenda 21.

12.0 Community Safety Implications

12.1 Rationalisation and refurbishment of schools allow the most vulnerable accommodation to be removed and other security improvements carried out.

13.0 Planning Implications

- 13.1 The relationship between housing development policy and school place provision is a factor in considering surplus place removal.
- 13.2 Construction of any new classroom provision would be subject to the usual planning permissions.

14.0 Local Member Support Implications

- 14.1 Primary place planning and potential surplus place removal have relevance to all Wards.
- 14.2 The current options affect the Bidston and St James, Birkenhead and Tranmere and Claughton Wards directly.
- 14.3 Phase 6 of the Review involves schools located in the following Wards: Seacombe, Liscard, New Brighton, Wallasey, Leasowe and Moreton East, Moreton West and Saughall Massie, Upton, Greasby Frankby and Irby, Bidston and St James (Manor).

15.0 Background Papers

Audit Commission Report: Planning School Places in Wirral September 2004.

School Organisation Plan.

LA document "Pursuit of Excellence: Primary Education in Wirral".

School pupil number returns, January 2009 (Annual Census return to DCSF).

School Net Capacity Calculation, July 2009, to DCSF requirements.

Consultation Documents

Other data held in Department including that provided by Wirral Health Authority.

16.0 Appendices

See list attached.

17.0 Summary

- 17.1 No one closes schools lightly. However, there is general agreement amongst all stakeholders that action must be taken to address the issue of surplus capacity. Officers are required to offer clear advice as to appropriate action in order to spend public money wisely and ensure all Wirral's children benefit equitably from the funding available. The recommendations below I believe will ensure best value for the future generations of children in the review areas, and more equitable spending for the benefit of all Wirral's pupils, from the savings made.

18.0 Recommendations

- 1) That statutory proposals be published in respect of the following options:
 - Option A2, closure of Cole Street Primary School from August 2010
 - Option B, closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School from August 2010
- 2) That the Director of Children's Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to publish these proposals, ensure the prescribed procedures are followed, including requesting permissions from the Secretary of State and proposals for the re-zoning of schools, in furtherance of the proposals.
- 3) That amendments be made to Phase 6 of the Primary Places Review:
 - a. to move the Leasowe planning area to Phase 8 of the Review, pending the outcome of proposals for a Joint Church school in that area

- b. to review Manor Primary School following that schools placement in Special Measures by Ofsted

Howard Cooper

Director of Children's Services

List of Appendices

| Appendix | Description |
|---|--|
| 1 | Extract from School Organisation Plan: Policies and Principles |
| 2 | Cabinet Report and resolution from 28 th May 2009 |
| <i>Consultation</i> | |
| 3a | Analysis of Consultation |
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| <i>Education and Inspections Act 2006</i> | |
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| 7c | Size and viability in consultation area |
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| 8 | Cabinet Resolution from 19 th March 2009 |
| 9 | Ofsted Inspection report on Manor Primary School, June 2009 |
| 10 | Map of Phase 6 small planning areas and schools list |

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SECTION B

POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES SUPPORTING PLAN

- 1) This School Organisation Plan is not a "stand alone" document, it forms part of the local planning framework, both of the LEA and other agencies and bodies and also is part of the local delivery of national policy initiatives and priorities.
- 2) The most important planning element is to set out the factors which the Committee will take into account when considering proposals to add, remove, relocate or re-organise places and maintain the balance between the management of surplus place removal and additional place provision with the maintenance of maximum parental choice.
- 3) Within the requirement that overall provision is effective and efficient i.e. an appropriate balance between school places available and pupil numbers, the School Organisation Committee when considering proposals referred to it under the Education (School Organisation Proposals) Regulations 1999, will consider each proposal against the following principles, weighted as appropriate to the proposals under consideration.

- i) The desirability in considering any proposals of matching school places to patterns of parental preference for relevant schools as expressed over a reasonable period of time which would normally be five years.
- ii) The duty upon schools to provide the National Curriculum and so far as it has been adopted by the school, the curriculum of the Education Authority.
- iii) The duty on schools to secure infant class sizes of no more than 30 pupils; the Committee should in addition have regard to the desirability of achieving similar provision in junior and secondary classes taking account of the

- desirability in certain areas of the curriculum for smaller class sizes in accordance with health and safety guidance.
- iv) The desirability of diversity of provision (for example by gender, religious or denominational conviction or for special educational needs), consistent with the efficient and effective use of resources and that there should be no reduction in the proportion of denominational places. Note: diversity in this context does not include the issue of selection since the Schools Standards and Framework Act makes separate provision for considering the position of grammar schools. The question of selection therefore, lies outside the competence of the Committee.
- v) The desirability of actively promoting the integration of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream schools wherever this is appropriate and can be adequately resourced. Whenever possible, the option of mainstream denominational school provision should be available for pupils with special educational needs whose parents would prefer this.
- vi) The promotion of high standards in relevant schools as reflected in external inspection evidence and in end of Key Stage and post 16 performance data as appropriate.
- vii) The accessibility to suitable schools for children resident in the area taking into particular account the Local Education Authority's home to school transport policy.
- viii) The desirability of providing a range of opportunities for pupils at 16+ so far as this is consistent with the efficient and effective use of resources.
- ix) The desirability of schools meeting the needs of the wider community, in particular the impact upon facilities available to the local community which may be provided in the schools concerned.

4) The above principles are those adopted in the School Organisation Plan previously. It is proposed, in the 2004/5 academic year that the LEA consider further the implications of an increasing number of primary schools with less than one form entry – 30 pupils and therefore primary schools of fewer than 210 pupils ie. 7 x 30, with the same entry size applied to separate infant and junior schools. The LEA review will consider a range of issues, including curriculum provision, class and year group organization, staffing structures, financial efficiency and parental attitudes, as well as the surplus places issue. It is intended that any proposals arising from this review will be brought to the School Organisation Committee as part of the annual plan review in June 2005.

5) Denominational Provision

Voluntary aided provision made by Churches is normally related to a particular parish or parishes. In respect of the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury the principles underpinning such denominational provision are as follows:

Catholic schools exist to meet the needs of parents of baptised Catholics in fulfilling promises and responsibilities accepted by them during their child's baptismal ceremony. It is the purpose of those schools to offer a distinctly Christian education in accordance with gospel values and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

It is the policy of the Diocese to provide a place for every baptised Catholic child within a Catholic Primary and Secondary School. Such provision for schools within the trusteeship of the Diocese is based on a parish network and each parish has a designated Diocesan Primary and Secondary School which serves it. Catholic Secondary Schools under the trusteeship of Religious Orders serve all geographical areas within Wirral LEA.

Catholic schools are an integral part of the mission of the Church and that mission is held to be valid and valued through all stages in the education system. Within each of those stages the aim of the Diocese is to maintain a distinctive Catholic education and environment.

The Church of England Diocese of Chester will make decisions regarding the provision of school place with reference to the following principles:

- promoting high quality education demonstrating Christian beliefs as expressed in the worship and practices of the Church of England;
- recognising the role of all Church of England schools in the mission of the Church and the life of the communities;
- seeking to meet the aspirations of parents and serve communities by providing education in the voluntary aided category within the framework of the Church of England;
- seeking to maintain the historic position of the Church of England in serving all communities by working in partnership with all those who provide or are employed in education.

6) This School Organisation Plan links closely to the LEA Asset Management Plan (AMP) and the linked Statement of Priorities. These were most recently updated and approved by the DfES in November 2002. The Statement of Priorities sets out the links to national priorities, this School Organisation Plan, the LEA Education Development Plan and a number of other plans, including the Early Years and Childcare Plan, the Access Strategy, the Security Plan and the post OFSTED Action Plan.

7) The AMP Statement of Priorities identifies the following key links with this School Organisation Plan:

Early Years - national target of universal provision for all three and four year olds already achieved.

Primary - the main challenge over the next five years in respect of provision of places is the projected continued and significant fall in pupil numbers. Area reviews are proposed in those geographical areas with the lowest projected occupancy rates for 2008/9.

Secondary - Currently a very efficient position, with very high occupancy rates and no school in excess of the 25% plus surplus places benchmark. The September 2002 transfer cohort represents the peak number, with a secondary roll peaking at January 2004 and then declining year by year.

Special - Future developments are linked to the LEA SEN plan, which is included as Appendix B of this Plan. The establishment of more bases in mainstream schools for pupils with moderate and complex learning difficulties and the provision of a second secondary school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are the main links to this plan. These proposals in principle match well with the opportunities presented by increased levels of “spare” accommodation in mainstream schools.

8) The LEA Education Development Plan (EDP) links to this plan in the efficient use of funding for both existing accommodation and any reductions or increases in accommodation to achieve the best match to pupils’ numbers and changing curriculum needs. In the Early Years and Primary setting this means the removal of accommodation wherever possible to allow re-direction of revenue funding into curriculum priorities and only a modest capital programme to enhance ICT, resource, library and dining provision and ease overcrowding at a very small number of schools. In the secondary sector, the raising of Attainment at Key Stages 3 and 4 is linked through the removal of surplus places – now completed at St Benedict’s and the major capital investments through PFI Capital Challenge, Targeted Capital, Aided Capital, Excellence in Cities funding and NOF funding to address a range of Suitability issues and when viewed as a whole, provide the most significant uplift in the Suitability and quality of secondary school accommodation for a generation. In addition the Specialist School initiative is fully supported by the LEA with around 50% of secondary schools already granted specialist status and others proposed.

This major investment is also supporting the EDP national priorities of narrowing attainment gaps, tackling under achievement and providing support for schools operating in challenging circumstances or which are causing concern.

As well as the national priorities outlined above, there are also links between this plan and the local priority targets in the EDP.

9) The capital investment in secondary schools and the current very efficient match between pupil numbers and overall capacity support the raising of standards and raising participation post 16 as well as enhancing specialist facilities to contribute to raising standards in Creative, Cultural, Emotional, Spiritual and Physical well being of pupils – both local priority targets. The projected reduction in secondary numbers over the next five years will also provide headroom for the greater inclusion principles set out in the LEA Special Education Needs plan attached as an appendix to this plan, which is the third local priority in the EDP. This plan also links with the post OFSTED Action Plan, which required the LEA to ensure that “the growth of surplus places in primary schools is controlled” and “reduce out of borough placements in special schools by expanding current provision which in turn links to the LEA Behaviour Support Plan”.

10) There are also implications arising from the School Organisation Plan for the LEA Access Strategy, the Security Plan, the LEA ICT Plan, the LEA Physical Education Plan, the Excellence in Cities Plan and the PFI Project Plan, in that careful decision making is required to ensure best long term returns from capital investment decisions.

11) In 2003/4 the LEA received a specific capital allocation of £251,000 to be used for the expansion of popular schools. This funding has been allocated to provide a three/four general classroom extension at Woodchurch High School, the most heavily over subscribed secondary school in respect of parental preferences in the LEA.

12) The LEA makes different arrangements for the following groups of vulnerable children:

- i. Children who are out of school because of illness and injury are provided for through Wirral Hospital School and Home Education Service. The LEA will shortly have finalised our policy on the education of children who are ill.
 - ii. Pupils who are looked after by local authorities. Most children who are looked after attend a mainstream or special school. They are supported by the Looked After Children Education Support Team which is part of the Pupil Access Support Service. A small number of these children are in children's homes where education is provided on site. Sometimes these homes will be outside the Borough.
 - iii. The LEA do not make arrangements for school aged pupils to attend college directly but many schools and the Pupil Access Support Service will arrange for placements at Wirral Metropolitan College and sometimes at colleges outside the Borough.
 - iv. The Authority keeps a record of those children who are educated at home by their parents provided their parents have informed us that they are educating their children at home. The Authority's inspectors pay regular visits to children's homes to ensure that their education is sufficient.
 - v. There are no psychiatric units or secure provision in Wirral but children with psychiatric difficulties may be educated in conjunction with the Child and Family Service which is the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service through the education provided at Wirral Hospital School. A base at Adcote House, which is the headquarters of the Child and Family Service, provides education for primary and secondary aged pupils. If necessary, following a period of assessment there, children may transfer to the main base of the Hospital School.
- 13) The Authority adopted in 2002 a Plan for the development of special educational needs which promotes the development of opportunities for children with special needs to be educated in a mainstream environment for some if not all of the time. The Authority also has ten successful special schools, in addition to the Hospitals School, which are developing strong links with mainstream schools to the benefit of pupils in both sectors. The objectives in the SEN Plan are complemented by the Accessibility Strategy adopted in 2003. This sets out the Authority's strategy to make all schools more accessible to

- children with disabilities. The LEA plan is attached as Appendix B of this plan.
- 14) Post 16 Provision
- The percentage of young people remaining in learning in Wirral post 16 is above the national average. The percentage in learning at age 17 is lower than the national average. There is an intention to increase the proportion of young people aged 16-19 in learning, although they need not necessarily be in learning in LEA provision.
- Post 16 provision for learners in Wirral differs in different parts of the borough.
- Birkenhead secondary schools do not provide post 16 education opportunities. Birkenhead students are able to apply for post 16 learning to the sixth form of a secondary school in another part of the borough, or to provision in the colleges or other training providers.
- Maintained secondary schools in Birkenhead do not provide post 16 education opportunities. Birkenhead students are able to apply for post 16 learning to the sixth form of a secondary school in another part of the borough, or to provision in the colleges or other training providers. Catholic secondary schools which serve the Birkenhead area do offer sixth form education.
- Secondary schools in Wallasey, Deeside and Bebington have sixth forms. Students are able to apply to either remain in their own school, join another school sixth form, or move to provision in the colleges or other training providers.
- A 16-19 area-wide inspection took place in Autumn 2002; inspecting provision for 16-19 year olds in schools, colleges, training providers and Connexions. The findings relevant to this plan relate to equality of access the learning opportunities and retention rates in learning, particularly at age 17 years. The Area-Wide Inspection (AWI) Action Plan addressing these issues has been submitted to the Department for Education and Skills. An agreed action plan to improve these issues will be implemented from September 2003.

REVIEW OF PRIMARY PLACES PHASE 5: AREA REVIEWS OF BIRKENHEAD, BEECHWOOD, NOCTORUM AND PRENTON AND POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF GILBROOK SPECIAL SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report advises the Cabinet of progress on the Phase 5 Area Reviews of primary school places in the small planning areas of Central, South and North Birkenhead, Beechwood, Noctorum and Prenton. Following meetings with key stakeholders in each of these areas, this report contains a summary of provision in each area and puts forward recommendations for options for consultation, and comments briefly on some of the issues involved. A recommendation is also made to consult on the possible relocation of Gilbrook School from Birkenhead to Woodchurch.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting of 16th October 2008, Cabinet instructed that Phase 5 of the Primary Places Review should comprise Prenton, Noctorum, North Birkenhead and Beechwood, South Birkenhead and Central Birkenhead. The minutes of that Cabinet meeting are attached for Members' information as Appendix A to this report. As in previous phases, the first stage of the Review has been to conduct a process where, on a confidential basis, meetings have taken place with key stakeholders in each of the areas under review. These stakeholders included Ward Councillors as well as officers of the Diocese of Chester and Shrewsbury, headteachers and chairs of governors of schools potentially affected by the Reviews. Following these confidential discussions, recommendations can now be made for options for consultation in the next stage of the review process.
- 1.2 In addition to the options described below there is considerable analytic and background material that was used as the basis for the identification of options; this is available for Members on request. A brief description of this material is included at Appendix B. Numbers on roll provided in this report are from the annual School Census of January 2009.

2.0 Prenton

- 2.1 The small planning area of Prenton was included within the Phase 5 Area Review in order to ensure that we had looked coherently at provision across this region of the Wirral. The Prenton area is served by a single community primary school.
- 2.2 Formed by the amalgamation of Prenton Infant School and Prenton Junior School in 2005, numbers on roll at this school have fallen in recent years, following the general trend across the borough, and are projected to remain relatively stable over the next five years. Prenton retains more than 80% of in-zone community/CE choice pupils, and also shows a net gain of pupils from other local schools, principally from the catchments of Devonshire Park Primary and Townfield Primary schools. In terms of size, the school is likely to remain well above the Wirral policy definition of a small school. In 2006, Ofsted judged Prenton to be a good school, and 2008 Key Stage 2 contextual value added shows that pupils are making the expected rate of progress.

Conclusion

- 2.2 There has been careful consideration of this planning area, the outcome of which is that the opinion of officers is that there is no need at this stage to proceed with consideration of options for change.

3.0 Noctorum

- 3.1 The small planning area of Noctorum contains four schools, two community, one Church of England Aided and one Catholic Aided. Of these, Hillside Primary and St Peter's Catholic Primary School are within the Wirral policy definition of a small school. Only Hillside Primary has significantly high surplus places (26.7%).
- 3.2 Hillside Primary School was originally separate Infant and Junior schools, amalgamated in 1998 in separate buildings, then consolidated into the former Infant building once building work was completed. There are sufficient places at schools within 1 mile to accommodate Hillside Primary School pupils, and almost as many community/CE choice pupils from Hillside's catchment attend Townfield Primary School, as attend Hillside Primary. Ofsted rated Hillside Primary as "satisfactory", and Townfield Primary as "good" in 2007. Key Stage 2 contextual value added in 2008 indicates that pupils at Hillside Primary are making the expected rate of progress, and at Townfield Primary, more than the expected rate of progress.

Cloughton Children's Centre has recently been established in the existing building at Hillside Primary School, which may have a longer term impact on improving numbers on roll at the school, which are currently projected to remain stable in the next five years.

- 3.3 St Peter's Catholic Primary School retains almost two-thirds of available Catholic choice pupils within the catchment Parish. Although overall there is a net loss to alternative Catholic primary schools, there is some overlap in pupil terms with the neighbouring Parish of St Paul's Catholic Primary (Beechwood), with 15% of pupils attending St Peter's residing in St Paul's Parish. While small, the school has few surplus places using the DCSF calculation method, and was rated "good" by Ofsted in 2006. Key Stage 2 contextual value added in 2008 indicates that pupils at St Peter's Catholic Primary are making more than the expected rate of progress.

Conclusion

- 3.4 St Peter's Catholic Primary School is the only Catholic primary in this planning area, although there are links with St Paul's Parish which should be monitored. The presence of the Children's Centre at Hillside Primary School may encourage more parents to choose the school over time. Pupils at both schools are making the expected rate of progress or better. On this basis, it is recommended that the Noctorum area should be monitored and reviewed in a later phase of the Review.

4.0 Central Birkenhead

- 4.1 The small planning area of Central Birkenhead contains six schools, three all-through community primary schools, a Church of England Controlled primary, and two Catholic Aided primary schools.

Surplus places are high in two of the six schools in this planning area – Christ Church CE (Birkenhead) Primary and Devonshire Park Primary. Christ Church CE Primary also falls into the Wirral policy definition of a small school. Oxton Children's Centre and a Spaces for Sports and Arts Initiative facility are located adjacent to the school.

- 4.2 Christ Church CE Primary had 162 pupils on roll in January 2009. Projections indicate an increase to 193 pupils by 2014, which would reduce surplus places from the present level of 32% to 19%, below the 25% or more level which requires an annual report to the DCSF. The Governing body have indicated a desire to expand the school through a rebuild on the same site. This is not supported by current projections. Other options for change in neighbouring schools may have minor ramifications for pupil numbers at Christ Church, however there is sufficient scope within the existing building to accommodate additional children if required.
- 4.3 Devonshire Park Primary School had 288 pupils on roll in January 2009. The Net Capacity of the current buildings is currently 420 pupils, which means 31% surplus places, above the

25% reporting threshold. Projections indicate that the number on roll will be broadly similar in 2014, with surplus remaining high unless action is taken. In 2007, Ofsted rated the school as good with outstanding features, and Key Stage 2 2008 contextual value added indicates that pupils are making the expected rate of progress.

- 4.4 The school occupies four pre-World War I buildings on a relatively confined site, originally Temple Road School. The two main buildings, North and South, and the former caretakers house are two storey, while the separate kitchen and dining block is single storey. The school has an F1 (nursery) class, and designated special needs classes at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- 4.5 Devonshire Park is rated as a high priority for Primary Capital Strategy funding based on a multi-factorial scoring system. There is scope to rationalize the school into a single main building by a combination of internal adaptations and extension. This could include a new entrance and admin area and relocation of existing kitchen and dining facilities into the main building. The scheme would incorporate extended school and community use of the building. The redundant building(s) would then be cleared and landscaped into additional play and on-site green space, which is currently lacking on the Devonshire Park site. The F1 class and SEN classes would be retained.
- 4.6 The rationalization is expected to reduce the Net Capacity of the school from 420 places to 300 places, which on current projections will reduce surplus places at the school to less than 10%. It will also reduce future expenditure on outstanding condition items from the school's Devolved Formula Capital.

Other considerations

- 4.7 Woodlands Primary School is the subject of a capital scheme development process listed on another item on the same Cabinet agenda, involving a two classroom extension to the main building in order to vacate rooms in use by the school at the adjacent Beechcroft building. The current admission number at Woodlands Primary is 44. This scheme would alleviate some of the accommodation suitability issues faced by the school, which would be further enhanced by a reduction in admission number to 30 places. However, dependant on the outcome of other options discussed in this report, pupil places may be required at Woodlands Primary School and consequently a reduction in admission number will not be pursued at this time.

Conclusion

- 4.8 It is recommended that an option appraisal is carried out to determine the most effective solution to the rationalization of Devonshire Park Primary School. Transforming accommodation through the Primary Capital Programme and other schemes, provides opportunities to promote joint agency work to promote co-ordinated solutions for pupils and their families. There is scope for community participation in the design process of any new school buildings, raising the school's profile within the community. Current funding predictions would indicate a 2011/12 implementation date at the earliest for any scheme.

5.0 South Birkenhead

- 5.1 The small planning area of South Birkenhead contains five schools – four community primary schools and one Catholic Aided primary. Of these two are below the Wirral policy definition of a small school, and both of these have significantly high surplus places.

With one exception, Mersey Park Primary, surplus places are relatively high in schools across this area. The table below shows for each school the current Net Capacity, number on roll and percentage surplus, with the projected number on roll and percentage surplus in 2014. Shaded cells indicate 25% or more surplus places.

| School | Capacity | 2009 NOR | 2009 Surplus % | 2014 NOR (projected) | 2014 Surplus % |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Bedford Drive | 406 | 314 | 22.7 | 364 | 10.2 |
| Mersey Park | 399 | 371 | 7.0 | 367 | 8.1 |
| Well Lane | 243 | 150 | 38.3 | 175 | 27.8 |
| Rock Ferry | 329 | 248 | 24.6 | 271 | 17.7 |
| St Anne's Catholic | 243 | 175 | 28.0 | 173 | 28.7 |

- 5.2 As demonstrated above, current projections indicate that surplus places are likely to remain high at both Well Lane Primary and St Anne's Catholic Primary schools, despite projected additional pupils at Well Lane Primary. Well Lane Primary is the base for an Area team in the stand alone block to the rear of the school.
- 5.3 During Phase 1 of the Primary Places Review in 2005, consultations on the closure of Well Lane Primary school were carried out with stakeholders in the South Birkenhead area. The outcome of that consultation was reported to Cabinet at its meeting of 18th July 2005. At that time, the closure of The Dell Primary School was considered a higher priority, and there were concerns about implications for class sizes at adjoining schools should both The Dell and Well Lane close at the same time.
- 5.4 27% of community/CE choice children who live in Well Lane's zone attend the school, which means that about two-thirds attend other schools. Despite a reduction in the Net Capacity from 351 pupils in 2003 to 243 in 2008, including the location of an Area team into part of the school, surplus places at Well Lane have been consistently high for many years and are projected to continue to be so. There is little further scope for rationalization of the existing building. The expenditure per pupil at Well Lane was £4,284 per pupil in 2006/2007, above the Wirral average of £3,249.
- 5.5 In 2006, Ofsted judged Well Lane to require a "notice to improve" with particular reference to children's standards and achievements, the curriculum and attendance. In 2007, the school was judged by Ofsted as "satisfactory". Key Stage 2 2008 contextual value added indicates that pupils were making the expected rate of progress.
- 5.6 Combined with potential to raise the admission number at Mersey Park Primary School (57 to 60), there are sufficient places at local schools to accommodate all current and future Well Lane pupils. In 2009, there were 269 surplus places at alternative schools within the South Birkenhead planning area and 1,290 surplus places at the 27 schools (counting Infant and Junior separately) within a 2 mile radius. While small, standards at the school have improved and numbers on roll are projected to rise over the next five years. It is not recommended to proceed to formal consultation in relation to Well Lane Primary School, although the position of schools in this area will continue to be carefully monitored.
- 5.7 There is some minor scope for "on paper" reductions in Net Capacity and surplus places at Rock Ferry Primary School and Bedford Drive Primary School through small reductions in their admission numbers. Admission number reductions are consulted upon through the Admissions Code of Conduct process and do not require formal consultation through the Review process. Officers will discuss the potential for such reductions with headteachers and Chairs of Governors at the two schools.

Diocesan Issues

- 5.8 As shown in 5.1 and 5.2 above, surplus places and small school size are also factors involving St Anne's Catholic Primary School.
- 5.9 St Anne's retains about half of the Catholic choice pupils living in its catchment Parish, with an overall net loss to other Catholic primary schools. Of those who attend Catholic schools elsewhere, the largest proportion (37%) attend St John's Catholic Infant and Junior schools in Bebington, located 0.5 miles away. The school occupies a mid-1970's building on two floors

with little scope for rationalization. Expenditure per pupil at St Anne's was £3,561 per pupil in 2006/2007, slightly above the Wirral average of £3,249.

5.10 In 2006, Ofsted judged St Anne's to require a "notice to improve", with particular reference to Foundation stage provision. In 2007, the school was judged by Ofsted as "satisfactory". In Key Stage 2 in 2008, the contextual value added score of 99.4 indicated that pupils were making the expected rate of progress.

5.11 The Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury have indicated an interest in rebuilding St Anne's Catholic Primary School using Primary Capital Strategy funding. This is intended to resolve various building condition issues, but would include a reduction in size to 210 places (rather than 243 places). The current site is completely surrounded by housing, and has very narrow and limited access. Resolving this issue would require consideration of the transfer to a new site in the immediate local area, potentially through purchase by the Diocese or a land swop to a Council owned site, alternatively a temporary relocation of the school to allow demolition and rebuild.

Conclusion

5.12 Factors involved in the inclusion of the closure of Well Lane Primary School in 2005's consultation remain an issue, and it is right to consider whether the school should continue to be retained. It is recommended not to proceed to consultation on closure of Well Lane Primary School at this time. Standards at the school have improved in recent years, and projections indicate that the number on roll should increase over the next five years, although remaining a small school. The area will require careful monitoring and will be considered again in due course, or earlier if circumstances require.

5.13 The Diocesan option for the rebuilding of St Anne's is unlikely to require publication of statutory notices. The reduction in surplus places achieved if this proposal were approved would be minimal, and St Anne's is currently rated as a medium priority for Primary Capital Programme funding. It is recommended that preliminary investigations take place into alternative sites in the local area, but that formal consultations are not carried out at this stage.

6.0 North Birkenhead and Beechwood

6.1 The small planning area of North Birkenhead is currently served by eight primary schools. Four are Community primary schools, one is Church of England Aided, and three are Catholic Aided. From September 2009, the area will also be served by the primary division of the Birkenhead High Academy for Girls, the only single-sex maintained primary school in Wirral. Of these nine schools, four are within the Wirral policy definition of a small school, and three of those four schools also have more than 25% surplus places.

The small planning area of Beechwood is served by three primary schools, one Community primary, one Church of England Controlled and one Catholic Aided. Two of the three are within the Wirral policy definition of a small school. Surplus places are relatively high at all three schools, but reach more than 25% surplus places in one school.

North Birkenhead

6.2 Cathcart Street Primary School and Cole Street Primary School are both small schools with high levels of surplus, situated in close proximity. The following table shows current capacity, number on roll and surplus places alongside projections for 2014.

| School | Capacity | 2009 NOR | 2009 surplus places | 2009 Surplus % | 2014 NOR (projected) | 2014 Surplus % |
|-----------------|----------|----------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Cathcart Street | 210 | 101 | 109 | 48.1 | 95 | 45.0 |
| Cole Street | 210 | 124 | 86 | 59.0 | 108 | 51.4 |
| Total | 420 | 225 | 195 | 53.6 | 203 | 48.3 |

The combined pupils of the two schools are effectively a single form of entry primary school, both now and projected to five years time, with almost a schools worth of surplus places between them. Options to combine the two schools should form part of the consultation in this area.

- 6.3 Cole Street Primary School occupies a 1920's two storey building on a confined site overlooking Birkenhead Park. The school has a roof top playground and there is little scope for rationalization of the existing building. Cathcart Street Primary School occupies a 1970's building on a pleasant, but relatively confined site. A community group, "CATS" occupies a double mobile classroom on the Cathcart site, but again there is little scope for rationalization of the building.
- 6.4 Cathcart Street Primary retains two-fifths of community/CE choice children who live in the catchment zone, the largest proportion of the remainder (a third) attending nearby The Priory CE Primary School. Cole Street retains a just a quarter of in-zone community/CE choice children, with the remaining three-quarters attending various local schools, including The Priory CE, Christ Church CE (Birkenhead), Woodchurch Road Primary and Cathcart Street Primary schools. The pupil populations of the two schools overlap slightly, in that some Cole Street zoned pupils attend Cathcart Street Primary School. It should be noted that The Priory CE and Christ Church CE have catchment zones that overlap those of the local community schools. Expenditure per pupil at Cathcart Street Primary School was £5,089 (fifth highest) and at Cole Street £4,066 (thirteenth highest) in 2006/2007, above the Wirral average of £3,429.
- 6.5 In 2009, Ofsted judged Cole Street Primary School to be "satisfactory". Cathcart Street Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted in 2006, at which time it was judged to be a "good" school. In Key Stage 2 in 2008, the contextual value added scores of 100.1 at Cole Street and 99.9 at Cathcart Street Primary indicated that pupils at both schools were making the expected rate of progress and standards at the two schools are therefore not dissimilar.
- 6.6 There are several methods for arriving at a single school. Legally, this could be achieved by closing one of the two schools and guaranteeing former pupils of the closing school a place at the other school, or by an amalgamation, which involves closing both schools and establishing a new school on a single site at which former pupils of both schools are guaranteed a place.

This leads to the following options for consultation:

A: Closure of Cathcart Street Primary School

B: Closure of Cole Street Primary School

C: Closure of both Cathcart Street and Cole Street Primary Schools, linked to the establishment of a new school on a single site.

- 6.7 Either existing building could accommodate the pupils of both schools within the current accommodation with minor alterations. If attractive, a new building, potentially on a new site, would become a high priority for 2011/2012 Primary Capital Strategy funding with a view to open in 2013, unless earlier funding is available from the Council's Capital pot. An option appraisal of existing and potential sites for a new school building is recommended.

Diocesan Issues

- 6.8 St Laurence's Catholic Primary School, located across the road from Cathcart Street Primary School, now has 75 pupils on roll and 64% surplus places, the roll having reduced by a third in the last three years alone. The roll is projected to continue to fall to 62 pupils and 70.5% surplus places by 2014. An Annex to the main building is currently leased by the Authority's Adult Learning team, and the school is the site of a satellite to Birkenhead and Tranmere Children's Centre based at St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School. There is little scope for further rationalization of the existing school building.

- 6.9 St Laurence's retains 61% of Catholic choice pupils within the St Laurence's portion of the joint Parish of St Laurence's and St Werburgh's and has a net loss to other Catholic primary schools. The joint Parish is currently served by two primary schools. The other, St Werburgh's, is in the small planning area of Central Birkenhead. St Werburgh's was rebuilt in 1999 as a single form of entry primary school and has few surplus places. It retains 69% of Catholic choice pupils in the St Werburgh's part of the Parish, and has a significant net gain from other Catholic primary schools, including St Joseph's (Birkenhead) and St Laurence's.
- 6.10 In 2008, Ofsted judged St Laurence's as "good". In Key Stage 2 in 2008, the contextual value added scores of 101.4 indicated that pupils were making more than the expected rate of progress. Expenditure per pupil at St Laurence's was £5,520 in 2006/2007, above the Wirral average of £3,429 and the highest of any Wirral primary school.
- 6.11 At the 27 alternative primary schools within a 2 mile radius of St Laurence's, in 2009 there were 1,609 empty places, 295 of which were in Catholic schools. Excluding those in Wallasey, there were 144 empty places in the five alternative Catholic primary schools in the Birkenhead area, which is projected to fall slightly to 130 empty places by 2014.
- 6.12 In order to provide Catholic primary places in this area of Birkenhead, the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury has already proposed the expansion of nearby Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School by three to four classrooms, including replacing a mobile classroom. This scheme is funded via the Local Authority Co-ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme and the Primary Capital Strategy and is expected to create an additional 90 places. In combination with existing surplus places in the area, if St Laurence's Primary School were to close, there should be sufficient Catholic primary places to meet parental demand in Birkenhead for the foreseeable future.
- 6.13 Relocation of the Authority's Adult Learning team to a central Birkenhead location would depend upon the outcome of the review, and the availability of suitable premises in the local area.

Beechwood

- 6.14 In 2005 when this area was last reviewed, there were 34% surplus places across the three schools. Two proposals for change arose from Phase 1 of the Review, one of which was implemented.

Community and Church of England Controlled schools

- 6.15 The amalgamation of Vyner Primary and St Oswald's CE Primary School to form Bidston Village CE Primary School on the former St Oswald's site was implemented in 2006. The site was projected to have 188 pupils and 42% surplus places in 2009, but as a result of the proposal being implemented, now has 277 pupils and 21% surplus places, which although high, is a significant improvement. In 2008, Ofsted judged the school to be "good", and Key Stage 2 2008 contextual value added indicates that pupils are making more than the expected rate of progress.
- 6.16 Numbers on roll at Manor Primary School have continued to fall in the last few years, and surplus places have now reached 45%. In 2006, Ofsted judged the school to be "satisfactory", and Key Stage 2 2008 contextual value added indicates that pupils are making the expected rate of progress. A satellite to the Bidston St James Children Centre has been established at the school in the existing building which may have a longer term impact on improving numbers on roll at the school, which are currently projected to continue to fall over the next five years.

Diocesan Issues

- 6.17 The second proposal resulting from Phase 1 of the Primary Places Review was the closure of St Paul's Catholic Primary School, which was referred to the School's Adjudicator. The Adjudicator's decision at that time was to reject the proposal, principally on the grounds of that there was no guarantee of sufficient places in the three alternative Catholic primary

schools, and no significant difference in standards between St Paul's and these three schools.

- 6.18 In 2009, while there are small numbers of surplus places at alternative Catholic primary schools, there are fewer than would be required to accommodate former St Paul's pupils. In terms of standards, at their last inspections St Paul's was judged by Ofsted as "satisfactory with some good features" (2007), St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Upton) was found to be "satisfactory" (2007), as was Holy Cross Catholic Primary School (2008), while St Peter's Catholic Primary (Noctorum) was judged as "good". Key Stage 2 2008 contextual value added at Holy Cross, St Paul's and St Joseph's (Upton) indicated that pupils were making the expected rate of progress, while at St Peter's (Noctorum), pupils were making more than the expected rate of progress. As discussed in Section 3 above, there is a degree of pupil population overlap between St Paul's and St Peter's (Noctorum).
- 6.19 St Paul's remains a small school with relatively high surplus places. There is no official waiting time between the Adjudicator's decision to reject a proposal and beginning the consultation process again on that proposal. However, in initial discussions the Diocesan Director of Education for the Diocese of Shrewsbury have made it clear that at this time they would again take up their right to refer a decision on the closure of St Paul's to the Schools Adjudicator, and without a significant alteration in the factors that led to the decision to reject the proposal in 2006, it is difficult to see how the Adjudicator would reach a different conclusion.
- 6.20 The development of 213 new houses in the Beechwood area is expected to generate around 50 primary age pupils, of whom 1 in 5 is likely to choose Catholic education. Although some will probably be children who already live locally, the number on roll at St Paul's could reasonably be expected to increase by around 10, and Manor Primary by about 20. The first phase of housing development on Beechwood consisted of 30 houses to be rented to existing Beechwood tenants, and 9 three and four bed houses for sale or shared ownership. The 30 rental properties include 14 retirement bungalows, 6 two bed houses, and 8 three and four bed houses. If this pattern is repeated across the other 7 development sites, 40% of the 213 houses built would be for retired or single people without children. Around 75% of the 213 would therefore be rented to existing residents. The new housing is intended to stabilise the community in the area, rather than to significantly increase its size.
- 6.21 It is not recommended to proceed to proposals in this area, although numbers and standards require careful monitoring. The area will be reviewed again in due course, or as required if circumstances change significantly.

Conclusions

- 6.22 When last reviewed in 2005, there were 1,786 pupils attending schools in the North Birkenhead planning area, with 499 (22%) surplus places. Four years on, there are 1,796 pupils attending schools in the North Birkenhead planning area (including Birkenhead High Academy), and 454 (20%) surplus places, a small reduction. In Beechwood, there were 444 pupils attending three schools, with 232 (34.3%) surplus places, rising in 2009 to 482 pupils and 195 (28.8%) surplus places.
- 6.23 In 2005/2006, proposals were made to reorganize school provision in the Bidston end of the Birkenhead North and Beechwood planning areas. In this phase of the Review, it is recommended to proceed to consultation on changes to school provision in the Birkenhead end of the planning area as follows:
- A: Closure of Cathcart Street Primary School
 - B: Closure of Cole Street Primary School
 - C: Closure of both Cathcart Street and Cole Street Primary Schools, linked to the establishment of a new Primary school

- D: Closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School

7.0 Phase 4 - Relocation of Gilbrook School

- 7.1 The closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School, Glebe Hey Road, Woodchurch, resulted from Phase 4 of the Primary Places Review. The school will formally close on 31st August 2009.
- 7.2 The Governing body of Gilbrook School, a special school with 50 places for primary age pupils with emotional and behavioural issues, have expressed an interest in relocating to larger premises with improved facilities to carry out additional behaviour support work to mainstream schools. The governors expression of interest letter is attached as Appendix C. The school is currently located in a semi-industrial area on Pilgrim Street, Birkenhead, but serves pupils from the entire Wirral area. A Sports Barn is located on the Gilbrook site.
- 7.3 Relocating to the former Arrowe Hill building would increase the net floor area available to Gilbrook by a third, and although the school would no longer have access to the Sports Barn, the total site area available to the school would triple including a substantial increase in hard and soft play area. The Authority would retain the former Infant building for storage purposes.
- 7.4 Travel to school arrangements would continue as specified in the Authority's information booklets for parents, which are that the Authority would pay the travel costs of children attending Gilbrook either by providing a travel pass for pupils able to travel by public transport, or by arranging travel on the Authority's own or contracted vehicles, including providing an escort if necessary.
- 7.5 The distance between the two sites is more than 2 miles in a straight line, which means that a "prescribed alteration" notice must be issued. Accordingly, it is recommended that Cabinet approve a formal consultation lasting at least six weeks to be carried out with various stakeholders including the governing body, parents/carers, staff and pupils of Gilbrook School, local residents, ward members and local MPs. The outcome of the consultation would then be reported back to Cabinet later this year for consideration.
- 7.6 Subject to approval, another item on the same Cabinet agenda includes £200,000 from 2009/2010 capital resources to facilitate the move to the former Arrowe Hill building.

8.0 Next steps

- 8.1 If the Council decides to approve any or all of these options which require consultation, this would involve publishing the options within the areas and inviting comments and suggestions from as wide a range of stakeholders as can be practicably achieved. Most critically this would involve the parents and carers of children in the schools potentially affected. Consultation meetings would therefore be held where views can be expressed directly to LA officers and the Cabinet member. We would also invite written comments. The outcome of these consultations would then be reported back to Cabinet for further consideration, as would any further options that had emerged during the process and the consultation.
- 8.2 There are new requirements for statutory competitions when new primary schools are established (as for example in an amalgamation). Appendix D provides a summary of the competition regulations.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are none arising as a result of this report. If options are approved for consultation, there will be further detailed reports that will set out all the implications.

10.0 Staffing Implications

- 10.1 There are none arising as a result of this report. If options are approved for consultation, there will be further detailed reports that will set out all the implications.

11.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

11.1 It is essential to plan school provision across the Authority so that it is both efficient and effective in the interests of all pupils. Consultations on the options set out in this report will need to address very carefully the impact of any preferred options on pupils which are served by the schools concerned.

12.0 Community Safety Implications

12.1 Rationalisation and refurbishment of schools allow the most vulnerable accommodation to be removed and other security improvements carried out.

13.0 Local Agenda 21 Statement

13.1 The provision of efficient and effective education is a vital part of serving local communities; inefficient use of resources is wasteful both in educational and physical resource terms.

14.0 Planning Implications

14.1 The relationship between housing development policy and school place provision is a factor in considering surplus place removal.

14.2 Any proposals that may arise out of options after the consultation and decision making process for school re-organisation would be subject to the usual planning processes.

15.0 Anti-Poverty Implications

15.1 The redistribution of funding released by school reorganisation, in combination with the Authority's intention to realign the schools budget to give higher levels of funding to schools with high levels of deprivation, as well as improved accommodation, goes towards raising aspirations and narrowing the attainment gap for vulnerable groups.

16.0 Social Inclusion Implications

16.1 School re-organisation and transforming accommodation through the Primary Capital Programme and other schemes, provides opportunities to promote joint agency work to promote co-ordinated solutions for pupils and their families. There is scope for community participation in the design process of any new school buildings, raising the school's profile within the community.

17.0 Local Member Support Implications

17.1 The schools specifically mentioned in the report and appendices, and the Wards in which they are situated, which are Bidston and St James, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Prenton, Rock Ferry, Oxton, Cloughton, Noctorum and Prenton.

Background Papers

18.1 Surplus place returns

DCSF guidance on Surplus Place Removal

Pupil and Capacity data held by the LEA

Recommendations

(1) That an option appraisal be undertaken regarding the consolidation of Devonshire Park Primary School into a single building.

(2) That consultations be undertaken regarding the following options for change in the North Birkenhead small planning area:

- A - Closure of Cathcart Street Primary School
- B - Closure of Cole Street Primary School

- C - Closure of both Cathcart Street and Cole Street Primary Schools, linked to the establishment of a new Primary school on a single site
 - D - Closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School
- (3) That an option appraisal be undertaken regarding potential sites for a single primary school resulting from any of consultation options A, B and C.
- (4) That consultations be undertaken regarding the transfer of Gilbrook School to the former premises of Arrowe Hill Primary School, Woodchurch.
- (5) That the remaining Phase 5 small planning areas be reviewed again as necessary or through the usual review process.

Howard Cooper

Director of Children's Services

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APPENDIX 3A

Analysis of Consultation

Consultation Meetings

Cathcart Street Primary School

Present:

Cllr Phil Davies (Chairman)
Mark Parkinson – LA
Marie Lawrence - LA
David Armstrong – LA
Sally Gibbs – LA
Phil Edwards – Technician

Rosemarie Bishop – Headteacher
John Cocker – Chair of Governors

Attended by 33 parents, 15 staff members, 4 governors, and 7 other interested persons.

29% of pupils were represented by at least one parent/carer.

Cole Street Primary School

Present:

Cllr Phil Davies (Chairman)
Mark Parkinson – LA
Marie Lawrence – LA
David Armstrong – LA
Sally Gibbs – LA
Phil Edwards – Technician

Val Chaderton - Headteacher
Barbara Egan – Chair of Governors

Attended by 16 parents, 22 staff members, 6 governors and 8 other interested persons.

13% of pupils were represented by at least one parent/carer.

St Laurence's Catholic Primary School

Present:

Cllr Phil Davies (Chairman)
Mark Parkinson – LA
Marie Lawrence – LA
David Armstrong – LA
Sally Gibbs – LA
Phil Edwards – Technician

John Walsh – Acting Headteacher
Sister Frances Guiney – Vice Chair of Governors

Sister Pauline – Representative of the Diocese of Shrewsbury

Attended by 18 parents, 13 staff members, 5 governors and 21 other interested persons.

26% of pupils were represented by at least one parent/carer.

Number of responses received by school

| Responses | Total | Directly related | Others |
|-----------------|-------|------------------|--------|
| Cathcart Street | 18 | 13 | 5 |
| Cole Street | 38 | 24 | 14 |
| St Laurence's | 10 | 1 | 9 |
| Other | 1 | | |

All written responses (forms, letters, e-mails) by respondent category and area

Please note: Totals may not match with previous table as some people fit into more than one category, for example parent and staff.

| Category of Respondent | No | % |
|------------------------|-----------|----|
| Parents | 29 | 41 |
| Staff | 7 | 10 |
| Governors | 7 | 10 |
| Other | 28 | 39 |
| Total | 71 | |

A **petition** was received in support of Cathcart Street Primary School containing 248 entries, of which 125 were duplicates, incomplete or non-existent addresses, out of borough or persons not on the electoral roll.

Of the remaining 123 entries:

| Catchment zone | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|
| Cathcart Street | 27 |
| Cole Street | 36 |
| Other Wirral | 37 |

38% of signees were parents/carers of a child attending Cathcart Street Primary School.

A **petition** was received in support of Cole Street Primary School containing 550 entries, of which 274 were duplicates, incomplete or non-existent addresses, out of borough or persons not on the electoral roll.

Of the remaining 276 entries:

| Catchment zone | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|
| Cole Street | 67 |
| Cathcart Street | 3 |
| Other Wirral | 30 |

16% of signees were parents/carers of a child attending Cole Street Primary School.

A **petition** was received in support of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School containing 627 entries, of which 329 were duplicates, incomplete or non-existent addresses, out of borough or persons not on the electoral roll.

Of the remaining 298 entries:

| Catchment Parish | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| St Laurence's | 22 |
| St Werburgh's | 4 |
| Our Lady and St Edwards | 7 |
| Other Wirral | 67 |

6% of signees were parents/carers of a child attending St Laurence's Catholic Primary School.

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APPENDIX 3 B

Summary of responses by school

People allied to Cathcart Street Primary School

Falling rolls

- Birkenhead Docklands development will provide homes for 20,000 people
- The Priory CE has taken more children than it should
- Numbers aren't falling anymore, they've fallen

Staff and Standards

- Provides good before and after school club
- Ofsted said was a good school
- Wraparound care for F1 children
- Courses for parents
- Good teachers and teaching assistants
- School trips
- A meeting place for parents
- Teaching and ethos is outstanding
- Bent over backwards to meet the needs of my physically disabled child
- Inclusive school
- Hardworking, dedicated staff
- Has an Ofsted registered childminding club in the school holidays
- Parents rely on CATS club so they can keep their jobs
- Specialises in special needs
- High staff:pupil ratio
- Staff can deal with mixed age teaching
- Children make good progress
- One to one teaching
- Children are assessed properly
- Out of school clubs – sports, cookery, languages etc

Pupils

- Would take children elsewhere if school was in Birkenhead Park
- My child loves coming to school here
- My child is happy and settled here
- Concerns about disruption to education

- Children go on to do really well in secondary school
- Other schools wouldn't give my child her medication
- Children would miss their friends
- Can't force children to like each other
- Concerns about class sizes
- I would not want my child mixing with Cole Street children

Building and site

- DDA compliant
- Shower and disabled toilet
- Relatively modern building
- School could be updated.
- Open land on the site for extension and enhanced outdoor space.
- Good landscaping, hedging and many types of trees, a green oasis
- Access is via a quiet cul de sac
- Close to pedestrian and cycle-way routes
- Citylands Regeneration area
- Residential properties on three sides
- Close to Birkenhead Docklands
- Large playground
- Separate Foundation playground
- Centre courtyard garden
- Can accommodate children from both schools
- CATS childcare facility on site
- Scope for more extended services e.g. clinic, children's centre, library
- Cheaper to build here
- New parents room
- ICT suites
- White boards in every classroom
- Walking distance to Europa Pools
- Memorial bench in the courtyard garden
- Inter school sporting events are held here
- Only school in the area with a grassed playing field

New School in the Park

- We already use the Park as much as possible

- New build in the Park would be potential safety risk to children
- New build in the Park would be open to more vandalism, drink and drug abuse
- Older children would go to the Park instead of straight home
- There is broken glass and drug paraphernalia in the Park
- Council would have to make sure Park was cleaned daily
- Dark and rocky areas in the Park

The Options

- A brand new school would give focus to the area
- Will the finance be available for a new school given the “credit crunch”?
- Would have to be a suitable and better site than at present.
- Question is which is best of current sites.
- If St Laurence’s closes, more children would come here
- Cathcart Street is a newer building
- How will you fit both sets of children onto one site?
- Concerns about new uniforms
- If St Laurence’s closes, could move the Children’s Centre satellite here
- Potential for development of more services here
- Concern about future of CATS club if school closes
- Don’t necessarily need a new school, but a renewed school
- Close to Wirral Waters development

The Process

- What are the main criteria for making a decision?
- Are out of catchment pupils taken into account?
- Staff should have had letters at the same time as parents

Traffic and transport

- Too far to travel to Bidston and St James Children’s Centre, would be better located at Cathcart Street
- Easy for grandparents to pick my child up if necessary
- School is on footpath and cycle way through City Lands

Financial

- How will you fund a new school?

Other Comments

- Heart of the community

People allied to Cole Street Primary School

Falling rolls

- Nearby houses are being improved
- Cole Street has more pupils than the other schools
- Cole Street has less surplus places than Cathcart Street
- Parents who would come here are put off by the closure consultation
- Many parents are expecting new babies
- F1 is full
- Parents don't come here because of the POTENS home
- People don't stop having children
- Cole Street is not a set of facts and figures

Staff and Standards

- Friendly
- Good standards
- CVA is good
- Links with two secondary schools
- Inclusive school
- School works closely with parents and children
- Family learning courses
- Nurture class was closed by Council
- Staff help parents find out about other services
- Activity week in the school holidays
- Provides extended services
- Supportive, patient, dedicated, caring and understanding staff
- One to one teaching
- Good relationships with midday staff
- Nurturing approach
- Family school
- Good communication
- Staff are devoted to dealing with each child's individual needs – personalised learning
- Good reputation
- I sent my children here despite Cole Street's poor reputation and have not been disappointed

- Outstanding care and education
- Raises aspirations through links with St Anselms
- Trust between staff and the community
- Always taking on new initiatives
- Concerns about future of staff

Building and site

- Centrally located
- Playground on the roof – one of five in Britain
- Children are safe in the rooftop playground
- Easy access to the park and library
- Park is used for events and lessons
- Solid building in good repair
- Are other schools the same age being pulled down?
- Should be improved not pulled down
- Good security
- Kitchen is a good size
- Very little vandalism
- Solid, substantial building
- Has had new toilets, replacement windows and the staffroom has been improved
- Large almost soundproof classrooms
- Two halls
- Existing car park could be used for play space if replacement car parking provided in or near the Park
- Small grassed area could be brought within the school
- Buildings to the rear could be bought to expand the site
- Warm in winter, cool in summer
- Could build a conservatory on the flat roof to house technology unit
- Could upgrade the computers
- Historical landmark, reeks of heritage
- Schools with playing fields often don't use them due to bad weather
- Disabled access would be improved by a lift
- Schools with playing fields don't use them because they're wet and expensive to maintain

Pupils

- Children love coming to school
- Children learn really well and get on with the other children
- Children gain confidence here
- Children would not cope with more children in a class
- Provides stability for children
- Moving school would be an upheaval for children
- Options will compromise children's education and affect their progress
- Children would miss their friends
- I moved here so my children could attend Cole Street
- My child is happy and settled here
- Pleased with my child's progress here
- There would be more lateness if children had to travel further to school

New School in the Park

- New school in the park could be safety risk to children
- Staff would have to check all the time that strangers were not talking to children through the railings
- New build may have superb technology, but could be installed in Cole Street
- New build seems attractive but loss outweighs advantages
- Unlikely to get planning permission for school in the park due to heritage issues
- Would not want children to walk near the Park after dark, I would not do so as an adult
- A teenage girl was sexually assaulted in the Park in the last year
- Teachers would not be safe working late at night
- We are already so near to the Park, how close do we need to be
- School used to have a canteen in the park
- Sea Cadet building could be used for new school as it may help with planning permission

The Options

- Why destroy a rich learning environment just to build a new one
- Change does not have to mean destruction
- All Cathcart Street children would be welcome and can be accommodated here

- Closing Cole Street would leave a big gap in primary school provision – the other two are only 5 minutes away from each other
- Should spend money on an existing school to make it accessible and suitable for the 21st century
- Recycle not rebuild, use what we already have
- Could a bridge be built from Cole Street to the Park?
- Cathcart Street is in an industrial area
- Could house the Children’s Centre satellite if the derelict building at the back was bought
- Close the school with the least pupils
- Existing schools are looking a bit old and tatty
- A new school with all “modcons” like a gym and a swimming pool would not take long to settle into
- Why not amalgamate Cathcart Street and The Priory CE?

Traffic and transport

- Easy to get to
- Concerns about distance to alternative schools
- Need better traffic control between Cole Street and the Park
- Children would have to cross either Charing Cross or Conway Street to get to another school

Financial

- Expenditure per pupil is lower than the other two schools

The Process

- The local authority must do everything it can to stop pupils drifting away before a decision is made

Other comments

- Used as a polling station
- Centre of its community
- Used as an evacuation refuge for POTENS residential home
- Generations have gone to this school
- As a childminder, I would find it difficult to pick children up from further away
- Open for 80 years
- Friends of Cole Street are active in the school – Summer Fairs etc
- If not used as a school, would Sea Cadets be interested in Cole Street as a building?
- Our school has the best dinners

- Birkenhead has had it's heart systematically ripped out by successive Councils, you should leave us alone

People allied to St Laurence's Catholic Primary School

Falling rolls

- Numbers would improve if school was publicised more
- Less children are being born
- Lots of demolition in the area
- Numbers are low
- If parents had known this was coming, maybe they would have sent their children here
- Government says "have a career" so of course people have less children
- Why didn't extra children (above capacity) at Our Lady and St Edwards come here rather than building extra classrooms there?

Staff and Standards

- Provides good education
- Small school means more one to one time for children
- Teachers are great, go above and beyond the call of duty
- Fun approach to learning
- Smaller classes means greater learning
- Lots of sports, trips and activities
- School works well with children with special needs
- Is in an area of high deprivation
- Some children do not have English as their first language
- Small schools are just as capable of providing an effective education
- Small schools can deliver the National Curriculum
- Small schools have a good ethos
- Inclusive school regardless of faith
- A small school works because the staff make it work
- Class sizes would be bigger in other schools
- School represents Wirral in football and cricket
- CVA is high, good standards
- Nurturing school
- Would quality of education be as good in other schools?

- One to one teaching

Building and site

- Children's Centre satellite to St Werburghs
- Could get another two small schools on this site with a good architect
- Questions about land ownership

Pupils

- Children would miss their friends
- Hard to make new friends in new school
- Children would be upset if school closed
- Pupils go on to do well in secondary school
- My child is happy and settled here
- Concerns about additional disruption for children with special needs
- Would children get places in Catholic secondary schools if they went to non-Catholic primary schools?
- Children get the nurturing here they don't always get at home
- Children always come back to see us when they've left for secondary school

The Options

- If closed, the Diocese and Local Authority would work together to ensure places at St Werburgh's and Our Lady and St Edward's for every child whose parents want them to go there
- Best date for closure would be August 2010
- Couldn't you scale the school down by finding other uses for the rest of the building rather than close the school?
- Why isn't there an amalgamation option?
- We were supposed to amalgamate with St Werburgh's about 20 years ago and it never happened
- Would be cheaper to keep St Laurence's open rather than build places. Traffic and transport
- Our Lady and St Edward's is already full
- Is the building work at Our Lady and St Edwards to take more children from St Laurences?

Traffic and Transport

- Concern about distance to alternative schools
- Expect us to walk two miles in the rain
- People won't cross roads to get to school

Financial

- It costs a lot to educate the children, but don't they deserve it?
- This is all about money
- Council wants the land to build houses on
- Can't the Catholic Church provide funding to keep the school open?
- Will the Diocese sell the land to the Council?

The Process

- This should be about children, not about statistics
- Staff would like help from HR earlier in the process
- Decision in January 2010 doesn't give much time for staff to find alternative employment
- You've already made a decision
- Michael Clarke should be at the meeting

Other comments

- Generations have gone to this school
- Parish church already closed – where did the funding go, was it to the school or the church
- Centre of its community
- Sports days and fairs get lots of visitors

DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY EDUCATION SERVICE

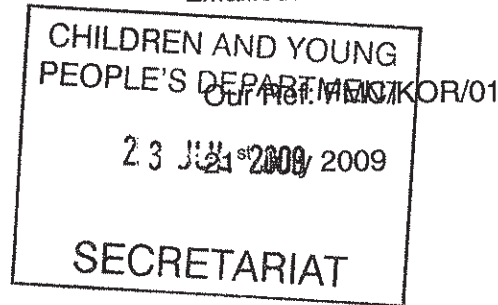
- committed to encouraging 'fullness of life'

MP/DA/SG/ML



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Mr H Cooper
Director of Children's Services
Hamilton Building
Conway Street
Birkenhead
CH41 1FD



Dear Mr Cooper

PRIMARY PLACES REVIEW : PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ST LAURENCES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Further to the above the Diocese has considered the options put forward by the Authority for provision of primary school places in North Birkenhead including that for the closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School and, in relation to the latter, those issues raised by parents and other stakeholders during the public consultation meeting on Thursday July 2nd 2009.

Arising from the above the Diocese would wish to draw the following matters to the attention of the Cabinet via the Primary Places Review process. Your good offices in progressing this will be much appreciated.

- 1) St Laurence's is currently achieving good standards of education and has made a valuable contribution to meeting the educational and spiritual needs of children under its care for many years.
- 2) It has achieved such in an area of high socio-economic deprivation. Within the current school 77.3% of children are entitled to Free School Meals, 33.3% have Special Needs, 6.7% are in care and 5.3% do not have English as a first language. To deliver what is recognised as high quality education provision against this background is a credit to all concerned with the school and is a strong argument for its continued existence.
- 3) Whilst one cannot disguise that St Laurence's is a small school evidence from OFSTED and others show that small schools in both urban and rural settings can be highly effective. It is notable that OFSTED's survey of 1,780 small schools reported that:
 - Compared with larger schools small schools are equally capable of providing an effective education and many are amongst the most effective in the country.
 - It is well within the capacity of small schools to teach the full range of the National Curriculum.
 - The good ethos of the great majority of small schools is one of their strengths and inspectors invariably described very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils ESPECIALLY in Church schools.
 - Inspectors noted that costs can be higher but they concluded that a good case emerged for the place of small schools in the education system as a whole when the quality of their educational performance is added to the broader contribution they make to their communities, particularly in areas of urban socio economic deprivation.

Cont/

- 4) St Laurence's serves not only Catholic parents but also those from other or no faiths who want a Catholic education for their children. It thus makes an invaluable contribution to community cohesion and by doing so provides a stable and well used focal point for that community. Also on the school site, and with the agreement of the Trustees, is an Annex occupied by the Local Authority's Adult Learning Team and a unit to the main Children's Centre at St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School. Both also contribute to community cohesion.

The Diocese appreciates the pressures on the Authority to reduce surplus places and provide education in a cost effective manner. We recognise too, though with no reflection on the school, that numbers are low. However the Diocese requests that the positive messages set out herein are balanced against those pressures.

Should Cabinet still come to a decision not to maintain St Laurence's Catholic Primary School the Diocese would very much hope for confirmation that the Authority will work with it and the Governing Bodies at St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School and Our Lady & St Edward's Catholic Primary School to ensure that sufficient places are available at those two schools for children from St Laurence's whose parents wish them to go there, including additional accommodation if so required. If closure is upheld then the Diocese believes this is best planned for August 2010.

Please do not hesitate to contact me where any further information might prove useful to the purposes of the Cabinet.

Yours sincerely

F. M. Clarke

F M Clarke
Director of Schools

- cc. Sister Frances Guiney, Acting Chair of Governors, St Laurence's Catholic Primary School
Mr John Walsh, Acting Headteacher, St Laurence's Catholic Primary School
Sister Patricia Goodstadt, Assistant Director of Schools

APPENDIX 5

Key points from DCSF guidance on School Re-organisation

5a – Closure of maintained schools

This would apply to the following options:

Closure of Cathcart Street Primary

Closure of Cole Street Primary

Closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary

Who can propose the closure of a school?

The LA can propose the closure of any school.

Linked proposals

If proposals are related to others they would be published together, for example, the proposed closure of Cathcart Street and Cole Street in order to amalgamate the two schools would be published with the proposal to establish a new primary school.

Representations

A six week representation period follows publication of notices. Representations are to be sent to the LA.

Decision Makers

This is either the LA, or the Schools Adjudicator. The Adjudicator's decision is final but there are limited rights of appeal following LA decisions.

The LA decision maker in Wirral is Council's Cabinet.

What if there are no objections?

As long as the closure proposal was made by the LA, and there are no linked proposals which receive objections, the proposal can be determined by the LA Decision Maker within 2 months. Conditional approval cannot be given.

There is no right of appeal to the decision.

And if there are objections?

If there are objections, or a proposal is linked to another which receives objections, proposals must be passed to the LA Decision Maker, who must make a decision within 2 months of the end of the representation period.

In relation to primary school closures, conditional approval can be given in relation to:

- Changes to admission arrangements at another school
- The occurrence of any other condition with a specified date for any other school or proposed school

The date for conditional approval is set by the Decision Maker, but can be extended before the expiry date if the proposer, i.e. LA, requests this modification. If the condition is not met by the specified date, the proposal must be considered afresh by the Decision Maker.

If the proposals are not decided within 2 months, the proposal must be passed to the Schools Adjudicator with one week of the end of the 2 month period.

Who can appeal against an LA decision?

Where objections have been received, the following bodies may appeal against the LA Decision Maker's decision in relation to primary schools:

- The Anglican Diocese of Chester
- The Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury
- The governing body/trustees of a Foundation or Voluntary school that is proposed for closure.

What happens if an appeal is made?

Appeals must be submitted to the LA within 4 weeks of the notification of the LA's decision. The LA then sends the proposal to the Schools Adjudicator within 1 week of receipt of the appeal. This includes any related proposals.

What factors are taken into account by Decision Makers?

These are the factors that must be examined:

- Will the proposal raise local standards of provision, and lead to improved attainment for children and young people? Are attainment gaps likely to be narrowed?
- Will SEN provision be improved, including wider school activities? Transport, funding, staffing and placement arrangements must be clearly stated.
- For schools causing concern, a proposal to close the school in order to amalgamate it with a more successful and/or popular school, should normally be approved if there is evidence that this will have a positive impact on standards.
- Proposals to close schools causing concern should be approved, subject only to checking that there will be sufficient accessible places of an acceptable standard available in the area to meet foreseeable demand and to accommodate the displaced pupils.
- Local diversity, the range of schools in the area, the impact on the aspirations of parents and whether the proposal will help raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.
- Closure of schools with a religious character should not normally be approved where the proposal would result in a reduction in the proportion of denominational places in the area, unless the school concerned is severely under-subscribed, standards have been consistently low or where an infant and junior school (at least one of which has a religious character) are to be replaced by a new all-through primary school with the same religious character on the site of one on the predecessor schools.
- Will the proposal help children achieve the Every Child Matters principles? This includes extended services, personal development, and support for children and young people with particular needs.
- Is there sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils taking into account likely future demand? The quality and popularity of schools with surplus places should be considered.

- Proposals to close schools with 25% or more unfilled places, and at least 30 surplus places, where standards are low for the Authority, should normally be approved. For all other proposals, standards, geographical, social and community use should be considered.
- Alternative sources of extended services
- The effects of any other changes to school provision in the area
- Accessibility planning, particularly for disadvantaged groups
- Proposals should not unreasonably extend journey times or increase transport costs, or result in too many children being unable to walk or cycle to school.
- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues
- If the school currently includes early years provision, whether alternative provision will integrate pre-school education with childcare and other services for young children and their families, and whether educational standards and access for parents will be maintained or enhanced at alternative provision, which could be private, voluntary or independent.
- The Decision Maker should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view when considering representations made on proposals. Instead the greatest weight should be given to representations from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by the proposals.

What decisions can be made?

The Decision Maker can decide to reject, approve, approve with a modification (such as the closure date) or conditionally approve (see above). A reason for the decision must be given.

What if the proposal needs to be withdrawn?

As long as the decision has not been made, the proposal can be withdrawn in writing by the proposer.

What if the proposal needs to be modified after the decision has been made?

The proposer must apply to the Decision Maker for a simple modification, such as a change to the date of implementation.

More complicated changes which substantially change the nature of the proposal would require a revocation notice, followed by fresh proposals which then follow the statutory process.

Approval of a revocation notice would only be given by the Decision Maker if circumstances have changed so substantially that implementation would be inappropriate, or if implementation of the original proposal would be unreasonably difficult.

5B– Establishment of a new maintained school

This would apply to the following option:

A3 Amalgamation of Cathcart Street Primary and Cole Street Primary to form a new school on an existing or a new site.

Establishing a new school

Most new schools are now expected to be established by a “competition” where the LA invites proposals to establish the new school.

Alternatively, the LA must apply for consent from the Secretary of State to publish proposals for a new school without running a competition. This does not mean permission to establish a new school has been granted, and the proposal would be subject to the usual statutory process.

Other proposers can also apply for the Secretary of State’s consent to publish proposals for a new school without a competition.

Competition

A competition is now required when the LA wishes to establish a new school.

- The LA must invite proposals from potential providers
- The LA can publish their own proposal as part of the competition

Are there exemptions to a competition?

The following do not require a competition:

- A new Academy
- New 16 to 19 provision, mainstream or special
- A new Nursery School
- Transferring an existing school to a new site
- Rebuilding an existing school on its current site

Who makes the decision?

If the LA:

- Has entered its own proposal
- Is a member or has appointed a member of a proposed “Trust School”
- Appoints a charity trustee of the foundation of a proposed “Trust School”
- Exercises any voting rights or appoints a person with voting rights in the foundation of a proposed Trust school

Then the decision maker is the Schools Adjudicator, which would be likely to be the case if the amalgamation option went ahead in Woodchurch.

Who can appeal the decision?

If the LA is the Decision Maker, there is no provision to appeal the decision.

If the decision is not made within 2 months of the end of the representation period, the proposals must be referred to the Adjudicator.

The Adjudicator's decision is final.

The specification

The LA decides the outline specification for the new school, including

- Number of places
- Age range including any early years provision
- Mixed or single sex
- Admission number
- Location, playing field provision and transport links
- Opening date
- Estimated capital costs and funding sources
- Provision for pupils with SEN
- The area and community to be served
- Extended services or other community use
- Preferred specialism (secondary)
- Arrangements for transport and sustainable transport alternatives.

Capital funding

Regardless of the proposer who wins the competition, the LA must provide the total capital funding to invest in the new school, unless the proposer offers funding towards the project.

The Primary Capital Strategy for Wirral has been approved by Cabinet and by the DCSF. The first two years funding have been allocated mainly to projects arising from Phase 3 of the Primary Places Review - replacing the building of Park Primary School, and building a new primary school in Pensby. This sets a precedent, and a new primary school building in North Birkenhead could be considered as a priority for a future year of the 14 year programme.

If a new Voluntary Aided school wins the competition, the governing body are responsible for funding 10% of capital costs.

Sites

The LA must identify the proposed site, although proposers may put forward proposals to establish the school on a different site.

If the approved proposal is for a new Foundation, Trust, or Voluntary Controlled school, the LA must provide the school site and convey their interest to the governing body or Trustees. For Aided schools, the LA must provide playing fields, and may choose to assist the proposer with the site, although the onus is on the provider.

The use of existing buildings should be considered on value for money considerations.

New housing

A Section 106 agreement can sometimes be negotiated where the developer bears all or part of the costs of a new school. A competition must still be run, and the winner has input into the design and specification of the school.

What are the stages of competition?

- 1 Consultation, including on any linked closures – recommended minimum of 6 weeks, no upper limit, including at least one public meeting. Followed by: Invitation to bid (notice published)
- 2 Proposer engagement and submission of proposals – minimum of four months from invitation to bid
- 3 Publication of proposals (notice published) and promotion of public awareness – within 3 weeks of the expiry date for submitting proposals. Any linked closure proposals would be published at the same time.
- 4 Representations – 6 weeks, with a public meeting within the first 2 weeks
- 5 Decision – within 2 months of end of representation period (LA) or whenever (Adjudicator)
- 6 Implementation – as specified in the proposal notice

Does this mean we would need to consult again?

Probably. The statutory consultation needs to cover the **specific location** and specification of the new school, which has not been the case in the recent consultation. Preliminary consultation to consider a range of options, and/or principles, for a possible reorganisation, is not regarded as the statutory period of consultation.

Advertising for proposers

The DCSF appoints mandatory consultants to market the competition, place adverts and act as a first point of contact. When potential proposers have been identified, the consultants will hold a seminar to provide advice to proposers.

The LA has the opportunity to attend the seminar and to take part in the question and answer sessions.

How does the LA submit a proposal for a community school?

Wirral has an APA rating of 3. Consequently, after the invitation to bid, the LA must apply to the Secretary of State for permission to submit a proposal for a community school within the competition.

Would consent be given?

Each application would be considered on its merits. Guidance indicates that consent may be given in the following circumstances:

- There is a higher than average number of Academies, voluntary or foundation schools and there are few or no schools in special measures within the authority;
- There is a clear case that a community school would build on existing diversity in the area. Diversity includes specialisms as well as ethos.

The following factors will be considered by the Secretary of State in considering applications for consent:

- The diversity (including distinct character and ethos) of provision within the area
- The views of interested parties e.g. parents and the local community;
- Whether the proposals will contribute to raising standards: taking into consideration performance across the LA and local schools;
- The range of curricular specialisms to be offered by the proposed community school and within the authority.
- Whether the core offer of extended services will be provided and if there will be a varied menu of interesting activities.

In what circumstances can a school be established without a competition?

The amalgamation option in North Birkenhead does not fall into any of the exempt categories.

Consequently, permission not to hold a competition must be sought from the Secretary of State.

When will the Secretary of State give consent to not hold a competition?

Guidance indicates that consent might be given in the following circumstances:

- Straightforward amalgamations of infant and junior schools where a replacement primary school is proposed.
- Where there is to be a reorganisation of religious schools in the area, and schools with a particular religious character are to be replaced by schools with the same religious character
- Where an independent proposer proposes a new school to increase diversity in the area, rather than in response to an LA's need to reorganise.

The following factors will be considered by the Secretary of State in considering applications for consent in the case of new primary schools:

- The contribution the school would make to levels of local diversity i.e. including the range of categories, specialisms, size etc;
- The prospect of other proposer interest if a competition were run (this factor will apply in the case of applications from the LA only);
- Local standards i.e. the standards achieved by existing schools and the performance of the LA in delivering children's services (this factor will apply in the case of applications from the LA only);
- Urgency for the new school to be in place and the impact of the competition process; and
- Any views expressed by interested parties e.g. parents and the local community.

Who would be the Decision Maker if there is no competition?

The decision would be made by the Adjudicator, since the new school proposal would include a bid from the LA to open either a community or a Foundation school.

5C- Commentary on the recommended options

Closure proposals

Options A1, A2 and B would be ultimately decided by the LA Decision Maker. If necessary, conditional approval can be given in relation to events at other schools, such as gaining planning permission approval.

Referral to the Adjudicator on a closure decision on options A1 and A2 can only be made on appeal by the two Diocesan Authorities, should they choose to do so. For Option B, the two Diocesan Authorities or governing body of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School can refer the decision to the Adjudicator, if they choose to do so.

New school proposals

In this case, the LA would apply to the Secretary of State for consent to publish proposals without a competition. The linked proposals to close existing schools and open a new school would then follow the usual processes and all three would ultimately be decided by the Schools Adjudicator.

If consent to establish without a competition is denied and a competition must be held, the LA would need to consult once again on the amalgamation option.

The LA could then apply for consent from the Secretary of State to enter a proposal for a community school into the competition. If this consent is not received, the LA can still enter a proposal to establish a new Foundation school into the competition.

In either situation, the decision maker would be the Adjudicator. If the new school is a Foundation school, the site and buildings would be conveyed to the Foundation governors or Trustees, while any capital costs would still be met by the LA.

APPENDIX 6

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2

DATA

This report contains information about 2008 Key Stage 2 results.

Actual Results

The % attainment of the cohort at Levels 4+ and 5+ for English, mathematics and science.

For benchmarking purposes, a table showing Wirral and England Average Results are shown.

Fischer Family Trust Estimates

Fischer Family Trust (FFT) is an independent organization which produces National data used by schools and LAs to support education. Estimates of potential attainment are provided based on pupils' own **prior attainment** (Estimate A), and pupils' **prior attainment plus social context factors** such as school's Free School Meal data (Estimate B, 'similar' schools). Use of the two estimates allows the impact of school context to be included in any discussion. The figures show the estimated result that a school should attain at the end of Key Stage 2 based on the results of that cohort's Key Stage 1 results. The source of the FFT estimates used in this document is June 2008 FFT DB v12.08.

Actual Results Minus Fischer Family Trust Estimates

Subtracting the FFT estimate from the actual result gives an indication of how well a school has performed based on:

- all schools nationally the Actual minus FFT A
- all 'similar' schools nationally the Actual minus FFT B

This is a value-added measure as it can be used to determine how well a school has performed related to national prior attainment figures.

DCSF Performance Table Figures

The DCSF publish annual tables which show data for Wirral Schools. The data includes Contextual Value Added and coverage indicators.

What is meant by value added?

Raw test results tell us whether pupils have scored above or below expected national levels. They do not tell us whether a pupil has made more progress than expected from one Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

The progress schools help individuals to make relative to their different starting points is usually referred to as **value added (VA)**. Value added measures are intended to allow more relevant comparisons between schools with different pupil intakes.

For example, pupils attending school 'A' may achieve results in Key Stage 2 tests above the expected national level while pupils at school 'B' achieve below. However, in value added terms, the pupils at school 'B' may have made more progress than other pupils relative to their Key Stage 1 starting point and, therefore, have a higher **value added**.

If the value added score is between 99 and 101 then pupils in the school are making progress in line with national expectations.

Other factors will have an impact on a school's VA score. The performance tables use the measures of coverage and mobility to indicate where a VA score may be unrepresentative.

Contextual Value Added (CVA) is not very different from VA. The basic principle of measuring progress from the KS1 to KS2 remains the same. However, a number of other factors which are outside a school's control, such as gender, special educational needs, movement between schools, and family circumstances, are also known to affect pupils' performance.

CVA therefore goes a step further than VA by taking these factors into account and thus gives a much fairer measure of the effectiveness of a school.

Key Stage 2 2008 results by school

| ENGLISH | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| | | Level 4+ | | | Level 5+ | | |
| DCSF | School | Actual | FFT A | FFT B | Actual | FFT A | FFT B |
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 83 | 85 | 83 | 28 | 31 | 27 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 100 | 87 | 83 | 29 | 31 | 25 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 69 | 58 | 54 | 15 | 14 | 11 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 70 | 79 | 74 | 10 | 23 | 18 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic | 76 | 75 | 71 | 17 | 21 | 17 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 64 | 66 | 63 | 23 | 21 | 16 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 79 | 64 | 60 | 21 | 20 | 17 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 85 | 83 | 80 | 23 | 29 | 23 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 89 | 80 | 77 | 22 | 29 | 20 |

| MATHS | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| | | Level 4+ | | | Level 5+ | | |
| DCSF | School | Actual | FFT A | FFT B | Actual | FFT A | FFT B |
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 68 | 79 | 77 | 22 | 29 | 27 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 76 | 79 | 75 | 18 | 29 | 26 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 38 | 49 | 46 | 8 | 10 | 9 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 60 | 74 | 71 | 13 | 27 | 23 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic | 79 | 73 | 70 | 17 | 23 | 19 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 68 | 62 | 59 | 32 | 21 | 18 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 86 | 69 | 66 | 43 | 22 | 19 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 81 | 79 | 76 | 35 | 28 | 24 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 89 | 79 | 65 | 22 | 28 | 19 |

| SCIENCE | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| | | Level 4+ | | | Level 5+ | | |
| DCSF | School | Actual | FFT A | FFT B | Actual | FFT A | FFT B |
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 88 | 92 | 90 | 47 | 46 | 42 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 94 | 92 | 90 | 27 | 45 | 38 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 77 | 73 | 69 | 15 | 21 | 17 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 77 | 88 | 85 | 33 | 40 | 33 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic | 90 | 85 | 82 | 38 | 37 | 30 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 91 | 79 | 76 | 41 | 33 | 27 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 93 | 81 | 78 | 43 | 32 | 27 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 88 | 90 | 88 | 46 | 44 | 37 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 89 | 90 | 83 | 33 | 44 | 32 |

Key Stage 2 2008 Actuals and FFT Value Added Scores

| ENGLISH | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| DCSF | School | Level 4+ | | | Level 5+ | | |
| | | Actual | - FFT A | - FFT B | Actual | - FFT A | - FFT B |
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 83 | -2 | 0 | 28 | -3 | 1 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 100 | 13 | 17 | 29 | -2 | 4 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 69 | 11 | 15 | 15 | 1 | 4 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 70 | -9 | -4 | 10 | -13 | -8 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic | 76 | 1 | 5 | 17 | -4 | 0 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 64 | -2 | 1 | 23 | 2 | 7 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 79 | 15 | 19 | 21 | 1 | 4 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 85 | 2 | 5 | 23 | -6 | 0 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 89 | 9 | 12 | 22 | -7 | 2 |

| MATHS | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| DCSF | School | Level 4+ | | | Level 5+ | | |
| | | Actual | - FFT A | - FFT B | Actual | - FFT A | - FFT B |
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 68 | -11 | -9 | 22 | -7 | -5 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 76 | -3 | 1 | 18 | -11 | -8 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 38 | -11 | -8 | 8 | -2 | -1 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 60 | -14 | -11 | 13 | -14 | -10 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic | 79 | 6 | 9 | 17 | -6 | -2 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 68 | 6 | 9 | 32 | 11 | 14 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 86 | 17 | 20 | 43 | 21 | 24 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 81 | 2 | 5 | 35 | 7 | 11 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 89 | 10 | 24 | 22 | -6 | 3 |

| SCIENCE | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| DCSF | School | Level 4+ | | | Level 5+ | | |
| | | Actual | - FFT A | - FFT B | Actual | - FFT A | - FFT B |
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 88 | -4 | -2 | 47 | 1 | 5 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 94 | 2 | 4 | 27 | -18 | -11 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 77 | 4 | 8 | 15 | -6 | -2 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 77 | -11 | -8 | 33 | -7 | 0 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic | 90 | 5 | 8 | 38 | 1 | 8 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 91 | 12 | 15 | 41 | 8 | 14 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 93 | 12 | 15 | 43 | 11 | 16 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 88 | -2 | 0 | 46 | 2 | 9 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 89 | -1 | 6 | 33 | -11 | 1 |

Wirral and National Figures

| | English | | Maths | | Science | |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | Level 4+ | Level 5+ | Level 4+ | Level 5+ | Level 4+ | Level 5+ |
| Wirral | 85 | 33 | 79 | 32 | 91 | 49 |
| England | 80 | 29 | 78 | 31 | 88 | 43 |

Performance Table Data 2008

| DCSF | School | CVA SCORE |
|------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2275 | Bidston Avenue Primary | 100.2 |
| 2261 | Cathcart Street Primary | 99.9 |
| 2262 | Cole Street Primary | 100.1 |
| 3368 | Holy Cross Catholic Primary | 99.4 |
| 3367 | Our Lady St Edward's Catholic Primary | 100.6 |
| 2249 | Portland Primary | 101.4 |
| 3370 | St Laurence's Catholic Primary | 101.4 |
| 3366 | The Priory CE Primary | 100.9 |
| 3372 | St Werburgh's Catholic Primary | 101.0 |

Blue shading indicates below the expected rate of progress, green indicates the expected rate of progress, and pink above the expected rate of progress.

SUMMARY

Cathcart Street Primary School

There were 17 pupils in the 2008 Year 6 cohort at Cathcart Street Primary, with each child being represented as 5.9%.

Results at Cathcart Street Primary in English L4+ and Science L4+ are above the Wirral and national averages. In English and Science L5 and in Maths at both levels, results are below both the Wirral and national averages.

Actual results for English L4+ and Science L4+ are above both FFT estimates A and B. In Maths L4+ actual results are below FFT A but above FFT B. At L5 actual results are below FFT A and FFT B for Maths and Science, while in English, they are below FFT A, but above FFT B.

The Performance Table overall value added score of 99.9 indicates that pupils at Cathcart Street Primary School are making the expected rate of progress.

Cole Street Primary School

There were 13 pupils in the 2008 Year 6 cohort at Cole Street Primary School, with each child being represented as 7.7%.

Results at Cole Street Primary in all core subjects at L4+ and L5 are below both

the Wirral and national averages.

Actual results in English L4+ and L5, and in Science L4+ were above FFT A and FFT B. In Maths L4+ and L5, and in Science L5 actual results were below both FFT A and FFT B.

The Performance Table overall value added score of 100.1 indicates that pupils at Cole Street Primary School are making the expected rate of progress.

St Laurence's Catholic Primary School

There were 14 pupils in the 2008 Year 6 cohort at St Laurence's Catholic Primary, with each child being represented as 7.1%.

Results at St Laurences in English L4+ and L5 are below both the Wirral and national averages. Results in Maths L4+ and L5 and in Science L4+ are above the Wirral and national averages, while Science L5 is equal to the national average but below the Wirral average.

In all three core subjects, results at L4+ and L5 were above both FFT A and FFT B.

The Performance Table overall value added score of 101.4 shows that pupils at St Laurences Catholic Primary School are making above the expected rate of progress.

APPENDIX 5B

OFSTED

The following are extracts from the most recent Ofsted report

Cathcart Street Primary School (2006)

Cathcart Street Primary is a good school. It enables its pupils to achieve well overall. Pupils are happy and behave well. They have positive attitudes to their work and know how to lead healthy lives. From very low standards on entry, pupils make good progress overall and leave Year 6 with broadly average standards. Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils with average ability in Years 1 to 6 make consistently good progress as a result of good teaching. The very good teaching and high quality support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enable them to make outstanding progress. In Years 3 to 6, more able pupils achieve as well as they should in English but not in mathematics and science: this is because the work set for them in mathematics and science is not challenging enough. Attendance is unsatisfactory and the achievement of the most frequent absentees is depressed as a result. The punctuality of a minority of pupils is unsatisfactory.

The well planned and enriching curriculum, together with the consistently good level of care and support provided, make significant contributions to pupils' enjoyment of learning, their good personal development and their good achievement. The quality of teaching is good. As a result, pupils find their work fun and interesting. They know what to do to improve because the school has successful strategies for assessing their learning and sharing this information with them. A good range of out of class activities, such as music and sports clubs, is supported strongly by pupils and contributes well to their good personal, social and cultural development.

Leadership and management are good. The school's view of itself is accurate. Last year, managers reacted quickly and effectively to a drop in standards and morale caused by a series of unavoidable disruptions to the smooth running of the school. There has been a marked improvement this year in standards, achievement and morale because of the measures taken. The school's capacity to improve is good because of the strides it has made since the last inspection, the effective action it has taken to address weaknesses and the good quality of its plans for the future. It provides good value for money.

Cole Street Primary School (2009)

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their overall personal development are satisfactory. Pupils are well mannered and friendly and their behaviour is generally good. They are attentive in lessons and keen to learn, especially when there are practical activities. Attendance is broadly average.

Pupils have a good understanding of what it takes to maintain a healthy lifestyle and are proud of their Activemark and Health Promoting School awards. The school council ensures that everyone has a voice in school affairs and

successfully negotiates improvements such as better playground facilities. Pupils feel safe in school and know that adult help is there, when needed.

They are keen to take on responsibilities and contribute well to the community through fundraising for local and international charities and, for example, entertaining local groups at Christmas. Projects such as helping to organise stalls at the school fair and raising funds towards the cost of their school trips help pupils to prepare satisfactorily for their future economic well-being.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. On entering the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills are very low in relation to expectations for their age. They make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Currently, standards at Key Stage 1 are well below average. This shows some improvement over the exceptionally low standards indicated by the national assessments in 2008. Teaching in Key Stage 1 has been strengthened and is bringing about better progress. Standards in Year 6 currently are broadly average overall but this has not been consistent over time. School assessment data for 2008 show improvements in English and science but there was a dip in mathematics. The school recognises that mathematics standards throughout the school are too low.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers are responding well to recent professional development but overall, the quality of teaching and consequently, pupils' progress are inconsistent. Lesson planning is satisfactory and learning objectives build well on what pupils already know. Teachers are beginning to use assessments more effectively to speed up progress. The curriculum enables pupils to achieve adequately in most subjects. They achieve well in sports and physical education. The increased emphasis on writing is showing positive results and mathematics is now well targeted throughout the school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has risen to the demands brought about by local changes and needs to ensure every child receives the pastoral care and support they require. There is a renewed vision and strong commitment to improving achievement and standards. The headteacher, supported by senior leaders, has steered the school through a period of instability in staffing. She has gained the confidence of all staff in enlisting the support of the local authority. Albeit recent, this is already showing signs of success in more effective teaching and better pupils' progress. Targets have been raised to reflect higher expectations. Systems for checking pupils' academic progress have been intensified to give clearer guidance for target-setting. This is a very inclusive school which amply demonstrates its commitment to equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination. The school promotes community cohesion well. Governors know the school well. They provide challenge and support in equal measure. Finances are managed efficiently to provide satisfactory value for money. Currently, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

St Laurence's Catholic Primary School (2008)

This is a good school in which pupils achieve well both academically and in their personal development. The staff know each pupil very well and relate well to them. As a result pupils feel safe, secure and happy in school. Teachers and

other adults provide extensive support to individuals or small groups of pupils, which is very effective in enabling them to catch up or extend their learning.

From starting points which are generally well below those expected for their age children make good progress in the EYFS. Nonetheless, by the time they start Year 1 pupils' skills and knowledge remain below national expectations. The school recognises this and provides useful extra opportunities for some pupils in Year 1 to join the Reception children in the afternoon to reinforce basic skills. The good start pupils make in the EYFS is built on satisfactorily in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 standards remain below average, with some weaknesses evident in the standard of pupils' writing skills. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2, especially in Year 5 and Year 6, in response to high quality teaching and the extra support they receive. These factors enable them to make especially good gains in their reading and mathematical skills. Older pupils demonstrate considerable keenness for mathematical reasoning, show perseverance in problem-solving and develop secure calculation skills. By the end of Year 6 pupils have done well to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science overall, but standards in writing remain a little below average. Pupils have few good opportunities in subjects other than English to enthuse them for writing and to reinforce this skill. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their class-mates.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school and relate well to each other. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and make good use of opportunities at play-times and in sporting activities both before and after school to take plenty of exercise. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and behave well in and around school. They have good opportunities to support each other and to contribute to the school and the wider community, for example, as school councillors and monitors. A key feature of this good sense of community is the innovative weekly pastoral care sessions which allow pupils of all ages to be taught a wide range of topics together in one class. Older pupils say they enjoy developing social and emotional skills this way through working with and helping out the younger ones. The school has many initiatives in place to promote attendance, which has been stubbornly low for several years. Despite a small improvement this term, this remains inadequate and shortfalls in attendance affect the progress of some pupils. The school's support programmes go some way to reducing the negative impact on pupils' learning. The good academic progress most pupils make in Key Stage 2 helps to raise their self-esteem and confidence, which sets them up well for later life.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. It promotes pupils' personal development well through the pastoral care sessions and a good range of visitors, such as the Kerbcraft team and the Life Education Bus, which provide useful advice on how pupils can stay safe. Pupils enjoy the good opportunities they have to extend their learning by visiting local museums and the Eureka science centre. The school has a satisfactory but interesting range of extra-curricular activities, including healthy cooking sessions. Extensive attention to the individual needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those at an early stage of learning to speak English, ensure these pupils make good progress.

The school has very effective liaison with outside agencies to remove or reduce barriers to learning for pupils with identified needs. Relevant required procedures are in place for child protection, safeguarding pupils and health and safety.

School leaders track pupils' progress closely, which enables them to identify individual needs at an early stage and take the appropriate actions. Targets for pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 are regularly reviewed and frequently adjusted upwards to reflect the good progress they make over the key stage and to raise their expectations.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers manage pupils well and relate well to them. In the best lessons, expectations of pupils' behaviour and progress are high and lessons are planned very effectively to meet the needs of all pupils in the mixed-age classes. Teachers challenge pupils well to develop their thinking skills and use a good range of assessment

techniques, including oral feedback and detailed marking, to help pupils keep up and improve their work. Writing frames and examples of model answers are used well to guide pupils on how to structure their work. In some lessons where these exemplary features are less evident the pace of learning drops.

The school benefits from good quality leadership and management. The acting headteacher and his senior leadership team are highly experienced practitioners. They possess the good range of complementary skills required to guide the school through the present uncertainties, due to pressures on the school budget caused by the falling roll. They are taking effective measures to integrate new teachers into the work of the school. Governance is satisfactory in ensuring statutory requirements are met, but governors have still to fully develop their role as critical friends to the school. The school has maintained the good quality of provision since its previous inspection.

APPENDIX 7

ISSUES CONCERNED WITH SIZE AND VIABILITY

7A In Pursuit of Excellence

Wirral Headteachers and Primary Team, School Effectiveness

September 2004

The following notes are an extract from the policy document 'In Pursuit of Excellence' which was developed with all Headteachers of Infant, Junior, Primary and Primary Special schools through consultations and consideration at the termly day conferences, over the academic year 2003-4. It was presented to Select Committee on 18 October 2004. Further work is planned to ensure that the five outcomes from The Children Bill, workforce reforms and the enriched primary curriculum are all firmly embedded.

The extract considers the issues relating to funding, staffing and resources in developing an effective and viable primary school.

Principles of effective and viable primary schools (page 7-8)

Schools have been given more autonomy over their budgets for some considerable time; the government now proposes to provide financial stability through agreeing three-year budgets. This will allow for more effective decisions to be made on a long-term basis around the school improvement agenda and the needs of the community, in relation to the unique context of each school.

It follows that there needs to be a range of staff employed e.g Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, teachers and support staff who may include: learning mentors, cover supervisors, Higher Teaching Level Assistants, other classroom assistants, bursars, clerical assistants, cleaners, caretakers, grounds/security staff, cooks, lunchtime supervisors, specialist coaches and instructors.

It then follows that funding should be differentially used on staffing and resources to meet the needs and aspirations of each school, thus allowing for flexibility and creativity in delivering an excellent primary curriculum.

There is broad agreement that the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 should stand-alone and that while cross-Key Stage grouping significant level of planning and intensive teaching input. There is also broad agreement that vertical grouping (mixed aged teaching) can be effectively deployed within Key Stages. The table below gives examples of how vertical grouping could be organised.

Examples of pupil groupings within a primary school

| | No mixed age teaching | Some mixed age teaching | | Maximum mixed age teaching |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| Foundation | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| 1 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| 2 | 30 | 30 | 30 | |
| 3 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| 4 | 30 | | | |
| 5 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| 6 | 30 | 30 | | |
| Total Size | 210 | 180 | 150 | 120 |

In order for a school to be viable and efficient, the number of pupils on roll will impact on the decisions made regarding staffing levels and organisation of the curriculum.

In principle, in order for a single form of entry school to be viable and efficient, the number of pupils on roll should be within the range of 180 and 210.

However, this range of numbers is only intended as a guide and should be considered alongside the other factors.

Other issues to be considered when establishing an effective and efficient primary school within a learning community include:

- the possibility of federation and amalgamation to ensure that community and faith needs are met;
- innovative use of staff across two sites;
- flexible delivery and use of curriculum time, with some part time staff to meet planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time;
- sufficient space within school buildings to allow for multi-agency working and for staff to undertake planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) activities;
- appropriate areas to be identified for teaching; meetings; quiet areas and deployment of space to help with behaviour strategies;
- that children should have access to a school that is no further than 2 miles from where they live;
- that schools are well placed within communities;

- that due consideration is given to parental choice.

7b) SMALL SCHOOLS : HOW WELL ARE THEY DOING?

A report by OFSTED based on the data from Inspections and national test results.

OFSTED March 2000

There follows a series of relevant quotations:

Following the completion of the four – year cycle of Ofsted inspections, and the National Curriculum test results in the core subjects at both key stages a comparison of achievements and the quality of education of small schools with larger schools has been completed.

We have defined a small school as one with fewer than 100 pupils on roll and have subdivided this group to create a “very small” category where the number on roll is fifty or less.

Small schools are able to cope with the demands of teaching the full National Curriculum. It is a tribute to the commitment of teachers in small schools that, by and large, they are able to teach the full range of knowledge, skills and understanding required by every subject in the National Curriculum.

Teachers in small schools work hard to make sure that their teaching is not impaired by a lack of subject knowledge; they are also extremely adept at harnessing the skills of other adults who can complement the expertise of the permanent staff.

The mixed-aged classes that larger schools prefer to avoid are, of course, unavoidable in small schools. The teaching in small schools can be just as effective as in larger schools, although it is a particular challenge to provide a high quality experience for the youngest pupils.

The teaching of under-fives is least effective where this age group is a small minority in a mixed age class of mostly older pupils. Teachers find it hard to provide work suitable for the youngest pupils, working towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes, while at the same time meeting the needs of other pupils who have progressed well into the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

Small schools usually have smaller classes, a factor which works in the teacher’s favour to offset some of the problems of teaching a wide age range, particularly at Key Stage 1. The teachers also know their pupils very well, often teaching them for more than one year, and by working with small groups there is plenty of scope to achieve a good balance of direct teaching and independent working.

Where teaching is weak, the planning often fails to take account of the wide range of age and attainment in the class and the work is not sufficiently challenging. The potential impact of a weak teacher on the progress of the pupils in a small school can be much greater than a large school; the problem is especially acute in a very small school where a teacher will stay with the same pupils for two or more years.

A significantly greater number than might have been expected on purely statistical grounds have been in the top 100 each year, and this does not include those successful very small schools with Y6 cohorts of less than 11 and whose results were not published.

At the other end of the scale, there were more small schools than would be expected in the table of the lowest scoring schools. Again, these numbers do not include the very small schools, but the presence of some of these in the serious weakness and special measures categories would increase the number of small schools in the bottom 100. The number of very small schools in special measures was about three times as many as would be expected, and the number of very small schools with serious weaknesses was twice as many as expected.

In summary:

- The majority of small schools achieve standards which are higher than the national average at the age of 7 and 11. However, these standards are less than those achieved in larger schools when socioeconomic background is taken into account. The quality of education provided by small schools compares well with what is provided by larger schools;
- While there are also many successful very small schools, this group is less effective in its provision for under-fives and is more vulnerable to the adverse influences of weak teaching and/or leadership;
- Inspection evidence confirms that the traditional reasons for the popularity of successful small schools are well-established features of these schools today. They have a positive ethos with a family atmosphere, close links between staff and parents, an important place in the community, and good standards of behaviour;
- The inspection evidence underlines the paramount of the headteacher in a small school. The head of a small school has a more than usually direct influence on the quality of teaching and standards achieved and this provides powerful opportunities to bring about change and improvement;
- There is much from the first cycle of inspections to encourage those who work in small schools. Higher unit costs notwithstanding, a good case emerges for the place of small schools in the education system as a whole, when the quality of their educational performance is added to the broader contribution they make to their communities.

OFSTED 2000

7c) Within the North Birkenhead area the number of pupils on roll and the projected numbers are:

| | 2009 | 2014 |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Bidston Avenue Primary School | 411 | 401 |
| Cathcart Street Primary School | 101 | 98 |
| Cole Street Primary School | 124 | 111 |
| Holy Cross Catholic Primary School | 182 | 183 |
| Our Lady and St Edwards Catholic Primary School | 249 | 290 |
| Portland Primary School | 176 | 186 |
| St Laurence's Catholic Primary School | 75 | 55 |
| The Priory CE Primary School | 208 | 195 |
| Birkenhead High Academy for Girls (Junior) | 270 | 281 |

Cathcart Street, Cole Street, Portland and St Laurence's Catholic Primary Schools currently fall into the category of small schools as defined by the Wirral's policy document, "In Pursuit of Excellence", within the subsection "Principles of effective and viable primary schools". Holy Cross Catholic Primary School and Portland Primary School are at the bottom of end what is considered a viable primary school according to the same policy document.

The projected number of pupils in Cathcart Street Primary School, 98 on roll in 2014, will not generate a level of funding that will give the flexibility to organise resources which will meet the needs of the school community and therefore it will be difficult to provide an excellent quality of education.

The projected number of pupils in Cole Street Primary, 111 on roll in 2014, will not generate a level of funding that will give the flexibility to organise sufficient resources to meet the needs of the school community and therefore it will be difficult to provide an excellent quality of education.

The projected number of pupils in St Laurence's Catholic Primary, 55 on roll in 2014 will not generate a level of funding that will give the flexibility to organise sufficient resources to meet the needs of the school community and therefore it will be difficult to provide an excellent quality of education.

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CABINET

Thursday, 19 March 2009

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|---|--|
| <u>Present:</u> | Councillor | S Foulkes (Chair) | |
| | Councillors | S Holbrook G Davies P Davies G Gardiner S Kelly | M McLaughlin R Moon J Quinn J Stapleton |
| <u>In attendance:</u> | Councillors | G Ellis JE Green J Hale | I Lewis L Rennie G Watt |

387 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting had been printed and published.

Resolved: That the minutes be approved and adopted.

388 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The members of the Cabinet were invited to consider whether they had a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any of the items on the agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest. The following declarations were made:

All Members of the Cabinet declared a personal interest in Minute 407 (Asset Management Update) due to membership of Joint Management Committee(s) and/or a user of services;

Councillor Stuart Kelly – a personal interest in Minute 403 (Raising Expectations: Enabling the system to deliver machinery of Government changes) due to his employment;

Councillor Simon Holbrook – a personal interest in Minute 416 (Carbon Reduction Commitment) due to his employment;

Councillor Steve Foulkes – a prejudicial interest in Minute 392 (Interim Planning Policy for New Housing Development) due to his employment;

Councillor Phil Davies – a personal interest in Minute 393 (Working Wirral – Working Neighbourhoods Fund) due to his membership of Wirral Metropolitan College Governing Body and as a non-executive director of Wirral PCT, a personal interest in Minute 401 (Area Youth Forum Awards – Recommendations for funding 2008/9) due to his membership of Charing Cross Youth and Community Centre Joint Management Committee, and a personal interest in Minute 402 (Delivering Improved

outcomes for vulnerable children, informed by the Children's Social Care review) due to his membership of the Board of Tranmere Together;

Councillor George Davies – a personal interest in Minute 391 (Secondary School Review: amended consultation options for Phase 1 schools and school status update) due to his membership of governing bodies of schools mentioned within the report and a personal interest in Minute 393 (Working Wirral – Working Neighbourhoods Fund) due to his membership of Wirral Society for the Blind and partially sighted;

Councillor Jean Stapleton – a personal interest in Minute 401 (Area Youth Forum Awards – Recommendations for funding 2008/9) due to her membership of Charing Cross Youth and Community Centre Joint Management Committee; and

Steve Maddox, Chief Executive – a personal interest in Minute 393 (Working Wirral – Working Neighbourhoods Fund) due to his membership of Wirral Metropolitan College Governing Body and Minute 405 (Connexions Transition) due to his membership of the Board of Connexions (Greater Merseyside) Limited.

389 **PROGRESS TOWARDS THE TRANSFORMATION OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES - FINANCIAL ISSUES**

The Director of Adult Services highlighted to members a number of proposed actions regarding financial issues affecting the Department of Adult Social Services. They included Fair Access to Care; fees payable to Residential & Nursing homes, Supported Living Providers and Domiciliary Care Providers and the transfer to the Local Authority of NHS – Wirral (Primary Care Trust) Funding for Learning Disability Services.

The Leader of the Council indicated that he was minded to recommend deferral of part of the recommendation. The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Inclusion indicated that she had requested further information on a number of matters relating to residential and nursing homes and felt it was appropriate that the matter be brought back to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

Councillor McLaughlin moved an amendment, duly seconded and it was -

Resolved: That

(1) with regards to Fair Access to Care Services, the decision to continue to provide social care services to individuals in Wirral who have critical and substantial needs be endorsed;

(2) with regards to Supported Living, to pay £13.18 per hour rate to all providers who have indicated they would accept the proposal and give 3 months notice to terminate contracts with providers who have refused. Work to be undertaken to establish if there is a business case to implement a detailed banded model of needs and fees during 2009/2010. This work to be carried out in consultation with providers and if proven further proposals be brought to Cabinet in order for the model developed to be introduced on 1 April 2010.

(3) with regards to Domiciliary Care, to maintain existing contract business at £12 per hour pro rata (i.e. 20 pence per minute) with a new contract to be developed during 2009/2010 to commence 1 April 2010 with a standard ceiling rate appropriate inflation clause and health standards. No new business will be placed with companies that refuse to accept the proposal and these contracts will be terminated (with 3 months' notice).

(4) with regards to Residential and Nursing Homes, having considered the representations made on behalf of the residential and nursing home providers, this aspect of the report be deferred. The Director of Adult Social Services is instructed to report to the next meeting of the Cabinet on 9th April 2009 with further details addressing in more detail the matters raised during the consultation process;

(5) with regards to the transfer to the Local Authority of Primary Care Trust Funding for Learning Disability Services:

(a) the proposed transfer of funding of £6,354,296 that the Council will receive for taking responsibility for the care of a number of people with disabilities currently funded by NHS Wirral, be approved;

(b) the Employment and Appointments Committee be recommended to approve the establishment of the following posts to support the transfer and to respond to the additional demands made upon the Department.

- Finance - 1 Technical Support Officer (Scale 2-4) £24,000
- Access and Assessment – 2 Social Work Posts £92,000
- Contracts – 1 Contract Officer (PO1) £37,000

390 WEST KIRBY REGENERATION - THE SAIL PROJECT

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services informed Cabinet of the details of Carpenter Investments' revised design proposals for the Sail Project. Members were requested to consider the design proposals in the context of the Council's aspirations for the regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby as well as the wider ambitions of the Council's Investment Strategy. The Director sought a decision from Cabinet on whether to continue their support for the revised proposal based on the designs submitted. If Members were supportive of the revised scheme design, a further report would be brought to Cabinet on 9th April on the associated financial package for the project, including the details of an independent valuation assessment to determine whether the scheme represented value for money to Wirral Council.

With the permission of the Chair, Mr Daghish on behalf of West Kirby Working Group, Councillor John Hale and Mr Brewitt on behalf of the developers addressed the Cabinet.

Councillor Gill Gardiner referred to the reduced size of the development and the loss of car parking provision. Councillor Gardiner felt that the design of the Sail School was good but that the hotel was not the iconic building she had hoped for. Councillor Gardiner moved a motion which was duly seconded.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning Strategy supported the motion.

The Deputy Leader of the Council referred to the different perceptions of the consultation process that had been expressed and requested clarification on these matters.

With the permission of the Chair, the Leader of the Conservative Group addressed the Cabinet.

Resolved: -That

(1) Cabinet recognises that ease of parking for residents and local businesses in West Kirby as well as the town's visitors is an important consideration both in terms of the proposed investment and regeneration actions under consideration and the future prosperity of the town;

(2) Cabinet notes this report and notes that it will receive a further report at a future meeting; and

(3) Cabinet acknowledges that if it decides to proceed with the Sail project in the future there will be detailed consideration of the proposals through the planning process which will include the issues around car parking.

391 **SECONDARY SCHOOL REVIEW: AMENDED CONSULTATION OPTION FOR PHASE 1 SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL STATUS UPDATE**

The Director of Children's Services advised the Cabinet of progress on the Phase 1 Area Review of secondary school places which comprised of schools in the Birkenhead and Bebington areas. Following additional consultations with stakeholders, and preliminary discussions with potential sponsors for an Academy, the report put forward further recommendations for consultation options in the Birkenhead area. It also provided an update on recent changes to school status, including the Secretary of State's decision on Birkenhead High School for Girls.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning referred to the context of the review in the light of falling school rolls and that the priority of the review was to raise the bar in terms of standards. Councillor Phil Davies also stressed that the Cabinet would be open to consider any further options that arose as a result of the consultation process.

The Leader of the Council referred to the creation of an Academy for Girls in Birkenhead and queried whether, in the Director's view, this was the best way of meeting the Council's corporate objectives in terms of reducing inequalities. The Director of Children's Services indicated that the range of measures proposed would transform the education experience in Birkenhead. The Leader of the Council expressed concern about the future of Ridgeway High School and the concerns of the residents in the area.

Resolved - That

(1) the option for consultation on secondary school re-organisation in Birkenhead to comprise of the establishment of two 5 form of entry 11 to 16

Academies – one a single sex Academy for boys on a site to be confirmed, and the other a mixed sex Academy on the site of Park High School;

(2) it be noted that the Cabinet will be open to consider any further options that arise as a result of the consultation process;

(3) discussions take place with Shaftesbury Youth Club regarding possible use of the Shaftesbury Playing Field site and their collaboration with the project;

(4) the Director be given all necessary authority to formalise agreements with potential sponsors, and to co-operate with OSC and DSCF appointed consultants in relation to the Statement of Intent and Expression of Interest phases of Academy development;

(5) the Director be authorised to take all necessary steps to ensure the prescribed procedures are followed, including consultations on the closure of predecessor schools, in furtherance of the two Academy option;

(6) a report including the Expression of Interest be brought to Cabinet in Summer 2009;

(7) the recent changes of school status be noted; and

(8) a report on the implications of the establishment of the Birkenhead High Academy for Girls from September 2009 be brought to Cabinet in Summer 2009.

COUNCILLOR SIMON HOLBROOK IN THE CHAIR

392 INTERIM PLANNING POLICY FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Members were reminded that the Council had adopted an Interim Planning Policy for New Housing Development in October 2005 to focus new housing development within a number of identified regeneration priority areas including the Newheartlands Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (Cabinet, 20 October 2005, Minute 278 refers).

Cabinet on 6 November 2008 then resolved that the Interim Planning Policy be reviewed in response to the publication of the North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021, following the outcome of a forthcoming planning appeal at Rockybank Road, Prenton (Minute 257 refers).

Planning Inspectors in two recent appeal decisions, at Rockybank Road, Prenton and at Beresford Road, Oxtun, had concluded that the Interim Planning Policy would assist in meeting the objectives of in the new RSS, which set out priorities for development across the Region. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services therefore recommended that the Interim Planning Policy for New Housing Development be retained unaltered.

Resolved: - That the Interim Planning Policy for New Housing Development (October 2005) be retained unaltered for use in determining planning applications.

COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES IN THE CHAIR

393 WORKING WIRRAL - WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND

Cabinet was requested to approve the financial recommendations of the Wirral Economic Development and Skills Partnership (WEDS) and the Investment Board in relation to Working Wirral funding and note that the Government had now confirmed the Working Neighbourhoods Fund allocation for 2009/10 at £9,879,402.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning Strategy welcomed the report.

Resolved - That

(1) Cabinet as accountable body for the Working Neighbourhoods Fund agrees the recommendations of the WEDS Partnership and Investment Board, subject to detailed contracting Working Wirral expenditure for:

- **Advocacy in Wirral – Wirral Bridges project up to a maximum of £49,246 for the period 2009 – 2011;**
- **Wirral Learning Consortium – Supporting Wirral project up to a maximum of £1,104,998 for the period 2009 – 2011;**
- **Wirral Mind ABC Together Project to a maximum of £752,783 for the period of 2009-2011**
- **Remploy- Linking people to Employment project to a maximum of £806,308 for the period 2009-2011**
- **Cheshire & Wirral NHS Foundation Trust – Improving Health project to maximum of 163,140 for the period 2009-2011**
- **Wirral Society of the Blind and Partially Sighted – Training and Development project to a maximum of £37,253 for the period 2009-2011**
- **Wirral Metropolitan College – First Steps to Employment project to a maximum of £130,000 for the period 2009-2011**
- **Enterprise Solutions - 3 month extension to the WirralBiz programme up to a maximum of £262,500 for the period 1 April to 30 June 2009;**
- **International Links Project up to a maximum of £360,000 for the period 2009-2011**
- **Support for Small Medium Sized Enterprises project up to a maximum of £1,600,000 for the period 2009-2011**
- **Infrastructure studies up to a maximum of £50,000 for the period 2009-2011.**

(2) if any advance funding for cashflow reasons is required, it is only done for voluntary and community sector groups on the maximum of a quarterly basis at a time and that it is subject to:

- i) the organisation clearly evidencing a need for advance funding, and**
- ii) that the quarterly performance report submitted at the end of each quarter demonstrates that the project is performing to target and timescales before any further advance of funding is made.**

394 **BUSINESS SUPPORT - RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services presented a report outlining the impact of the current recession on Wirral's economy and identifying the steps taken by the Council to assist businesses affected by the current economic challenges, and build upon the budget proposals identified at Cabinet on 23rd February 2009.

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services to meetings that had been held with local employers and the package of measures agreed by the Council at its meeting on 2nd March 2009. He suggested that Cabinet consider a monthly report on this matter.

Resolved: - That

- (1) the contents of the report be noted;**
- (2) the proposals for the support mechanisms and programme interventions that are set out in the report be agreed, specifically:**
 - **The changes proposed for the Think Big Investment Fund**
 - **A programme of Support for Small Businesses (£50k budget resolution and £800k Working Wirral)**
- (3) the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services presents a monthly update report to Cabinet on the state of the local economy.**

395 **MERSEYSIDE RURAL ECONOMY STRATEGY**

Cabinet were advised that the Merseyside Rural Economy Steering Group had recently been established, bringing together the 6 Greater Merseyside Local Authorities, with St Helens as the lead. The aim of the group was to establish a clear evidence base of rural economic opportunities and challenges; to agree a common understanding of rural economic programmes and funding opportunities; and to understand the specific issues of each individual local authority.

Members were requested to approve a one-off contribution of £10,000 from Wirral towards developing the Merseyside Rural Economy evidence base, strategy and action plan implementation.

Resolved - That a one-off contribution of £10,000 from Wirral towards developing the Merseyside Rural Economy evidence base, Strategy and action plan implementation be approved.

396 **LDF EVIDENCE BASE - STRATEGY FOR TOWN CENTRES, RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL LEISURE IN WIRRAL - EXTENSION OF CONTRACT**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services reported that a series of consultancy studies had been commissioned as part of the process of assembling an evidence base for Wirral's Local Development Framework.

He presented a report advising of an extension to the contract for the Retail, Town Centres and Commercial Leisure study currently being prepared by Roger Tym & Partners to carry out additional survey work to assess the impact of the Liverpool One development on the Borough. Roger Tym and Partners had submitted a fee proposal of an additional £10,885 exclusive of VAT to undertake this work, plus survey fees of £11,590 plus VAT (total of £22,475 plus VAT). The Council's Contract Procedure Rules (5.1.2) required Cabinet approval for the extension of an existing contract. However, in view of the need to commission this additional work as soon as possible, advice was taken from the Council's Procurement Section and the proposed extension of the contract was authorised by the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services under delegated powers, in consultation with the Leader of the Council on the understanding the matter be reported to Cabinet.

Resolved – That the action of the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services under delegated powers to agree the extension of the contract with Roger Tym & Partners to undertake an additional household survey and associated analysis for a fee of £22,475 be noted.

397 **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE NORTH WEST – PARTIAL REVIEW – CONSULTATION ON INTERIM DRAFT POLICIES**

Cabinet were advised that the Regional Leaders Forum (4NW) had published Draft Interim Policies as the next stage in the Partial Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West. Following discussions with the Government, the scope of the Review had been amended and would now only cover policies for gypsies and travellers, travelling showpeople and parking standards. The remaining issues would be reviewed as part of the emerging single Regional Strategy which was to be the subject of a separate consultation process.

The deadline for comments on the Draft Interim Policies for gypsies and travellers, travelling showpeople and parking standards was 27 March 2009. It was recommended that the Directors Comments set out within the body of the report form the basis of the Council's response to 4NW.

Resolved - That the Directors Comments and Recommendations 1 to 3 set out in this report form the basis of the Council's response to the Regional Leaders Forum.

398 **COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FUND AND PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PILOTS IN AREA FORUMS - EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services presented a review of the pilot process for allocating Community Initiatives Funds (CIF) via participatory budgeting. The pilots took place for Oxtown Prenton and Bidston Cloughton area forums. Findings indicated that this process was a viable way of allocating funding and it was recommended that, with some modifications and improvements, the pilot be extended and this method rolled out to other forum areas, with the option for forums to adopt different models of operation appropriate to the area.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Customer Engagement moved a recommendation, duly seconded, and it was –

Resolved - That

- (1) Cabinet recommends all Area Forums to adopt the participatory budgeting model for the purposes of allocating community initiatives fund;**
- (2) Cabinet suggests Area Forums adopt the participatory model they believe best suits the circumstances within their locality;**
- (3) the Area Forum Chairs Group be charged with co-ordinating and monitoring the models used for purposes of the identification and spreading of good practice; and**
- (4) the participatory budgeting method of allocating CIF be branded as 'Funds For You'**

399 YOU DECIDE PILOT EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services presented a review of the pilot process for allocating You Decide funds via a form of participatory budgeting. The pilots took place across all the area forums. Findings indicated that this process benefited the community by enabling additional services to be delivered in local communities, by involving residents in decision making and by enabling residents to have a greater understanding of the costs of services and associated choices. It had also provided departments with an additional intelligence source to help understand local needs and deliver services accordingly.

At Council on 2nd March 2009 it had been agreed for the funding to be maintained at £260,000 which was £20,000 per Area Forum, with the continuation of an additional £20,000 each for the Youth Parliament and the Older Peoples Parliament.

Resolved – That

- (1) Departments identify services that can be offered 'for sale' based on what is possible each year.**
 - Use quantitative questionnaire as in 2008 to include locations and postcodes of where services are requested.**
 - Decide location of chosen services using information from questionnaire by liaising with departments to deliver selected services in each forum**
- (2) The Area Forum Chairs Group consider best practice for the operation for You Decide participatory budgeting. There are a number of different models that could be adopted. The evaluation process has shown that participants want a greater level of involvement in the decision making process so this should be considered when developing the process for operation.**

400 HEYGARTH PRIMARY SCHOOL - NEW KITCHEN / IMPROVED DINING/ STORAGE FACILITIES - SCHEME AND ESTIMATE REPORT

The Director of Children's Services described the work required at Heygarth Primary School for the removal of existing kitchen and dining arrangements and to provide a

new kitchen facility, store area and seating store and the existing hall to double as a dining room. The report set out the scheme and estimate and Cabinet was asked to consider and approve the scheme.

Resolved: - That

- (1) the Scheme and Estimate as presented be accepted;**
- (2) approval be given for Technical Services department to obtain tenders for the scheme and report back to Cabinet;**
- (3) Technical Services be authorised to obtain all necessary statutory approvals for the scheme; and**
- (4) scheme costs to include the consequential improvements to be made to the existing premises as a result of complying to Building Regulation Part L and the scope of the work to be agreed with Building Control.**

401 AREA YOUTH FORUM AWARDS - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING 2008/09

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services informed Cabinet of the proposals received from youth projects for funding from the Area Youth Forums, informed Cabinet of the recommendations made by young people from the four Area Youth Forums in September/November 2007 regarding allocations to projects benefiting young people in their areas and requested that Cabinet agree the transfer of the £10,000 budget from Corporate Services to Children and Young People's Department (CYPD) and that, in future, ratification for the awards be via the four CYPD District Boards.

Cabinet was further requested to consider the recommendations of the four Area Youth Forums and agree to fund applications at the levels identified within the appendix of the report. The budget of £2,500 per Area Youth Forum was within the Corporate Services Budget, but all support for the Youth Forums was provided by the CYPD.

Resolved: -That:

- (1) the report and the proposed allocation of funding as detailed in Appendix 1 be agreed;**
- (2) the transfer of the £10,000 budget from Corporate Services to CYPD be agreed; and**
- (3) future ratification of these awards be via the four CYPD District Boards.**

402 DELIVERING IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN, INFORMED BY THE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE REVIEW

The Director of Children's Services outlined the strategy in place and the additional capacity required to deliver improved outcomes for children in need, at risk of significant harm or who had experienced significant harm. The major drivers were the

findings of careful scrutiny of services following Baby P; the requirements set out in the Children and Young Person's Act 2008, the Children and Young People's Plan, Local Area Agreement and the Council's Corporate Plan. Cabinet's approval was sought to implement the following changes from agreed budget growth of £690,000.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning welcomed the report and the measures set out in the report which would strengthen the ability of social workers to spend time with children.

Resolved: - That

- (1) the strategy set out in the report be approved;**
- (2) uncommitted 2008/09 ABG (up to £260,100) be carried forward in to 2009/10;**
- (3) the report be referred to Employment & Appointments Committee; and**
- (4) the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management prepare a further report for Cabinet setting out proposed remodelling of legal support for children, in the light of changed circumstances.**

403 RAISING EXPECTATIONS: ENABLING THE SYSTEM TO DELIVER MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT CHANGES

The Director of Children's Services outlined the current stage in preparing for the transition of commissioning and funding of post-16 provision from the Learning and Skills Council to the Local Authority. The full transfer of commissioning and funding of post-16 funding would take place in 2010.

Resolved: -That

- (1) the Stage 2 Application be approved for submission to Government Office North West; and**
- (2) the Director of Children's Services be requested to report back on staffing and financial implications of these changes as they arise.**

404 REVIEW OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES - OUTCOME OF FURTHER CONSULTATIONS ON A JOINT CHURCH SCHOOL IN LEASOWE

Cabinet were advised of the outcome of the further consultation process which had taken place in the Leasowe and Wallasey areas in respect of the option to establish a Joint Church school in Leasowe. The option was previously consulted upon in Spring 2007 during Phase 3 of the Primary Places Review. The report described the option, the responses to it, and made recommendations with regard to statutory proposals in relation to the option.

Resolved – That

(1) the two Diocesan bodies be given all necessary assistance in submitting an application to the Secretary of State in order to seek a waiver of the requirement to hold a competition;

(2) the Director of Children's Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to publish proposals, ensure the prescribed procedures are followed for the closure of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School and the establishment of a Joint Church school at the Our Lady of Lourdes site, the exact procedure being dependent on the outcome of the application in (1) above;

(3) the published admission number of the Joint Church school be maintained at 25 pupils for a period of three years from implementation, reviewed and amended if preference popularity is deemed to have increased; and

(4) should the Joint Church school be approved and implemented as in (2), the Leasowe area be moved from Phase 6 of the Primary Places Review to Phase 8 accordingly.

405 CONNEXIONS TRANSITION

The Director of Children's Services presented a report which provided the Cabinet with information on the arrangements for the future commissioning of Connexions Services.

Resolved: - That

(1) the existing contract with Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership be amended to cover the period to 30th September 2009, pending the completion of procurement processes;

(2) the new contract for 'connexions services' cover the period 30th September 2009 to 31st March 2012 with an option of an extension to the contract for a further period of up to 3 years, but for the contract to accommodate an appropriate break clause in the event of poor performance or reduced financial capacity to commission the service to the level previously agreed;

(3) Halton Borough Council be the lead Authority for procurement of the new arrangements on behalf of the 6 participating Merseyside Local Authorities;

(4) Halton Borough Council becomes the contract holding Authority on behalf of the 6 participating Merseyside Local Authorities from the City Region for the new contract when awarded with the appropriate cross Authority commitments; and

(5) Wirral Council enter into an agreement with Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership Limited to extend the current contract to 30 September 2009 provided the other five Merseyside Local Authorities agree to

the extension and to pay their previously agreed proportion of the payments due to the company under the extended contract.

406 **NOMINATION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2009/10**

The Cabinet was requested to make nominations for the positions of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2009/10, which would be submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 11th May 2009.

Resolved - That the Council be recommended that

(1) Councillor Andrew Hodson be nominated for the position of Mayor for the municipal year 2009/10; and

(2) Councillor Alan Jennings be nominated for Deputy Mayor.

407 **ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management updated Members on the implementation of the Office Accommodation Strategy; sought approval of new Policies relating to Disposals and Community Asset Transfer; and authorised officers to progress Disposals and Community Transfers, in accordance with these policies. An addendum was circulated containing further information about the Community Fund and recommends how it should be used to support the asset transfer process.

Resolved: - That

(1) the progression of the Office Accommodation Strategy be endorsed;

(2) the new Policies on Disposals and Community Asset Transfer (subject to transfers of community centres being offered first to established and viable Joint Management Committees) be approved and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed to progress their objectives;

(3) recommendations (1) and (2) in the addendum to the report in relation to applications for use of the Community Fund to support asset transfer be approved as set out below:

(a) The Community Fund be used to support community asset transfer by:

meeting costs of essential repairs to make buildings fit for purpose at the time of transfer. The nature and cost of such repairs will be determined by the Council's Head of Asset Management as part of the transfer process; and/or contributing interim support towards running costs for up to two years where an organisation can demonstrate that at the end of that period it will have a sustainable business plan.

(b) A joint application be made to the Fund by the Council and the community group to which an asset is being transferred as part of the second stage of the application process set out in the Community Asset Transfer Policy.

(4) the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be nominated as the new Council representative on the joint Working Group administering the Community Fund, to replace the departing Head of Legal and Member Services.

(5) the Director of Finance works towards amalgamating the existing budgets for building complexes into one budget, to become the responsibility of the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management.

408 **PROPERTY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported that on the 5th February 2009, Cabinet had considered a report on Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Use of Resources for 2008. This had indicated that a score of 3 had been achieved overall for "Use of Resources" which included Asset Management. His report updated members on a number of Asset Management issues relating to the Managing Resources assessment.

Resolved: - That the actions taken responding to the issues raised by the Use of Resources Assessment, in respect of Asset Management, be approved.

409 **TRANSITION FROM COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT**

Cabinet were provided with an update on the changes to the Audit Commission's approach to assessing the performance of partnerships and other public bodies, including local authorities.

The Leader of the Council referred to the Council's revised CPA rating – increasing to a 3 star authority – and congratulated all staff that had contributed to this achievement. Councillor Foulkes requested that Cabinet members arrange to visit staff within their portfolios to congratulate them.

Resolved – That

(1) the changes arising from the introduction of the CAA framework be noted; and

(2) an improvement plan be brought back to Cabinet that integrates the organisational and area assessments, use of resources and managing performance elements on the assessment, and that provides a diagnostic evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement.

410 **FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Chief Executive advised Members that his report was one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year presenting an overview of the performance of the Council in delivering the Vision for Wirral as set out in the Corporate Plan and was for the quarter-ended 31 December 2008.

Resolved –

- (1) the performance report be noted; and
- (2) Cabinet recognises the need to present information in a concise and timely fashion in a manner easily accessible to members and therefore asks for a short and to the point report to be placed in the electronic library within two weeks of the end of the quarter and a presentation made by the Director of Corporate Services to the next available Cabinet.

411 PROJECTED BUDGET 2010-11

The Director of Finance presented the projected budget for 2010-2011 which would be the final year of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR).

Resolved – That the projected budget for 2010-11 be updated and reported regularly to the Cabinet.

412 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2009 TO 2012

The Director of Finance presented a report which set out the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2009-2012 in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services.

Resolved: - That

- (1) the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2009 to 2012 be approved;
- (2) the Prudential Indicators be adopted; and
- (3) the Council Officers listed in Appendix D be authorised to approve payments from the bank accounts for all treasury management activities.

413 PAYMENT OF SUPPLIERS WITHIN 10 DAYS

The Director of Finance recommended changes to the payments processes to reduce the period of time taken to pay providers and suppliers from receipt of invoice. The proposal was to achieve payment of SME suppliers and providers within 10 days of invoice receipt. The current performance target was 32 days.

The report outlined the volume of transactions processed by the Council and identified a number of measures necessary to improve the payments cycle.

The Deputy Leader of the Council requested whether future reports could contain the value of invoices as well as number.

With the permission of the Chair, the Leader of the Conservative Group addressed the Cabinet. Councillor Green queried when business would have confidence that they would be paid within 10 days and was informed that it was not possible to set a date for this.

Resolved: -That

- (1) the Authority targets the payment of SME invoices in ten days at a cost of £170,000.**
- (2) the measures proposed in this report be agreed as the appropriate means of achieving improvements to the payments process.**
- (3) the staffing arrangements required to deliver this Action Plan be implemented immediately.**

414 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2009/10

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report recommending dates for Council, Cabinet and committee meetings for the municipal year 2009/10. The proposed calendar was set out in Appendix A to the report.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources moved a motion, duly seconded, and it was –

Resolved: - That the calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2009/10, attached as Appendix A, be approved – except that:-

- (a) in the event that the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees is reduced from 10 to 6, the dates for O&S (1) to (6) be used; and**
- (b) Cabinet be moved from 3rd June 2009 to 28th May 2009 and from 16th July 2009 to 23rd July 2009.**

415 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

At its meeting on 9 July 2008, the Cabinet had considered a report on proposed constitutional amendments and resolved to review the structure of Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report on this matter which also proposed a revised scheme of delegation to portfolio holders.

Resolved: - That

- (1) the scheme of delegation of executive functions to portfolio holders be amended to allow all non-key decisions to be made under delegation in line with paragraph 3.3 of the report;**
- (2) the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee be re-titled 'Sustainable Communities' Overview and Scrutiny Committee;**
- (3) Cabinet reaffirms its view that all non-executive members of the Council (other than the Mayor) should have the opportunity to serve on an Overview and Scrutiny Committee if they so choose and therefore believes that each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should have 10 members;**

(4) the proposal to move to five overview and scrutiny committees, based on the Council's corporate priorities be forwarded to the three Party Leaders for their comments to be brought back to the Cabinet at its next meeting; and

(5) Cabinet's preference is that the Scrutiny Chairs Committee be a properly constituted committee and that its role be that of programme co-ordination and call-ins that involve two or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

416 CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT

The Director of Technical Services updated Members on changes to the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) made by the Government, since the previous report to this Committee on the 15 January 2008. The main changes included the inclusion of all State Schools, a change to the reporting period from the calendar year to the financial year, the rescheduling of a number of dates and a significant increase (of 50%) in the fixed cost of allowances in the first three years to £12\tonne. The report also suggested a way forward for the Council as current calculations now put the likely first year outlay to the Council at £510,000 in April 2011. At least 90% of the outlay would be recycled to the Council in October 2011 dependant on its position in the CRC league table.

Resolved: - That

(1) as a financial incentive the value of any bonus or penalty incurred collectively should be apportioned across all sites to encourage each site to actively participate.

(2) to ensure that these costs are not absorbed into utility budgets, and due to its complexity, the CRC scheme be identified as a separate expenditure item.

(3) the details and financial implications of the CRC scheme be included in the future financial planning for the Council.

(4) the proposals detailed in sections 5.3, 5.4, 5.7, 5.9 and 5.10 be implemented; and

(5) further reports be presented to Cabinet and the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee as more detailed information on the question of the CRC scheme becomes available.

417 GRAFFITI PREVENTION AND REMOVAL - SERVICE UPDATE

The Director of Technical Services requested members to note the outcomes achieved through the re-launch of the Graffiti Prevention and Removal Services. Members had chosen graffiti as a Policy Option for 2008/9 in order to expand the scope of graffiti removal across Wirral. His report detailed how the additional £30K has been used in order to reduce occurrence of graffiti in the provision of an efficient and sustainable service. Members were requested to approve the procurement of a 3 year Graffiti Prevention and Removal Contract to commence April 1st 2010, in order to secure a longer-term sustainable arrangement for this service.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment announced that the Neighbourhood Environment Team was runner-up for the ENCAMS award for efficiencies through partnerships and congratulated staff on this award.

Resolved – That

- (1) the progress made by the Graffiti Steering Group and the success of the new graffiti removal service be noted;
- (2) the extension of the “Together” pilot for a further 12 months to the end of March 2010 be approved;
- (3) the procurement exercise for a 3-year graffiti removal and prevention contract be approved.

418 **MARKETING SUPPORT FOR WIRRAL'S TOURISM BUSINESSES DURING THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC DOWNTURN (1 APRIL 2009 TO 31 MARCH 2010)**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services referred to the current national economic downturn and the more strategic approach needed to support Wirral's tourism businesses in the immediate future. The approach would be to market Wirral Peninsula's tourism offer more effectively and help local businesses increase trade through partnership. With this in mind, the Destination Marketing Office (DMO) had been working closely with The Mersey Partnership (TMP) for the past year, as well as the other district councils, to develop a joint three year “Partners for Tourism Growth” project for European funds. The bid, for funds from the Northwest Development Agency's (NWDA) operational programme, would directly help local tourism businesses market their services more effectively and efficiently. This report highlighted the delay to release funds from the NWDA's programme at a time of greatest need for Wirral's tourism businesses, and the immediate interim measure recommended to support them through the economic crisis.

Resolved: - That an allocation of £60,000, from the Council's Match Funding Budget and Reserve be approved, to deliver a 2009 spring marketing campaign to support Wirral's tourism businesses during the current national economic downturn. This is on the understanding that the funds will be re-imbursed, from the Wirral element of the three year “Partners for Tourism Growth” ERDF bid, if approved.

419 **MUSEUM ACCREDITATION**

The Director of Regeneration advised members that Museums Accreditation had replaced Museums Registration and was the national standard for museums in Britain, administered by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). Wirral Museums Service needed to submit applications for the Accreditation of the Williamson Art Gallery & Museum and Birkenhead Priory before the end of March 2009. Both sites were registered under the previous national scheme. Part of the application process required Cabinet approval for the application for Accreditation, the Forward Plan and the Acquisitions and Disposal Policy.

Resolved: - That

- (1) the applications for Accreditation for Williamson Art Gallery and Museum and Birkenhead Priory be approved;**
- (2) the Forward Plan for the Museums Service be approved; and**
- (3) the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy for the Museums Service be approved.**

420 2009/10 LOCAL TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME - ROAD SAFETY.

The Director of Technical Services reported that further to his report on the Local Transport Capital Programme, which was considered and approved by Cabinet on 15th January 2009, his further report set out project details relating to proposed schemes within the Road Safety Block.

This has been identified as a Key Decision in the Forward Plan.

Resolved: - That

- (1) the Road Safety programme for 2009/10 be approved as set out in this report;**
- (2) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to select a suitable alternative from the reserve list of schemes in consultation with party spokespersons, in the event that it proves impractical to proceed with an approved scheme or unallocated finance becomes available;**
- (3) the receipt of petitions for traffic calming as identified in Section 7 be noted and the decision by Overview and Scrutiny Committee that as no benefit to the personal injury accident record can be achieved by actioning these requests, they are not prioritised for action at the present time.**

421 2009/10 LOCAL TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME - ENVIRONMENT/AIR QUALITY

Further to his report on the Local Transport Capital Programme, which was considered and approved by Cabinet on 15th January 2009, the Director of Technical Services provided project details relating to proposed schemes within the Environment/Air Quality Block and requested Cabinet to approve this programme.

This had been identified as a Key Decision in the Forward Plan.

Resolved – That

- (1) the Environmental / Air Quality programme for 2009/10 be approved as set out in this report;**
- (2) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to select a suitable alternative from the reserve list of schemes in consultation with party spokespersons, in the event that it proves impractical to proceed with an approved scheme or unallocated finance becomes available.**

422 **TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME INTEGRATED TRANSPORT BLOCK - AREA FORUM CONSULTATION**

The Director of Technical Services brought Cabinet's attention to the results of Area Forum Consultation on the drawing up of the 2009/10 list of highway schemes under the LTP Integrated Transport Block.

His report summarised the decision of each Area Forum on the possible reallocation of this transport block from the centre to each Area Forum and, in conclusion, sought Cabinet approval to the Block Allocation becoming wholly decentralised and each Area Forum receiving an allocation of £18,200.

Resolved: - That

- 1) **the report be noted and that officers be thanked for their engagement with the Area Forums over this matter.**
- 2) **the Integrated Transport Block Allocation be decentralised with each Area Forum receiving a one-eleventh share amounting to approximately £18,200 in 2009/10 to carry out scheme(s) of a traffic management/road safety nature in the local area.**
- 3) **the Director of Technical Services provide assistance in each Forum area for this expenditure to aid decision making in drawing up future works programmes under the Integrated Transport Block Allocation.**

423 **COMMUNITY SPEED INITIATIVE (ACCIDENTS 2ZER0)**

The Director of Technical Services informed Cabinet of the results of further consultation with Community Forums and Members over requests for the next round of areas within the Community Speed Initiative (Bring Accidents Down 2zer0) programme.

He sought approval from Cabinet to move the initial trial areas scheme to a further seven areas identified within the report.

Resolved: That -

- 1) **the content of the report in respect of the consultation which has taken place so far be noted;**
- 2) **the Director of Technical Services investigate suitable additional areas as necessary adding to the programme as necessary;**
- 3) **a programme of rotation of areas for the Bring Accidents Down 2zer0 scheme as indicated in paragraph 4.2 of the report be endorsed; and**
- 4) **the selection of the next 7 areas for the signs to be moved to should be delegated to the Chief Officer in consultation with the portfolio holder and the areas be chosen from the 14 identified in the report to give a Wirral-wide spread while taking into account any petitions that have been received.**

424 **HIGHWAY AND ENGINEERING SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE - CONTRACT MOBILISATION UPDATE**

Further to the decision by Cabinet on 16th October 2008 to award the new Highway and Engineering Services contract to Colas Limited, the Director of Technical Services provided an update on the contract mobilisation process on the run-up to the 1st April 2009 contract commencement and sought Cabinet endorsement for the commencement of the new contract following the recent Gateway 4 Readiness for Service Review.

His report also sought Cabinet approval for exemption from Contracts Procedure Rule 19 'Procurement valued at less than £50,000.00', to facilitate the use of the Engineering Workshop, by other Council Departments, as set out in paragraphs 3.4.5 and 3.4.6.

Resolved: That

(1) the progress made in relation to contract mobilisation and the positive outcome of the recent Gateway 4 Readiness for Service Review be noted and on this basis the commencement of the new contract be endorsed; and

(2) the use of the Engineering Workshop by other Council Departments, as proposed in paragraphs 3.4.5 and 3.4.6, be approved and the exemption from Contracts Procedure Rule 19 'Procurement valued at less than £50,000' for this process up to a value of £30,000 and subject to client Departments being satisfied that value for money is being achieved, be approved.

425 **MERSEY GATEWAY BRIDGE PROJECT GROUP REPRESENTATION**

The Director of Technical Services informed Members of the proposal to refresh the partnership arrangements relating to the new Mersey crossing – known as the Mersey Gateway.

Cabinet was requested to approve the attendance of one officer and one elected Member to the reformed Mersey Gateway Bridge Project Group.

Resolved: That Council be recommended that the Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transport Services and the Head of Streetscene and Waste be nominated to the reformed Mersey Gateway Bridge Project Group and the body be included in the schedule of approved bodies within the Constitution.

426 **RE-ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS FOR WIRRAL HOUSING NEEDS AND MARKET ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGIC ECONOMIC VIABILITY ASSESSMENT**

The Director of Regeneration sought approval of the appointment of Fordham consultants to carry out work in relation to an update of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the Borough and to undertake a Strategic Economic Viability Assessment to provide the evidence base for the preparation of the Local Development Framework without the need to obtain written quotes pursuant to Rule 5.2 of the Contract Procedure rules.

Resolved: - That the appointment of Fordham consultants to carry out the work identified in the report without the need to obtain written quotes pursuant to Rule 5.2 of the Contract Procedure Rules be approved.

427 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved: That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

428 **MOTOR AND ENGINEERING INSURANCE**

Cabinet were advised on the procurement process for the Motor and Engineering Insurance contracts by the Director of Finance and he recommended the awarding of both contracts to Zurich Municipal for five years from 1 April 2009.

Resolved: That

(1) the Motor Insurance contract be awarded to Zurich Municipal for a period of 3 years commencing from 1 April 2009 with an option to extend for a further 2 years;

(2) the Engineering inspection and insurance contract be awarded to Zurich Municipal for a period of 3 years commencing from 1 April 2009 with an option to extend for a further 2 years; and

(3) the annual saving of £47,519 be noted.

429 **CONTRACT HIRE OF NEW MOTOR VEHICLES**

Cabinet were advised that the Council had operated with a Car Leasing Scheme since 1987 to support staff recruitment and retention. The scheme currently operated in partnership with Flintshire County Council as one of the last remaining contracts formulated under the Wirral and North Wales Partnership. The current contract was a "User Chooser Scheme" which allowed officers access to an unrestricted list of vehicles.

The Director of Finance sought approval to adopt the Office of Government Commerce Car Leasing Contract with effect from 1 April 2009 and set out in a report the potential savings and environmental issues arising from the use of the contract.

Resolved: - That the adoption of the Office of Government Commence Car Leasing Contract with effect from the 1 April 2009 at a saving of £10,000 in 2009-10 be approved.

430 **RATING OF FORMER DOCK PROPERTIES**

On 27 November 2008 Cabinet had considered the change to the valuation for rating purposes of what were previously described as Dock Undertakings. Cabinet had requested a further report when Government proposals were known. The Director of Finance gave an update on the current position, detailed the way forward for Member approval and highlighted issues that would continue to face the businesses involved in the future.

The Leader of the Council referred to recent discussions in the House of Lords.

Resolved: - That

(1) subject to (3) below, the Director of Finance writes to each port occupier with the National Non Domestic Rates Bills for 2009-10 setting out the position with arrears due and invites each occupier to consider requesting spread or scheduled payments over an extended period; and

(2) Officers continue to monitor valuation appeals and encourage meetings with the port owner with regard to rates already paid to the owner.

(3) Officers investigate the implications of the House of Lords discussions, and if they have any impact on the decision above, a further report be brought back to the Cabinet prior to the decision being implemented.

431 POSTAL SERVICES

The Director of Finance advised members that the deregulation of the Postal Services market In January 2005 had presented an opportunity for the Council to examine possible financial and efficiency savings within the current postal service.

His report outlined the work carried out in the light of market changes, made recommendations for change, and outlined the potential efficiency savings that could be achieved.

Resolved: That

(1) the Council continue to contract with Royal Mail for postal services at an annual cost of approximately £664,000.

(2) the adoption of the efficiencies identified in the report to achieve financial savings of £82,000 per annum be approved.

432 CULTURAL SERVICES VAT RECOVERY

The Director of Finance informed Members of work undertaken by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in respect of a backdated Value Added Tax (VAT) return in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules paragraph 5.1.1 'Exceptions to Procurement procedure'.

Resolved: That the work carried out in respect of the retrospective VAT claims undertaken by PwC on a "no win, no fee" basis under the Contract Procedure Rules paragraph 5.1.1 'Exceptions to Procurement procedure', be acknowledged.

433 **VOLUNTARY FIRST REGISTRATION OF TITLE**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management sought Members' approval to engage the Land Registry to register title to all the unregistered land in the Council's ownership throughout the Borough with funding from the Efficiency Investment Budget.

Resolved: - That

(1) the Voluntary Registration of all land and property assets in the Council's ownership be authorised; and

(2) the Land Registry fees be met from the Efficiency Investment Budget.

434 **LAND AT WOODHALL AVENUE/ROYSTON AVENUE, WALLASEY - SALE**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management sought Cabinet's approval to a further revision of terms for the sale of the site located at Royston Avenue/ Woodhall Avenue, Egremont, to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and to waive the call-in period in this report in view of the urgency of implementing the decision to meet the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) funding deadline of 31st March 2009 and avoid £2,232,000 of grant funding being lost.

Resolved: - That

(1) the revision to the terms for sale of the site identified in this report be approved; and

(2) the call-in period for this matter be waived in view of the urgency of implementing the decision to meet the HCA funding deadlines and avoid £2,232,000 of funding being lost, and the Council be advised accordingly.

435 **PAYROLL AND HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEM**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management recommended a revised procurement process for a payroll and human resource (HR) system to replace the Council's current systems when the licences expired at the end of May 2011. The current licences were an extension of a contract which expired in May 2008.

A revised, integrated payroll and HR system was expected to generate significant savings and service improvements across the council.

Resolved: - That the Director of Law HR and Asset Management, in consultation with the Director of Finance, be authorised to procure and implement the most appropriate payroll and HR system, taking in to account the issues raised in this report.

436 **PARENTING AND PREVENTION COMMISSIONING**

The Director of Children's Services made recommendations to Cabinet for approval to procure parenting and preventative services for 2009/11. The proposed services to

be commissioned would support the delivery of several Departmental and Corporate priorities and respond to developments in joint working (e.g. use of the Team around the Child Model and development of Area Teams). The commissioning and procurement process resulting in these recommendations had been robust, multi-agency (including voluntary and community sector involvement) and inclusive of parents, children and young people.

Resolved: That

(1) the procurement of services in appendix 1 to the report be approved and contract negotiation with the identified services be provided from 03/07/09; and

(2) the extension of the existing contract for Racial Minority Ethnic Contract to 30th September 2009 be approved to allow for the timeline.

437 HMRI - APPOINTMENT OF LOVELL AS THE COUNCIL'S PREFERRED DEVELOPER PARTNER FOR TRANMERE

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management sought Cabinet's approval to formally appoint Lovell as the Council's preferred private developer partner for delivering housing market renewal in Tranmere.

Resolved: - That

(1) the inclusion of land in Tranmere within the Church Road Development Programme as set out in Appendix I be agreed;

(2) a Development Agreement be entered into with Lovell to redevelop the Church Road area of Tranmere;

(3) the current Global Development Appraisal and Preliminary Development Appraisal for Phase 1 of Church Road as set out in Appendix II be noted;

(4) the likelihood that the Council will be required to provide gap funding for Phase 1 of the Church Road scheme – the retail element – to ensure it is viable and proceeds in 2009/10 be noted;

(5) a further report be received in the near future regarding the development programme, notably the level of gap funding required for Phase 1 and the requirement to enter into a building lease for Phase 1;

(6) make available the sites at Church Road for development and subsequent private freehold ownership as set out in this report; and

(7) the continued engagement of Tweeds as cost consultant advisers be approved to finalise and monitor the development programme on the same terms as reported to the Housing and Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 26th September 2007 (minute 16).

438 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair referred to this being Andrea Grant's last Cabinet meeting at Wirral Council and thanked her for her work at Wirral. Councillors Holbrook and Green endorsed the Leader's comments.

Manor Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105041 |
| Local Authority | Wirral |
| Inspection number | 324145 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Allan Torr HMI |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

| | |
|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 122 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Peter Abernethy |
| Headteacher | Mr Nigel Greathead |
| Date of previous school inspection | 22 March 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Beechwood Drive Beechwood Birkenhead Wirral CH43 7ZU |
| Telephone number | 0151 6773152 |
| Fax number | 0151 6789369 |

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 June 2009 |
| Inspection number | 324145 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Manor is a smaller than average primary school. Most pupils are White British. There is a larger proportion of boys in the school than average and there is a small number of pupils looked after by the local authority. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is exceptionally high. Although the proportion of pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability is double the national average, the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is around the national average. There is an Early Years Foundation Stage class for three to five year old children. Attached to the school is Beechwood Children's Centre which is managed separately by Sure Start. The school has been awarded the Sportsmark and a Family Works award.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Manor Primary School has positive features but it has made too little progress to tackle the issues identified at the previous inspection and some important areas have deteriorated. This is partly because of frequent and long-term staff absences involving a high proportion of teachers. The absences have hampered the ability of staff to embed new initiatives and developments, and to lead and manage different subject areas to ensure the school improves and meets the needs of its pupils. The headteacher has been unable to delegate responsibilities and therefore retained too many roles to enable him to drive improvement. Although he has led the improvement in attendance and has kept the school running on a daily basis over the last two years of turbulence, there is no capacity to improve and tackle the school's weaknesses. Governance is also inadequate. Governors do not have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, a grasp of the school's weaknesses, or the knowledge to be able to challenge and support the school to ensure it improves.

Standards in Key Stage 1 have fallen since the last inspection and in 2008 were well below the national average, although standards in the current Year 2 are slightly higher. Standards in Years 3 to 5 are low, accentuated by long-term staff absences in those classes. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been well below average for three years, particularly in English. Pupils' writing skills are weak. Achievement is uneven across the school and inadequate overall. Some year groups and some groups of pupils, particularly more able pupils and boys, do not make the progress they should. In contrast, most pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability make satisfactory progress because of the effective support that they receive.

There are pockets of effective teaching but the overall quality is inadequate. There is not enough good teaching to tackle the low standards and to raise achievement. Pupils do not have the guidance they need to improve their work. Too many tasks are easy and lack challenge and pupils are unaware of the steps they need to take to improve their work further. Although the curriculum is satisfactory and there are some elements that are good, subjects are not being managed sufficiently well to deliver improvements. Subject leaders do not evaluate or monitor the subjects well enough. Improvements are also hampered because a high proportion of subject leaders have been absent. Consequently, standards attained in different subjects are too variable.

Pupils and parents are supportive of the school and its work. Learning environments are bright, well decorated and welcoming and there is a calm and inclusive feel to Manor Primary. Pupils are friendly, generally well behaved, sensible and polite. They have a good understanding of how to lead a safe lifestyle and a satisfactory understanding of how to be healthy. They make a positive contribution to the school community through the school council and through taking up jobs and responsibilities around the school. They are not well prepared for their future lives because their basic skills are weak and their attendance, although improving, remains below the national average. Pupils cooperate well together and have good social development; they take opportunities to debate, discuss, and to reflect which aids their good spiritual development. Their understanding of different cultures is less well developed.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Early Years unit with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. By the time they leave the unit, children have made satisfactory progress in gaining the knowledge and skills expected for their age but their progress is variable between different areas of learning. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and are able, for example, to choose and use resources independently, take turns, share, cooperate and to work well with others. The majority of children achieve more highly than the national and Wirral averages in their physical development. However, although there have been improvements over the last three years, children's attainment in mathematical development and communication, language and literacy skills is below national expectations. Occasionally, children underachieve in these areas of learning because the planned activities lack focus and are not matched to their abilities so that their skills are not extended. Skilled and able teaching assistants provide valuable support in the unit and ask a good range of questions which moves pupils' learning on. There is an appropriate mix of teacher-led and child-initiated activity.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English throughout the school, particularly writing.
- Improve the quality of academic guidance so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to produce better work.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make at least satisfactory progress and continually build on their prior knowledge
- Improve the effectiveness and knowledge of governors and subject leaders so they are able to evaluate accurately the quality of the school's provision and take steps to raise standards and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with a variable range of skills and knowledge but are below average in their mathematical development and communication, language and literacy skills. Since the last inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have declined. Over the last three years standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been at best below and sometimes well below the national average. Girls in particular attained significantly below the national average and boys' attainment lagged behind the girls. Currently in Key Stage 1, standards are beginning to recover, particularly in mathematics but they remain too low given the children's starting points when they entered Year 1.

Standards attained by Year 6 pupils have been well below average for the last three years. In 2008, for example, only half of pupils attained the expected Level 4 in mathematics. Attainment in English, and in particular writing, is low. Although pupils' attainment in Year 6 has risen during the last year as a result of better teaching, standards remain low in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils' learning is fragmented due to the high level of staff absence, frequent changes of teachers and the relatively high proportion of inadequate lessons. In some classes, pupils make satisfactory progress; in others they make very slow progress, leading to variable standards and achievement. Girls attain well below the national average for girls and boys perform less well than the girls, particularly in English. Higher ability pupils make inadequate progress and do not reach the higher grades they should do given their abilities. Children who attain highly by

the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage rarely continue to attain well by the end of the following key stages. However, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because their needs are met more appropriately through targeted support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils are mostly polite and welcoming. Their social development is good. They thrive on the many opportunities they have to cooperate in teams, discuss and debate issues and to perform for others. Although their cultural development is satisfactory, pupils have a narrow view of other cultures and countries. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles; however, many do not put this into practice and are sometimes inactive at break times and many eat unhealthy snacks. Pupils say they feel safe and free from harassment and poor behaviour. They have a good understanding about safety; for example the school council showed good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. Most pupils' behaviour is good, although at times some pupils show a slight lack of respect for adults and are over-familiar.

Generally, pupils enjoy coming to school as evidenced by their improving attendance. The proportion of pupils persistently absent is reducing. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community and are generous in their support for good causes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

While some satisfactory teaching was observed, too much of the teaching seen was inadequate. One of the main reasons for this is the same issue as highlighted at the last inspection: there is often a lack of challenge resulting in activities not being matched to pupils' needs. While this can be partly explained by the long-term absence of staff, the impact on pupils has been to restrict the progress they make. For example, more able pupils complete the same work as less able pupils and they are often engaged in low level tasks such as cutting, sticking, colouring in, or adding just a few words onto a worksheet. In too many lessons pupils are occupied, rather than challenged. Similarly, pupils sometimes complete work they have already proved they can do earlier in the year. Some teachers ask questions which enable pupils to think, reason and to explain. The majority ask questions which are too narrow and need very little effort from pupils to answer. By doing this, they are spoonfeeding the answer rather than helping pupils to make progress in their thinking. There are many opportunities to work on practical activities, work collaboratively and to support each other. There are instances, however, where this is at the expense of good individual work and pupils consequently have little to show for their efforts. Use of assessment across the school is inconsistent. In some classes teachers' marking provides good tips for pupils to improve their work; in the majority of classes marking is celebratory and does not let pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

While there are significant weaknesses in the quality of provision, classrooms are bright, well resourced and attractive places to work. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good; staff are caring, supportive, kind and generous with their time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is based on national requirements and schemes of work from the International Primary Curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in research, discussion and debate. For example, Year 5 pupils completed some good research into different habitats as a part of their science work. Other year groups explore stimulating topics such as airports, chocolate and shelters. This enables pupils to learn the connections and links between different subjects. Although this curriculum is having a positive effect on some subjects such as history and information and communication technology (ICT), the work in some classes is too low level and pupils are not using their writing skills enough. Subject leadership is weak. This means the effectiveness of the curriculum on raising standards and improving pupils' outcomes is not as good as it could be.

The curriculum is enriched and enhanced by different trips, and visiting speakers. The Diwali day, for example, helped pupils to gain a fuller knowledge of celebrations and festivals in different faiths. The annual cycling proficiency programme enhances pupils' knowledge of safety as well as their physical skills and balance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Many aspects of care and support are satisfactory and some are good. There are rigorous and effective systems for vetting staff, for safeguarding pupils and for working with other agencies to help improve pupils' lives. Systems for checking health and safety and risk assessment are good. Effective systems are in place to intervene to support pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability. However, pupils do not get good enough guidance and support to improve their work. Although targets are set, pupils cannot remember them and teachers do not refer to them in lessons. Similarly, the targets do not help pupils to know what to do to improve their work and to reach the next level. There is often little opportunity for pupils to respond to any comments made by teachers from previous lessons. Marking in writing, as a result of 'the big write', is better because it gives pupils clear advice about what to do to improve. Generally, marking is not used well enough to secure improvements across all subjects and varies from one piece of work to another. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting vulnerable pupils and those at risk of falling behind. The support they give is satisfactory, but in some instances they do all the work for the pupils which hampers pupils' ability to think, reason and explain.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and can demonstrate the impact of their actions to improve some aspects of the school's work, for example in improving attendance. However, there is not enough capacity in leadership throughout the school to drive improvement. The headteacher does too much. Although he has done a creditable job in keeping the school running through two years of turbulence, leadership is not sufficiently shared among middle leaders to enable them to monitor their subjects or to take action to improve achievement. Systems are not securely in place to ensure

that staff work as a team and for senior leaders to listen to their suggestions to improve provision.

Self-evaluation is inadequate. The school's judgements about pupils' standards, progress and work are over generous. Key weaknesses in attainment, standards and the quality of provision have not been picked up. Although the local authority has put in some good support, the intensive support it received was not effective in challenging weak practice and the school has not fully engaged with the support offered.

The headteacher is effective in his promotion of community cohesion. He has analysed the local population and has a strategy for ensuring the school helps to support parents and the local community. The governors are not aware of their duties in this respect. Governance is inadequate overall. There are four vacancies on the governing body which is limiting its ability to support the school. Governors have a lack of knowledge and understanding about how to measure the impact of initiatives. They are not able to interpret data to understand how well pupils achieve. They are unsure about their role in ensuring statutory duties are met and are unable to evaluate accurately the effectiveness of the school.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | |
|---|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 4 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | No |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being? | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 4 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 3 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 3 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 3 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 3 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 3 |

Achievement and standards

| | |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 4 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 4 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 4 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 3 |

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 3 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 3 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 3 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 3 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 4 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 4 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 |

Leadership and management

| | |
|--|-----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 4 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 4 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 4 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 3 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 4 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 4 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | Yes |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Manor Primary School, Birkenhead, CH43 7ZU

This letter is to tell you about my recent visit to inspect your school. It was good to meet so many of you at break time, in class and in the school council meeting. It was also great to see you making good use of the two refurbished playground areas. I thought most of you were polite, sensible and cooperated well with others. I also thought most of you have a good understanding of hazards and how to lead a safe life, particularly staying safe using the internet. Most of you said you enjoy lessons, particularly the more practical lessons such as mathematics, science, physical education and art. It was certainly clear you enjoy lessons more when you are actively involved and when lessons are challenging and not too easy. Your school environment is warm, inviting and the classrooms are good places to learn and to study.

Following my visit, I have decided Manor Primary needs to improve. This means that although there are some things the school does well, in some very important areas there are weaknesses which need to be tackled quickly for you to make better progress in your learning and to reach higher standards. I have asked the school to:

- Help you to attain higher levels in your work, particularly in English.
- Improve the range of activities in lessons to help you learn more and make better progress. I have also asked teachers to improve the guidance you get to improve your work so that you know exactly what to do to reach a higher level.
- Make regular checks to ensure that you are all doing as well as should in your work.

You and your teachers will be given help and support to carry out these improvements and inspectors will visit the school regularly to check the progress everyone is making. You, your teachers, parents and governors will all need to work together to ensure the school improves as quickly as possible.

SCHOOLS INCLUDED IN PROPOSED PHASE 6 REVIEW BY SMALL PLANNING AREA

SOUTH WALLASEY

BRENTWOOD EARLY YEARS CENTRE
EGREMONT PRIMARY
KINGSWAY PRIMARY
PARK PRIMARY
RIVERSIDE PRIMARY
SOMERVILLE PRIMARY
ST JOSEPHS CATHOLIC PRIMARY (Wallasey)

NORTH WALLASEY

LISCARD PRIMARY
GREENLEAS PRIMARY
MOUNT PRIMARY
NEW BRIGHTON PRIMARY
ST ALBANS CATHOLIC PRIMARY
ST GEORGES PRIMARY
SS PETER & PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY

MORETON

EASTWAY PRIMARY
LINGHAM PRIMARY
SANDBROOK PRIMARY
CHRIST CHURCH CE AIDED PRIMARY
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY

GREASBY

BROOKDALE PRIMARY
GREASBY INFANTS
GREASBY JUNIOR
OUR LADY OF PITY CATHOLIC PRIMARY

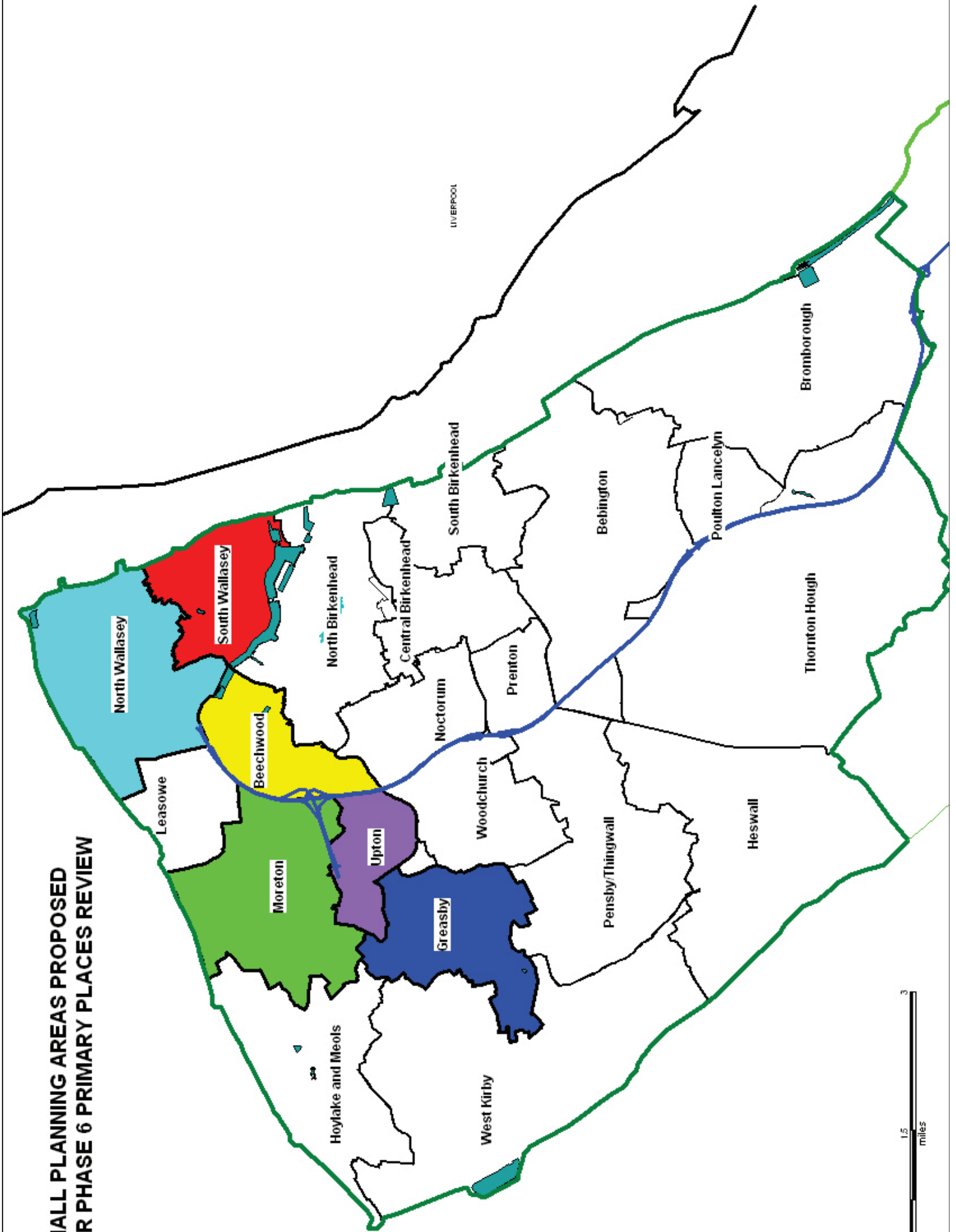
UPTON

OVERCHURCH INFANTS
OVERCHURCH JUNIOR
ST JOSEPHS CATHOLIC PRIMARY (Upton)

BEECHWOOD

MANOR PRIMARY

**SMALL PLANNING AREAS PROPOSED
FOR PHASE 6 PRIMARY PLACES REVIEW**



REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update of the position in respect of secondary school places in Wirral and describes recent developments, the current position and issues for the future in relation to the proposed Phase 2 of the Secondary Places Review. Following various recent developments, the report also recommends that Phase 2 of the review be divided into two sub-phases.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting of 29th November 2007, Cabinet instructed that Phase 1 of the Secondary Places Review should comprise schools in Birkenhead and Bebington (Wirral South). Phase 2 of the Review would then comprise schools in Wirral West and Wallasey, due to begin in Autumn 2009. The report and minute form Appendix A to this report.
- 1.2 Phase 1 has resulted in a complex option for consultation including the establishment of a mixed Academy and a Boys Academy, linked to the closure of three existing schools – Ridgeway High School, Rock Ferry High School and Park High School. The Secretary of State has issued a Statement of Intent for the two new Academies, and the process is currently at the Expression of Interest stage. The Council are acting both as sponsor and as Local Authority for both new Academies, and a separate report on the Expressions of Interest will be brought to Cabinet during the Autumn.
- 1.3 As in Phase 1 of the Review, there are four essential elements in looking to plan future secondary school requirements across the Borough. These are, firstly, the numbers of children expected to enter school over the next seven years (Section 2); secondly the capacity of the current stock of secondary schools, individually and in areas (Section 3), thirdly the impact of school size on standards, including the National Challenge (Section 4), and finally various other factors with implications for place provision (Section 5)
- 1.4 This report updates Cabinet on changes to the four elements in 1.3 above and proposes a subdivision of Phase 2 of the Review.

2.0 Pupil Numbers

- 2.1 The projection method for Years 7 to 11 in secondary schools is as follows. In order to calculate the Year 7 intake for each future year, the actual number of pupils in Wirral primary schools is rolled forward to their equivalent Year 7 intake year, then multiplied by 101.7 to reflect a historical increase at this transition point which is related to movement to the maintained sector from independent schools. Individual school Year 7 intakes are then based on the previous three years Year 7 intake figures. Years 8 to 11 at each individual school are simply rolled forward.
- 2.2 Post-16 projections are not the focus of this report, however, for completeness, Year 12 pupil numbers are calculated from Year 11 actual numbers at individual schools (excluding schools without sixth forms), to which the individual school's historical staying on rate is applied. In a similar manner, Years 12 and 13 are calculated from the actual number on roll for the previous year, using the historical staying on rate.
- 2.3 The number of secondary age pupils has already begun to fall, following as a natural consequence of the longstanding falling roll in primary schools, and will continue to fall in the future, based upon numbers of actual pupils now in primary schools which will translate into intakes up to 2016. Total secondary numbers on roll, actual and projected, to 2016 are as set out below.

| | YEAR | PUPILS | ANNUAL CHANGE | CUMULATIVE CHANGE |
|------------------|------|--------|---------------|-------------------|
| ACTUAL | 2002 | 21109 | | |
| | 2003 | 21432 | +323 | +323 |
| | 2004 | 21331 | -101 | +222 |
| | 2005 | 20955 | -376 | -154 |
| | 2006 | 20581 | -374 | -528 |
| | 2007 | 20051 | -530 | -1058 |
| | 2008 | 19439 | -612 | -1670 |
| | 2009 | 19007 | -432 | -2102 |
| PROJECTED | 2010 | 18894 | -113 | -2215 |
| | 2011 | 18485 | -409 | -2624 |
| | 2012 | 18064 | -421 | -3045 |
| | 2013 | 17696 | -368 | -3413 |
| | 2014 | 17283 | -413 | -3826 |
| | 2015 | 17169 | -114 | -3940 |
| | 2016 | 17165 | -4 | -3944 |

The numbers set out above are for secondary age pupils (11 – 16) in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools or maintained sixth form provision. Actuals are as at the January Census. Projections from 2010 onwards include Birkenhead High Academy for Girls. Cumulative change is measured against 2002 baseline.

- 2.4 The above figures illustrate a significantly falling school roll across the Borough. The levels of reduction are not evenly distributed between areas, or between individual schools within areas. The table below shows 11 to 16 numbers on roll at January 2009 and projected to 2016 by area.

| | 2009 | 2016 | % Projected Fall |
|--------------|------|------|------------------|
| Birkenhead | 3734 | 3302 | 12% |
| Wallasey | 5244 | 4350 | 17% |
| Wirral South | 4442 | 4095 | 8% |
| Wirral West | 5896 | 5417 | 8% |

The numbers set out above are for secondary age pupils (11 – 16) in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools or maintained sixth form provision. Actuals and Wirral areas are as at the January Census. Numbers on roll in 2009 for Birkenhead include Birkenhead High School for Girls to allow proper comparison with 2016. Woodchurch High School and Upton Hall School, previously included within the Birkenhead area, are now incorporated into Wirral West throughout this report in line with Local Authority planning areas.

- 2.5 Pupils attending Wirral secondary schools over the next seven years already exist in Wirral primary schools. Migration is minimal, and while individual school rolls may vary, it seems reasonable to conclude that over the next seven years around 1,800 fewer pupils will require 11 to 16 school provision, continuing a trend which has already resulted in over 2,400 fewer pupils in the system in 2009 than there were in 2003.

3.0 School Capacity and Surplus Places

- 3.1 Establishing the projected number of pupils is the first step in planning ahead, the second step is the calculation of the capacity of both individual schools and overall LA capacity, in order to try to achieve the best match between need and provision, whilst at the same time retaining some flexibility to allow parental preferences to be considered.

- 3.2 The capacity of secondary schools is calculated by the DCSF Net Capacity method, used by all Local Authorities. This method replaced two former measures of school capacity, the Standard Number capacity (SN) and the More Open Enrolment (MoE) method, which produced anomalies and variations year on year. When first introduced in 2002/2003, the Net Capacity method resulted in reductions at some schools and increases in others. It seems likely that the Net Capacity method will continue to be used by the DCSF and LAs in

future years. There is little scope for “on paper” reductions in surplus places using this method.

- 3.3 The Council is required to monitor surplus places, both by the DCSF and by the Audit Commission. The Audit Commission recommends that surplus places overall should be no higher than 10%. Below 4%, there may be little scope for parents to exercise their right to express a preference, while above 10% the Council is considered to be wasting resources supporting empty space, rather than directly funding education. In the most recent Supply of School Places return to the DCSF, the overall surplus percentage for secondary schools was calculated at 15%.
- 3.4 DCSF also uses the number of schools with more than 25% and more than 30 surplus places as a measure of how effectively the LA is managing places. In January 2009, five of Wirral’s 22 secondary schools were in this category. The Authority is obliged to make a statement about schools in this category, stating how and when the surplus place issue is to be addressed, or if no action is to be taken, the reasons for this decision.
- 3.5 Wirral is already above the Audit Commission’s recommended 10% maximum for surplus places, and has two schools in the 25% and 30 places category. No action is taken to address these issues, and applying the pupil projection methods given in 2.1 and 2.2 above, the overall Wirral surplus place percentage in secondary schools will increase to 24% by 2016, more than double the Audit Commission’s maximum acceptable level.
- 3.6 With regard to the DCSF 25% and 30 places measure, it is estimated that the number of schools exceeding this benchmark would rise from five to nine secondary schools by 2015/2016, 40% of the total.
- 3.7 Projections for percentage surplus and numbers of schools exceeding the 25% and 30 places measure by area are given in the table below.

| | 2009 number on roll | 2009 Capacity | % 2009 Surplus | % 2016 surplus (projected) | No. schools with 25% & 30 places |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Birkenhead | 4001 | 5838 | 32 | 35 | 3 out of 6 |
| Wallasey | 6410 | 7539 | 15 | 30 | 3 out of 5 |
| Wirral South | 5398 | 6249 | 13 | 19 | 1 out of 5 |
| Wirral West | 7299 | 7902 | 8 | 16 | 2 out of 7 |

The numbers set out above are for secondary and post-16 age pupils (11–19) in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools. Actuals are as at the January Census. For comparison purposes, 2009 NOR and Capacity include Census and provisional Net Capacity data from Birkenhead High School for Girls.

- 3.8 The two areas upon which the falling roll has and will continue to have most impact are Birkenhead and Wallasey. It should however be noted that surplus places are projected to increase in all parts of Wirral, and that by 2016 all four areas are expected to exceed the Audit Commission’s 10% maximum benchmark.
- 3.9 As in the primary school sector, there are a number of methods of removing surplus places.
- Re-allocation of space within schools for non-core purposes, such as extended services and other community provision.
 - Removal of temporary accommodation.
 - Changes in accommodation to meet the needs of a changing curriculum
 - Proposals for school re-organisation where other measures are insufficient to reduce surplus capacity to an acceptable level.
- 3.10 The intention is that these methods will continue to be applied but increasingly it is the final one which will have most relevance.
- 3.11 Phase 1 of the Secondary Places Review is intended to address falling rolls in the Birkenhead area, the outcome of which will necessarily also impact upon schools in the Wirral South area. Phase 1 will be the subject of a report to Cabinet during the Autumn.

3.12 The surplus place situation in Wallasey remains the next most significant, however other factors lead to a recommendation to Cabinet to split Phase 2 into two sub-phases; the first being Wirral West, the second being Wallasey.

4.0 School Size and Standards

4.1 Section 4 of Appendix A covers this element in some detail, which will not be repeated here.

4.2 At time of writing, no secondary school is in an Ofsted category of concern.

4.3 On 10th June 2008, the DCSF announced the National Challenge, a three year £400 million programme targeting 638 schools in England where fewer than 30% of pupils achieved at least five GCSEs at A* to C, including English and maths in 2007, with the target of no schools in the below 30% category by 2011.

4.4 Six Wirral secondary schools were identified as part of the National Challenge, three of which are included in the Phase 1 review area. They are: Ridgeway High School, Park High School and Rock Ferry High School.

4.5 The remaining three schools fall within the Phase 2 review area. They are Wallasey School, Oldershaw School and Pensby High School for Boys.

5.0 Other factors impacting on school capacity

5.1 On 13th August 2009, the Planning Committee approved an application in relation to Plot 1 (Northbank East) of the Wirral Waters development which would create 141 apartments in the Seacombe area. Outline planning permission has also been granted for an additional 1,531 residential units divided between the Birkenhead and Seacombe sides of the waterfront area.

5.2 The number of pupils generated on average by new housing developments is lower than is often thought to be the case. The Audit Commission recorded a range of three to six pupils per year group for every one hundred new homes built in their 1997 study 'Trading Places'. In addition, family movement within Wirral means that some children moving to new developments will already be on roll at a Wirral secondary school. The first phase of 141 apartments could reasonably be expected to produce an additional 40 pupils aged 11 to 18 in the Seacombe area, although the majority of these would be expected to be existing Wirral residents. If fully realised and occupied, the entire Wirral Waters development could be expected to accommodate around 470 pupils aged 11 to 18.

5.3 The majority of the Wirral West review area remains within the Council's West Wirral planning restraint area for new housing development, and as such, new housing is unlikely to impact greatly on secondary schools in this area.

6.0 Birkenhead High School for Girls Academy update

6.1 Following final approval from the Secretary of State in Spring 2009, this former fee-paying independent school for girls is now a 3 to 19 Academy for girls from September 2009. The admission number for entry to Foundation 2 is 40 pupils, with an admission number of 100 pupils to Year 7.

6.2 There are substantial and wide-ranging implications to the Authority, not only in terms of school place planning and data sharing with the new Birkenhead High Academy, but in terms of financial and staffing implications of the Authority's involvement with the procurement and delivery of £10.5 million of capital works at the Birkenhead High Academy sites. This capital is in addition to previous indicative allocations to the Authority for BSF.

6.3 Using the Partnerships for Schools framework, Mott MacDonald has now been appointed as an external technical advisor in relation to the proposed capital works at Birkenhead High Academy. Mott MacDonald Group is a management, engineering and development consultancy serving the public and private sectors worldwide. In 2009, the company was named Best Technical Advisor in the Infrastructure Journal Awards.

6.4 In terms of admissions, the current allocation for entry to Birkenhead High Academy in Year 7 in 2009 breaks down as follows:

| | | |
|----------------|---|-----|
| Birkenhead | - | 42% |
| Wirral West | - | 29% |
| Wallasey | - | 14% |
| Wirral South | - | 10% |
| Out of Borough | - | 5% |

38% of allocated pupils had previously attended Year 6 of the former independent school, of whom a third had joined Birkenhead High School for Girls for all or part of Year 6 only. Pupils on roll at Birkenhead High School for Girls at the end of Year 6 in Summer 2009 were guaranteed a place in Year 7 at the Girls Academy in September 2009.

- 6.5 If this pattern of admission from the various areas of Wirral continues into future years, there is likely to be further significant impact on numbers of girls entering existing schools not only in Birkenhead, but also in the Wirral West area.

7.0 Inclusion

- 7.1 At its meeting of 23rd April 2009, Cabinet approved the development of a new build 11 to 19 school for young people with complex learning difficulties on a split site. The 11 to 16 provision of approximately 135 places is to be co-located with a mainstream secondary school. In reorganising Wirral's secondary school provision, potential sites for co-location should be considered.

- 7.2 There may be further opportunities to locate special needs bases/places within mainstream secondary schools, meeting the increasing national emphasis on inclusive education. Given the small numbers of pupils involved, any impact on rolls or surplus places is expected to be minimal.

8.0 Building Schools for the Future and PFI

- 8.1 The Council's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) has resulted in the rebuild or significant remodelling of 9 secondary schools and one primary school. A unitary charge is payable on these buildings for twenty-five years after the building is handed over the Local Authority. This liability remains whether or not the building remains in use as a school, however it does not preclude options affecting schools occupying PFI buildings.

- 8.2 Due partly to Wirral's participation in PFI, the Council's place in the original ranking for the national Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme was in wave D, which meant full participation by 2016. In advance of the full BSF programme, Wirral was invited to take part in a One School Pathfinder scheme to fully re-build one secondary school, and the rebuilding of Woodchurch High School was approved by Cabinet on 15th November 2006. Building work officially began on site in May 2009. The new building is due to be open in September 2010.

- 8.3 The national BSF programme has subsequently been re-ordered by Partnerships for Schools (the national body managing BSF) and Wirral now have a three phase listing rather than the single start in 2016. Wirral's Phase 1 is listed as a priority entry into BSF at a date yet to be determined.

- 8.4 As part of the full BSF programme, the Council will be required to draw up a Strategy for Change and an Outline Business Case articulating its vision for transforming secondary school provision and outlining the principles that would underpin the programme.

These principles are likely to include:

- Meeting the demands of 21st century learning activities and curriculum changes
- Access to ICT
- Inclusion
- Extended schools provision
- Specialist facilities
- Promoting physical and mental well-being

- 8.5 It is important to start planning and consulting early with schools, parents/carers and other stakeholders, and to begin thinking in depth about what modern schools should look like and where funding and work can be targeted most effectively.
- 9.0 **Dividing Phase 2 of the Secondary Places Review**
- 9.1 In thinking about how to provide the best educational opportunities for Wirral's future children and young people, we must give consideration as to whether we have not only the right number of schools, but the right size of schools to meet the needs of Wirral's secondary school population.
- 9.2 Cabinet are asked to approve the sub-division of Phase 2 into two phases – 2A to comprise Wirral West, 2B to involve the Wallasey area.
- 9.3 The factors involved in this recommendation include:
- The limited availability of staffing resource to support the review process
 - The recent approval of the Wirral Waters development in Seacombe and the subsequent potential impact on school rolls in that area
 - The implications of the National Challenge
 - Opportunities for change, linked to Building Schools for the Future
 - The impact of Birkenhead High Academy for Girls
 - The falling roll situation in the Wirral West area, which, although impacting on all schools (including Grammar schools) is relatively localised to the Pensby area.
- 9.4 All schools in the Wirral West area would be reviewed in Phase 2A, which would involve Calday Grange Grammar School for Boys, Hilbre High School, Pensby High School for Boys, Pensby High School for Girls, Upton Hall School, West Kirby Grammar School for Girls, and Woodchurch High School. The last bullet point above indicates that the falling roll is most localised to the Pensby area, and these two schools are discussed in more detail below.
- 9.5 Pensby High School for Boys is in the 25% and above surplus place category. By 2016, both Pensby High School for Boys and Pensby High School for Girls are projected to fall into this category. There are 1,422 pupils on roll between the two schools in 2009, and 328 surplus places (19% overall). By 2016, the total roll is projected to fall to 1,163 pupils, while surplus places rise to 587 (34% overall).
- 9.6 Pensby High School for Boys is also one of the six schools identified in 2008 as part of the National Challenge (Section 4).
- 9.7 The two schools are located on the same site, and already share alternating floors in the central "tower". The two schools have successfully operated a joint Sixth Form, albeit with two separate heads of Sixth Form, for around 20 years. This enables what would otherwise be two small school sixth forms – approximately 100 pupils each – to offer a wider range of post-16 subjects and curriculum opportunities.
- 9.8 Individually, each school is relatively small in overall pupil numbers. As a combined school, either by amalgamation, or hard federation, the total number on roll should secure the viability of secondary school provision for boys and girls in Pensby.
- 9.9 A hard federation differs from amalgamation in that it involves the two schools remaining separate in terms of budgets, admissions and performance data, each school being inspected separately by Ofsted. The two schools would operate under a single governing body. There are a range of possible senior leadership structures. Federations can only be proposed by the Governing bodies of two or more schools.
- 9.10 As discussed in Section 8, it is vital for BSF to begin thinking early how capital funding can be targeted most effectively. It is recommended that the Wirral West area be targeted in Phase 2A of the Secondary School Review, beginning in Autumn 2009. It is hoped that Phase 2B (Wallasey) would then commence in Autumn 2010.

10.0 Secondary Place Review Process

- 10.1 This report proposes that in addition to the existing measures set out in 3.9 above that a review of secondary school places in the Phase 2A area is begun in Autumn 2009 to match current provision against future predicted need and draw up proposals for discussion and further consultation, leading to formal proposals, where appropriate. This will also enable the Authority to be prepared for BSF, and for any further “advance” projects that might arise of a similar nature to the current One School Pathfinder at Woodchurch High School.
- 10.2 Should a school be placed in an Ofsted category of concern during this time, it may alter the timescale for schools in that area.
- 10.3 As Phase 1 of the Secondary Places Review, and in the on-going Primary Places Review, it is proposed that a review document be produced for each area, including the following information:
- (a) Relevant cabinet reports
 - (b) Maps of the area
 - (c) School data, including Aided provision.
 - (d) Demographics and projections
 - (e) Current school populations plotted by address.
 - (f) Asset Management Data
 - (g) Other services / provision currently located on school sites.
 - (h) School performance data
 - (i) Diocesan Body statement

This document would be used as the basis for pre-consultation discussions with school governors and headteachers, Diocesan Bodies, other Council departments and relevant external bodies, with a view to producing options for more formal consultation as appropriate.

- 10.4 The outcome of the pre-consultation, including any options for formal consultation, will be the subject of a future report to Cabinet. If Cabinet approves options for formal consultation at that stage, the next step would be to publish the options and hold wide consultation with stakeholders including parents/carers.
- 10.5 Following consultation, a further report will be brought to Cabinet, containing recommendations for next steps, which may include statutory proposals. The earliest date for implementation of such proposals would be September 2011.
- 10.6 The challenges created by the falling roll also offer an opportunity to make a significant investment and complete the transformation of Wirral’s secondary schools, begun by PFI, to ensure that all pupils and their communities have access to high-quality secondary education, in high quality facilities, fit for purpose for 21st century education and provide stability in this sector for a significant period of time.
- 10.7 The review process proposed in this report will enable the Council to be well-placed to make best use of BSF and other funding streams, by developing a comprehensive strategic vision for the future of secondary school provision in Wirral.

11.0 Financial Implications

- 11.1 Inaction will mean spending larger proportions of the overall schools budget on fixed costs, and consequently less directly on pupils. The decisions on school re-organisation emanating from the Primary Places Review have already demonstrated value for money and enabled the Authority to devote more resources to children’s education in order to produce better quality outcomes, leading to higher standards and more efficient use of capital. The first three phases of the Primary Places Review will enable more than £500,000 to be redistributed each year which would otherwise have been spent on fixed costs.
- 11.2 The Council’s existing consultation option for Phase 1 of the Review, if implemented, will not be funded directly through the Building Schools for the Future programme, but will impact on the amount of capital funding available to the Council when Wirral enters the full BSF programme.

12.0 Staffing Implications

12.1 Current staffing levels are one of the factors involved in proposing a division of Phase 2 into two sub-phases.

13.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

13.1 It is essential to plan school provision across the Authority so that it is both efficient and effective in the interests of all pupils.

13.2 An equality impact assessment will be carried out on this report.

14.0 Community Safety Implications

14.1 Rationalisation and refurbishment of schools allow the most vulnerable accommodation to be removed and other security improvements carried out.

15.0 Local Agenda 21 Implications

15.1 The removal of old, inefficient accommodation contributes to Council principles and targets in respect of Agenda 21.

16.0 Planning Implications

16.1 The relationship between housing development policy and school place provision is a factor in considering surplus place removal.

16.2 Any proposals that may arise out of options after the consultation and decision making process for school re-organisation would be subject to the usual planning processes.

17.0 Anti-Poverty Implications

17.1 The redistribution of funding released by school reorganisation, in combination with the Authority's intention to realign the schools budget to give higher levels of funding to schools with high levels of deprivation, as well as improved accommodation, goes towards raising aspirations and narrowing the attainment gap for vulnerable groups.

18.0 Social Inclusion Implications

18.1 School re-organisation and transforming secondary mainstream and secondary special accommodation through BSF and other schemes, provides opportunities to promote joint agency work to promote co-ordinated solutions for pupils and their families. There is scope for community participation in the design process of new school buildings through BSF, raising the school's profile within the community.

19.0 Local Member Support Implications

19.1 Secondary school re-organisation has relevance to all Wards.

19.2 Wirral West secondary schools are located in the following Wards: Hoylake and Meols, Pensby and Thingwall, Upton, West Kirby and Thurstaston.

20.0 Background Papers

20.1 Audit Commission Report: Planning School Places in Wirral September 2004.

Asset Management Plan and Statement of Priorities.

School Census, January 2009

Supply of School Places return, August 2009, to DCSF requirements.

Other data held in Department

Recommendations

- (1) That approval be given to the division of Phase 2 of the review of secondary school provision into Phase 2A and Phase 2B, beginning with pre-consultation with headteachers and chairs of governors in schools in Wirral West.
- (2) That options arising from this initial consultation be the subject of a further report to Cabinet with my recommendations for option(s) to proceed to wider, formal, consultation with all stakeholders.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 29TH NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PROVISION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES – FUTURE STRATEGY

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the position in respect of secondary school places and describes recent developments, the current position and issues for the future. It identifies a significant increase in secondary surplus places over the medium term if further action is not taken and proposes a phased review of secondary school provision, involving schools and stakeholders, to identify any further opportunities for the removal of surplus places.

1.0 Background

1.1 There are four elements in looking to plan future secondary school requirements across the Borough. These are, firstly, the numbers of children expected to enter school over the next seven years; secondly the capacity of the current stock of secondary schools, individually and in areas, thirdly the impact of school size on standards, and finally a series of factors with implications for place provision. These include developments within the Education System: for example, those arising from the Children Act and Extended Schools, Building Schools for the Future and the need for diversity in school provision, the duty to respond to parental preference, and external factors which impact on secondary school numbers; for example, Housing Market Renewal and new housing developments.

2.0 Pupil Numbers

- 2.1 The projection method for Years 7 to 11 in secondary schools is as follows. In order to calculate the Year 7 intake for each future year, the actual number of pupils in Wirral primary schools is rolled forward to their equivalent Year 7 intake year, then multiplied by 101.7 to reflect a historical increase at this transition point which is related to movement to the maintained sector from independent schools. Individual school Year 7 intakes are then based on the previous three years Year 7 intake figures. Years 8 to 11 at each individual school are simply rolled forward.
- 2.2 Post-16 projections are not the focus of this report, however, for completeness, Year 12 pupil numbers are calculated from Year 11 actual numbers at individual schools (excluding schools without sixth forms), to which the individual school's historical staying on rate is applied. In a similar manner, Years 12 and 13 are calculated from the actual number on roll for the previous year, using the historical staying on rate.
- 2.3 The number of secondary age pupils has already begun to fall, following as a natural consequence of the longstanding falling roll in primary schools, and will continue to fall in the future, based upon numbers of actual pupils now in primary schools which will

translate into intakes up to 2014. Total secondary numbers on roll, actual and projected, to 2014 are as set out below.

| | YEAR | PUPILS | ANNUAL CHANGE |
|------------------|---------------|--------|---------------|
| | ACTUAL | 2000 | 20599 |
| 2001 | | 20995 | +396 |
| 2002 | | 21109 | +114 |
| 2003 | | 21432 | +323 |
| 2004 | | 21331 | -101 |
| 2005 | | 20955 | -376 |
| 2006 | | 20581 | -374 |
| PROJECTED | 2007 | 20051 | -530 |
| | 2008 | 19474 | -577 |
| | 2009 | 19005 | -469 |
| | 2010 | 18573 | -432 |
| | 2011 | 18221 | -352 |
| | 2012 | 17848 | -373 |
| | 2013 | 17545 | -303 |
| | 2014 | 17164 | -381 |

The numbers set out above are for secondary age pupils (11 – 16) in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools or maintained sixth form provision. Actuals are as at the January Census.

2.4 The above figures illustrate a significantly falling school roll across the Borough. The levels of reduction are not evenly distributed between areas, or between individual schools within areas. The table below shows 11 to 16 numbers on roll at January 2007, and projected to 2014, by area.

| | 2007 | 2014 | % Projected Fall |
|------------|------|------|------------------|
| Birkenhead | 5936 | 4868 | 18% |
| Wallasey | 5536 | 4617 | 17% |
| Bebington | 4550 | 4032 | 11% |
| Deeside | 4029 | 3647 | 10% |

The numbers set out above are for secondary age pupils (11 – 16) in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools or maintained sixth form provision. Actuals and Wirral areas are as at the January Census.

2.5 Pupils attending Wirral secondary schools over the next seven years already exist in Wirral primary schools. Migration is minimal, and while individual school rolls may vary, it seems reasonable to conclude that over the next seven years almost 3,000 fewer pupils will require 11 to 16 school provision, continuing a trend which has already resulted in over 1,300 fewer pupils in the system in 2007 than there were in 2003. The average size of a Wirral secondary school is around 1000 pupils, with a range of 645 to 1560.

3.0 School Capacity and Surplus Places

3.1 Establishing the projected number of pupils is the first step in planning ahead, the second step is the calculation of the capacity of both individual schools and overall LA capacity, in order to try to achieve the best match between need and provision, whilst at the same time retaining the ability to allow parental preferences to be considered.

- 3.2 The capacity of secondary schools is calculated by the DCSF Net Capacity method, used by all Local Authorities. This method replaced two former measures of school capacity, the Standard Number capacity (SN) and the More open Enrolment (MoE) method, which produced anomalies and variations year on year. When first introduced in 2002/2003, the Net Capacity method resulted in reductions at some schools and increases in others. It seems likely that the Net Capacity method will continue to be used by the DCSF and LAs in future years. There is little scope for “paper” reductions in surplus places using this method.
- 3.3 The Council is required to monitor surplus places, both by the DCSF and by the Audit Commission. The Audit Commission recommends that surplus places overall should be no higher than 10%. Below 4%, there may be little scope for parents to exercise their right to express a preference, while above 10% the Council is considered to be wasting resources supporting empty space, rather than directly funding education. In the most recent Supply of School Places return to the DCSF, the overall surplus percentage for secondary schools was calculated at 11%.
- 3.4 DCSF also uses the number of schools with more than 25% and more than 30 surplus places as a measure of how effectively the LA is managing places. In January 2007, two of Wirral’s 22 secondary schools were in this category. The Authority is obliged to make a statement about schools in this category, stating how and when the surplus place issue is to be addressed, or if no action is to be taken, the reasons for this decision.
- 3.5 Wirral is already above the Audit Commission’s recommended 10% maximum for surplus places, and has two schools in the 25% and 30 places category. No action is taken to address these issues, and applying the pupil projection methods given in 2.1 and 2.2 above, the overall Wirral surplus place percentage in secondary schools will increase to 23% by 2014, more than double the Audit Commission’s maximum acceptable level.
- 3.6 With regard to the DCSF 25% and 30 places measure, it is estimated that the number of schools exceeding this benchmark would rise to a third of secondary schools by 2013/2014.
- 3.7 Projections for percentage surplus and numbers of schools exceeding the 25% and 30 places measure by area are given in the table below.

| | 2007 number on roll | 2007 Capacity | % 2007 Surplus | % 2014 surplus (projected) | No. schools with 25% & 30 places |
|------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| Birkenhead | 6340 | 7539 | 16 | 30 | 4 out of 7 |
| Wallasey | 6572 | 7612 | 14 | 27 | 1 out of 5 |
| Bebington | 5486 | 5977 | 8 | 18 | 1 out of 5 |
| Deeside | 5190 | 5496 | 6 | 14 | 1 out of 5 |

The numbers set out above are for secondary and post-16 age pupils (11–19) in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools. Actuals are as at the January Census.

- 3.8 In 2007, the two areas upon which the falling roll has had most impact are Birkenhead and Wallasey. It should however be noted that surplus places are projected to increase in all parts of Wirral.
- 3.9 As in the primary school sector, there are a number of methods of removing surplus places.
- Re-allocation of space within schools for non-core purposes, such as extended services and other community provision

- Removal of temporary accommodation.
- Changes in accommodation to meet the needs of a changing curriculum
- Proposals for school re-organisation where other measures are insufficient to reduce surplus capacity to an acceptable level.

3.10 The intention is that these methods will continue to be applied but increasingly it is the final one which will have most relevance.

View of the Schools Forum

3.11 Members should note that in June 2005 the Schools Forum passed the following resolution:

“Resolved - That Wirral Schools Forum recognises that the local education authority has a duty to maintain and fund schools in an efficient and effective manner. This implies that the number of schools should reflect the pupil population and the needs of Wirral communities, which could mean the amalgamation or closure of schools for the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.”

4.0 School size, funding and standards

4.1 Funding is delegated to the governing bodies of individual schools based on a multi-factorial budget formula, the principal component in which is the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU). Consequently, schools with more pupils on roll will clearly have a larger budget, while schools with fewer pupils will receive a smaller budget.

4.2 The budget formula ensures that all schools have sufficient resources to operate, regardless of size, although increasingly difficult compromises have to be made as schools get smaller – see further comment below. Smallness alone would not cause any school to become financially unviable. What does happen is that small schools draw in a greater share of the resource per pupil from the total available for distributing among all schools. Since the total sum available for spending on all our children does not increase if we choose as an Authority to organise our children in more schools than is necessary for the efficient and effective delivery of education, it follows that the maintenance of small schools, where this is not necessary, comes at the expense of all other children.

4.3 Larger schools can employ more staff, and through division of labour, employ more specialist subject teachers. Smaller schools may only require a small amount of teaching in certain subjects, and face compromises in terms of the range of subjects they are able to offer, and the grouping arrangements they are able to employ.

4.4 Earlier in 2007, under the guidance of a seconded headteacher, a group of curriculum deputy headteachers representing different types of school met to discuss issues of curriculum viability. The group acknowledged that compromises were necessary as the number pupils in each year group reduced, limiting not only the breadth of subject choice available to pupils, but also placing pressure on teachers to teach outside their subject area, and on the school to employ more part-time staff, as well as limiting grouping arrangements and creating timetabling difficulties. The outcome is reported as Appendix A.

4.5 Given the diverse nature of Wirral’s secondary school provision, the group’s view was that a definite size beyond which a school was no longer viable was impossible to determine. However, the group agreed that the compromises became increasingly difficult for cohorts approaching 100 pupils.

- 4.6 National research on secondary school size has been scarce, but a study carried out in 2002 suggests that the optimum cohort size for a comprehensive school is between 175 and 200 pupils. For an 11 to 16 secondary school, this would result in between 875 and 1000 total pupils.
- 4.7 Other Councils who have already begun reviewing their secondary school provision have produced various optimum sizes, often with a range rather than a fixed number. Local context and population patterns are inevitably a factor in the variation between local authorities. Sefton Council, which is one of Wirral's statistical neighbours, have stated that they "will not be prescriptive on the issue on school size", but that as a guide they consider that 11 to 16 schools should have at least 90 pupils per year, and 11 to 18 schools at least 120. This is not dissimilar to the 100 pupil figure agreed by the Wirral working group.
- 4.8 With regard to organisational viability there can be no question that small schools face greater challenges. This of course does not mean that at any one time a particular small school cannot produce excellence through having outstanding teachers. In many parts of the country it is a clear necessity to maintain small schools because the alternative would be that children be transported, perhaps for a number of miles, to the nearest school. Authorities who have such schools receive additional funding from the government which enables them to spend more on these schools without it being at the expense of others, in order for them to be organisationally viable. Wirral does not receive this element of grant.
- 4.9 No Wirral secondary school is currently in an Ofsted category of concern, however were to this to occur, this could trigger a school review as there is a duty to consider whether schools in these categories should be closed or amalgamated with another school.
- 4.10 In thinking about how to provide the best educational opportunities for Wirral's future children and young people, we must give consideration as to whether we have not only the right number of schools, but the right size of schools to meet the needs of Wirral's secondary school population.

5.0 **Other factors impacting on school capacity**

- 5.1 Other factors can be broadly grouped into changes to communities in Wirral which impact on pupil numbers and the debate about the nature and form of secondary education provision and the subsequent implications for school size, structures, inter-school relationships and locations, which has been brought about by the Children Bill and other recent and proposed legislation.
- 5.2 Looking firstly at changes to communities in Wirral, the biggest changes impacting on school provision over the next ten years are likely to come from the Housing Market Renewal Strategy in the Birkenhead, Tranmere, Rock Ferry and Seacombe areas. Once future options are brought forward to the Council and the community, then more detailed work will be undertaken to assess the implications for secondary school places and provision and consider options for the future to complement, integrate with and support the Housing Market Renewal Initiative (HMRI). However, it is unlikely that this will have a significant impact on pupil numbers.
- 5.3 Clearly, sufficient "spare" capacity has to remain in the system to deal with local growth fluctuations as a result of new development. The number of pupils generated on average by new housing developments is lower than is often thought to be the case; the Audit Commission recorded a range of three to six pupils per year group for every one hundred new homes built in their 1997 study 'Trading Places'. Added to this is the situation that family movement within Wirral means

that some children moving to new developments will already be on roll at a Wirral secondary school. The current planning development rules for parts of Wirral are also a factor to be taken into account, for example, the restrictions on new housing.

- 5.4 In addition to these “practical” factors regarding pupil numbers and premises capacity there is a need to set the places debate into a framework which considers not only pupil numbers but links provision to the aims, principles and aspirations for secondary education in Wirral, thereby providing a template for consideration when looking at individual schools, groups of schools or provision across larger areas.
- 5.5 It is also important that Aided school provision is considered in overall school place planning in any area. Across the borough, there are two all-ability mixed sex Catholic Aided secondary schools, and two single sex Catholic Aided grammar schools. There is no Church of England secondary school. There will be a continuing need to work in partnership with the Diocesan Bodies in looking at future capacity needs in the secondary sector. The generally falling roll may impact unevenly, to some extent, on Aided and community schools.
- 5.6 In the future, curriculum changes may alter some of the issues and ease some of the difficulties, for example, increased flexibility at KS3 may reduce the need for specialist teachers and facilities. The introduction of specialised diplomas at 14 to 19 may also lead to a change in staffing arrangements and facilities. We cannot determine the full impact of curriculum changes at this point in time, however these changes are unlikely to change the fact that smaller schools are unable to provide the breadth of choice for pupils that larger schools can.
- 5.7 The Government has recently announced their plans to require young people to remain in school, training or workplace training until the age of 18 from 2013. In 2006, Connexions estimated that 1,210 or 10% of young people aged 16 to 19 in Wirral were NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training), which is above the average proportion of NEET young people across the North West region (8.9%), but below the Merseyside regional average (10.8%). The document “Raising Expectations: Staying in education or training post-16 – from policy to legislation”, available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/Raising%20Expectations.pdf> sets out the economic and social imperatives behind the change. The first age group to be affected will enter secondary school in September 2008. The change does not, however, mean that pupils would be forced to stay in school or continue with academic lessons, as the definition also includes vocational and further education college courses, as well as apprenticeships and work-based learning. The change in the participation age is unlikely to have a significant impact on overall numbers on roll in school-based provision.

6.0 **Academy and Independent School developments**

- 6.1 Birkenhead High School is a 3 to 19 fee-paying independent school for girls, operated by the Girls Day School Trust (GDST) and sited at Devonshire Place, Prenton. There are currently around 640 girls on roll across the age range, including 96 in post-16 education. The school draws pupils from across Wirral, with a small number travelling from out of borough. The admissions arrangements have recently been altered to enable boys to be admitted to the 3 to 7 age range.
- 6.2 In early October, it was announced that the GDST had approached the Academies division of the DCSF with a view to becoming an Academy from September 2009.

The school has released a statement via its website which can be read at: <http://www.gdst.net/birkenheadhigh/>

- 6.3 This application is at an early stage, and there has yet to be a full formal consultation which must involve the Authority. If it is approved by the Academies Division, the school would become an all girls Academy with approximately 900 free places for girls aged 3 to 19. Parents of existing pupils will no longer be required to pay fees. The school intends to phase admissions by admitting new pupils only to F2 (Reception), Year 7 and Year 12 (sixth form) in the first year, with all other year groups remaining unchanged in terms of “in-filling”. The school intends to select 10% of pupils in Year 7 on the basis of aptitude in music. All other places would be allocated on the basis of a “fair banding” system, the details of which are currently unclear.
- 6.4 The school indicates that there would be two forms of entry to F2, and four forms of entry to Year 7. Currently classes in primary phase have up to 20 pupils, whilst classes in secondary phase have no more than 24 pupils. The Academy would admit girls only up to age 16, but there is a possibility of boys being admitted into the Sixth Form department.
- 6.5 Shortly after the GDST announced their intention to apply for Academy status, the independent Birkenhead School (Boys) announced that it will become a co-educational school from September 2008. Ahead of this date, they have stated that girls will be admitted to Foundation 2, Year 1 and Year 2 (Key Stage 1) from January 2008, to Years 3 to 5 from April 2008, and to Year 6 and the Senior school from September 2008. They will remain independent, and retain their fees and selection system. Further detail is available via the school’s website. <http://www.birkenheadschoo.co.uk/news/coed.htm>
- 6.6 Changes to the independent school sector, creating more mainstream places for girls, is likely to have an impact on both primary and secondary school places and pupil numbers, particularly in schools in the local area to Birkenhead High School, (although the Academy proposal is to draw pupils from the wider Wirral area). There are four secondary schools within two miles of Birkenhead High School which admit girls, they are Park High, Prenton High for Girls, Ridgeway High and Woodchurch High Schools. Upton Hall School, a Catholic Aided grammar school for girls is just over 2 miles away. St Anselm’s Catholic Aided College is within 2 miles, and may be affected if boys are admitted to the new Academy’s Sixth Form. Other schools further afield may also be impacted if this change is approved.
- 6.7 It would be prudent to invite representatives from Birkenhead High School to participate in the pre-consultation exercise referred to in section 10 below.

7.0 Inclusion

- 7.1 Concurrent with the proposed review of mainstream secondary school provision, a seconded special school headteacher will be leading on an investigation of the future of secondary special school provision in Wirral. This will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet.
- 7.2 Nationally, there has been an increasing emphasis on inclusive education, that is, the education of more children and young people with special needs within mainstream educational settings. There may be opportunities to locate special needs bases within mainstream secondary schools, or indeed to co-locate special schools with their mainstream counterparts.
- 7.3 The numbers of pupils involved are relatively small, and while this is an important accommodation factor to be considered, it is not a priority within the Council’s vision for

Building Schools for the Future, the impact on surplus places and school size is expected to be minimal.

8.0 Building Schools for the Future and PFI

- 8.1 The Council's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) has resulted in the rebuild or significant remodelling of 9 secondary schools and one primary school. A unitary charge is payable on these buildings for twenty-five years after the building is handed over to the Local Authority. This liability remains whether or not the building remains in use as a school, however it does not preclude options affecting schools occupying PFI buildings.
- 8.2 Due partly to Wirral's participation in PFI, the Council's place in the national Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme is in wave D, which means full participation by 2016. In advance of the full BSF programme, Wirral was invited to take part in a One School Pathfinder scheme to fully re-build one secondary school, and the rebuilding of Woodchurch High School was approved by Cabinet on 15th November 2006. Design and programme development are underway, architects and relevant Technical Services staff have been appointed to the scheme. Completion is anticipated in August 2009, with subsequent demolition of part of the existing buildings and ground works.
- 8.3 As part of the full BSF programme, the Council will be required to draw up a Strategy for Change and an outline business case articulating its vision for transforming secondary school provision and outlining the principles that would underpin the programme.

These principles are likely to include:

- Meeting the demands of 21st century learning activities and curriculum changes
- Access to ICT
- Inclusion
- Extended schools provision
- Specialist facilities
- Promoting physical and mental well-being

- 8.4 It is important to start planning and consulting early with schools, parents/carers and other stakeholders, and to begin thinking in depth about what modern schools should look like and where funding and work can be targeted most effectively.

9.0 Secondary Place Review Process

- 9.1 It is proposed that in addition to the existing measures set out in 3.9 above that a review of secondary school places is begun in Autumn 2007 to match current provision against future predicted need and draw up proposals for discussion and further consultation, leading to formal proposals, where appropriate. This will also enable the Authority to be prepared for BSF, and for any further "advance" projects that might arise of a similar nature to the current One School Pathfinder at Woodchurch High School.
- 9.2 Surplus places are currently highest in Birkenhead and Wallasey, lower in Deeside and Bebington. However preliminary analysis indicates that Birkenhead and Bebington have interlinked pupil populations at the secondary level, and consequently should be reviewed together in Phase 1 during 2007/2008. Wallasey and Deeside areas will then form Phase 2 of the Secondary review. Should a

school be placed in an Ofsted category of concern during this time, it may alter the timescale for schools in that area.

9.3 As in the on-going Primary Places Review, it is proposed that a review document be produced for each area, including the following information:

- (a) Relevant cabinet reports
- (b) Maps of the area
- (c) School data, including Aided provision.
- (d) Demographics and projections
- (e) Current school populations plotted by address.
- (f) Asset Management Data
- (g) Other services / provision currently located on school sites.
- (h) School performance data
- (i) Diocesan Body statement

This document would be used as the basis for pre-consultation discussions with school governors and headteachers, Diocesan Bodies, other Council departments and relevant external bodies, with a view to producing options for more formal consultation as appropriate.

9.4 The outcome of the pre-consultation, including any options for formal consultation, will be the subject of a future report to Cabinet. If Cabinet approves options for formal consultation at that stage, the next step would be to publish the options and hold wide consultation with stakeholders including parents/carers.

9.5 Following consultation, a further report will be brought to Cabinet, containing recommendations for next steps, which may include statutory proposals. The earliest date for implementation of such proposals would be September 2009.

9.6 The challenges created by the falling roll also offer an opportunity to make a significant investment and complete the transformation of Wirral's secondary schools, begun by PFI, to ensure that all pupils and their communities have access to high-quality secondary education, in high quality facilities, fit for purpose for 21st century education and provide stability in this sector for a significant period of time.

9.7 The review process proposed in this report will enable the Council to be well-placed to make best use of BSF and other funding streams, by developing a comprehensive strategic vision for the future of secondary school provision in Wirral.

10.0 Financial Implications

10.1 Inaction will mean spending larger proportions of the overall schools budget on fixed costs, and consequently less directly on pupils. The decisions on school re-organisation emanating from the Primary Places Review have already demonstrated value for money and enabled the Authority to devote more resources to children's education in order to produce better quality outcomes, leading to higher standards and more efficient use of capital. The first three phases of the Primary Places Review will enable more than £500,000 to be redistributed each year which would otherwise have been spent on fixed costs.

11.0 Staffing Implications

11.1 Current staffing levels will need to be taken into account in determining the number and timescale of proposed area reviews.

12.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

12.1 It is essential to plan school provision across the Authority so that it is both efficient and effective in the interests of all pupils.

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 Rationalisation and refurbishment of schools allow the most vulnerable accommodation to be removed and other security improvements carried out.

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14.1 The removal of old, inefficient accommodation contributes to Council principles and targets in respect of Agenda 21.

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15.1 The relationship between housing development policy and school place provision is a factor in considering surplus place removal.

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16.1 The redistribution of funding released by school reorganisation, in combination with the Authority's intention to realign the schools budget to give higher levels of funding to schools with high levels of deprivation, as well as improved accommodation, goes towards raising aspirations and narrowing the attainment gap for vulnerable groups.

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17.1 School re-organisation and transforming secondary mainstream and secondary special accommodation through BSF and other schemes, provides opportunities to promote joint agency work to promote co-ordinated solutions for pupils and their families. There is scope for community participation in the design process of new school buildings through BSF, raising the school's profile within the community.

18.0 Local Member Support Implications

18.1 Secondary school re-organisation has relevance to all Wards.

19.0 Background Papers

19.1 Audit Commission Report: Planning School Places in Wirral September 2004.

Asset Management Plan and Statement of Priorities.

School Census, January 2007

Supply of School Places return, August 2007, to DCSF requirements.

Other data held in Department

Recommendations

That

- (1) approval be given to the principle of a two phase review of secondary school provision beginning with pre-consultation with headteachers and chairs of governors in schools in Birkenhead and Bebington;
- (2) approval be given to invite representatives from Birkenhead High School to participate in the review from the pre-consultation stage onwards; and
- (3) options arising from this initial consultation be the subject of a further report to Cabinet with my recommendations for option(s) to proceed to wider, formal, consultation with all stakeholders.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

Minutes - Cabinet - 29 November 2007

Present

Chair S Foulkes

Councillors George Davies, PL Davies, G Gardiner, PJ Hackett, SA Holbrook, SE Kelly, M McLaughlin, RK Moon, Jean Quinn

In attendance: C Blakeley, S L Clarke, JE Green, SR Mountney, WW Smith

Minute 361 - CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING: PROVISION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES – FUTURE STRATEGY

The Director of Children's Services gave a summary of the position in respect of secondary school places and described recent developments, the current position and issues for the future. His report identified a significant increase in secondary surplus places over the medium term if further action were not taken and proposed a phased review of secondary school provision, involving schools and stakeholders, to identify any further opportunities for the removal of surplus places.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning referred to the rationale for the review being similar to that for Primary School reviews. He felt that the process gave everyone the opportunity to get involved and thanked those staff that had been involved in the initial work.

The Leader of the Council referred to the additional factors that would be involved in the review of secondary school provision and indicated that he had been impressed with the work that had been undertaken to date and the links that had been made with Headteachers and Chairs of Governors.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group stated that whilst it was necessary to address the issue of numbers set out in the report, the additional factors for consideration needed to be set out.

The Director of Children's Services agreed to arrange a seminar for all members of the Council on the different governance arrangements in schools.

Minute Decision :

Resolved - That

- (1) approval be given to the principle of a two phase review of secondary school provision beginning with pre-consultation with headteachers and chairs of governors in schools in Birkenhead and Bebington;
- (2) approval be given to invite representatives from Birkenhead High School to participate in the review from the pre-consultation stage onwards; and
- (3) options arising from this initial consultation be the subject of a further report to Cabinet with recommendations from the Director of Children's Services for option(s) to proceed to wider, formal, consultation with all stakeholders.

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update of the progress so far with regard to the development of the two new Academies in Birkenhead. The report seeks approval for the two Expressions of Interest and for commencement of the statutory consultation process for closure of the three secondary schools affected by the Phase 1 proposals.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting of 29th November 2007, Cabinet instructed that Phase 1 of the Secondary Places Review should comprise schools in Birkenhead and Bebington (Wirral South).
- 1.2 Phase 1 has resulted in a complex option for consultation including the establishment of a mixed Academy and a Boys Academy, linked to the closure of three existing schools – Ridgeway High School, Rock Ferry High School and Park High School. This was reported to Cabinet on 19th March 2009.

2.0 Overview of the Academies Process and Progress So Far

- 2.1 Following the approval by Cabinet at the March meeting of the proposals for the Secondary Review of School Places, the Office for the Schools Commissioner (OSC) worked on a Statement of Intent for each Academy. This outlines the intention of the Minister for Schools to establish the two academies in Birkenhead. The LA was asked to provide the OSC with some background information about the schools and their context and each of the sponsors were asked to provide information about themselves and what they would bring to each Academy. There was a delay in us receiving the Statements of Intent as a result of a change in the Minister for Schools and Learners in early June. We received the two Statements of Intent on 8th July 2009.
- 2.2 The confirmation of the Statements of Intent also confirmed the sponsor teams for the two Academies. These are:

Mixed Academy

University of Chester (lead sponsor)

Wirral Metropolitan College

The Local Authority

Boys' Academy

David Hughes (lead sponsor)

University of Liverpool

Birkenhead Sixth Form College

The Local Authority

- 2.3 The next stage in the process was for each of the Academy sponsor teams to put together an Expression of Interest. The lead sponsor oversees this process. The New Projects Division of the DCSF identifies an external consultant to support the process. The consultant for the Wirral Academies was appointed by the DCSF in early July 2009 and the first meeting between herself and the sponsors took place on the 27th and 28th July 2009. In her timeline the Expressions of Interest are due to be submitted for Ministerial decision later in October once they have been approved by the DCSF Operations Board on 6th October 2009.

- 2.4 The meetings on 27th and 28th July triggered a range of actions. The LA was asked to provide the consultant with data and information about the existing schools, demographics, standards and so forth. Quite a large part of the DCSF template for the Expression of Interest (EOI) contains this information.
- 2.5 Each of the sponsor teams was charged with producing a Vision Statement as part of the Expression of Interest for their Academy. The process for producing the vision statement has taken place over August and early September, via meetings and electronic communication.
- 2.6 Following this process, the consultant has pulled together the data sections using the information from the LA and the Vision statements and then worked on a covering commentary.
- 2.7 As part of this process, the governing bodies of the three existing schools have been invited to a meeting where each of the sponsor teams have been able to present their vision statements and invite comments. Each governing body, on the same evening, was asked to formally meet and minute their response. As the model is for 3 schools becoming 2 academies, each governing body was asked to produce a response to each of the EOIs. It is not a requirement that the existing governing bodies approve the EOIs, but the process does require that they are given an opportunity to express their views.
- 2.8 At the Cabinet meeting of 1st October 2009 the Cabinet is being asked to approve the two EOIs as both the LA and as a sponsor.
- 2.9 Once the sponsors have all agreed and signed the EOIs and Cabinet has also approved they will then be submitted to the Minister for Schools and Learners for his approval.
- 2.10 Once the Minister for Schools and Learners has approved the EOIs, the third stage commences which is called the Feasibility Stage. This stage is about more detailed planning for the Academy, agreeing curriculum structure, leadership and management arrangements, staffing requirements, starting planning processes regarding buildings, planning ICT, deciding key policy statements and so on. The DCSF appoint a Project Management Team to support the sponsors in this process. The current timeline has this commencing in November and being completed early spring 2010.
- 2.11 The Feasibility stage also includes the formal consultation with stakeholders on the establishment of the two new Academies, as well as the pre-statutory consultation on the closure of the predecessor schools, which is discussed in more detail in Section 4 below.
- 2.12 The outcome of this stage will be a further submission to the Minister for approval who, if he approves, signs the Funding Agreement.
- 3.0 Expressions of Interest**
- 3.1 The Vision Statements as part of the Expressions of Interest for each of the two proposed Academies will be presented by the sponsor teams to Cabinet as part of this report. The draft Expressions of Interest are included as Appendix 1 (Boys) and Appendix 2 (Mixed). It should be noted that these documents are draft and may contain comments and minor items of missing information that will be rectified before submission to the DCSF Operations Board.
- 4.0 Consultation on Closure**
- 4.1 In order to establish Academies on existing school sites, it is necessary to follow the statutory procedures to close the existing community secondary schools. The process must to be completed before the Funding Agreement with the DCSF can be signed.
- 4.2 The two Academies are due to open in 2010, with pupils on roll at the existing three schools transferring to the new Academies. In order to meet this timeline, it is anticipated that the funding agreement between the sponsor teams and the DCSF to finance the two Academies will be signed by April 2010. For this to happen, it is necessary for the Council to secure the necessary approvals to close the existing schools as community schools before this date.

- 4.3 The Local Authority undertakes formal consultations on the closure of the predecessor schools in order to make way for the new Academies. It is envisaged that this would take place in October-November 2009, with the outcome reported to Cabinet in January 2010. If it were then decided to proceed further, statutory notices would be published, followed by a six week representation period during which comments and objections can be made by any person or organisation in relation to the proposals. Council's Cabinet, as the Decision Maker, would then be asked to determine the notices taking into consideration the representations received, to decide whether the three predecessor schools should close, with a proviso that these closures are linked to the signing of the Funding Agreement.
- 4.4 The timetable below outlines the necessary stages of consultation for each school concerned. Consultation will involve staff, governors, parents and the local community at each affected school, as well as other statutory consultees set out in guidance.

| Action | Date |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Report to Cabinet | 1 st October 2009 |
| Formal closure consultation begins (6 weeks) | 21 st October 2009 |
| Formal closure consultation closes | 27 th November 2009 |
| Report to Cabinet | 14 th January 2010 |
| Statutory closure consultation begins (6 weeks) | 28 th January 2010 |
| Statutory closure consultation closes | 10 th March 2010 |
| Report to Cabinet | 15 th April 2010 |
| Funding Agreement signed | End of April 2010 |

- 4.5 At the same time, the sponsor teams undertake a non-statutory consultation on the opening of the Academies. The consultation outcomes are reported to the Secretary of State as part of the required documentation for the Funding Agreement.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from the report.
- 5.2 Capital funding for new and refurbished Academy buildings is from the national Building Schools for the Future programme. The responsibility to provide sites for Academies rests with the LA. There are likely to be significant costs in the management of the Academy programme and the transition stage which will be the subject of future reports.

6.0 Staffing Implications

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.
- 6.2 The creation of Academies 2 and 3 will require significant staff transfers under TUPE, provision of staff matched to the transition arrangements and the management of the transfer from existing staffing structures to those of the new Academies.
- 6.3 Costs arising from redundancies agreed prior to establishment of the new Academies are shared between the LA and the DCSF. Any redundancy costs arising following the establishment of the Academies are to be met from the Academy's budget.

7.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 7.1 It is essential to plan school provision across the Authority so that it is both efficient and effective in the interests of all pupils.
- 7.2 An equality impact assessment will be carried out on this report.

8.0 Community Safety Implications

- 8.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

9.0 Local Agenda 21 Implications

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

10.0 Planning Implications

10.1 All capital works will be subject to the relevant national and local planning legislation.

11.0 Anti-Poverty Implications

11.1 The capital investment in new and refurbished Academy provision is intended to contribute to “narrowing the gap” which is one of the Council’s priorities.

12.0 Social Inclusion Implications

12.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

13.0 Local Member Support Implications

13.1 Secondary school re-organisation has relevance to all Wards.

13.2 The three secondary schools named in this report are located in Claughton and Rock Ferry Wards.

14.0 Background Papers

14.1 Reference documentation and guidance on the Academy programme produced by the DCSF

Working papers for Academy 2 and Academy 3 held in the Children and Young People’s Department

Recommendations

- (1) That Cabinet approves the Expressions of Interest for the two Academies and their submission to the Minister of State for Schools and Learners.
- (2) That the Director of Children’s Services undertake all necessary formal consultations on the closure of the three predecessor schools as set out by guidance

Howard Cooper

Director of Children’s Services



**ACADEMY 2 (BOYS)
(Working title)
IN WIRRAL**

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR AN ACADEMY
REPLACING THREE PREDECESSOR SCHOOLS**

Section 1: 1.1 Executive Summary

It is proposed to replace three co-educational secondary schools, Park, Rock Ferry, and Ridgeway High Schools, in Birkenhead, an area of the Wirral which has significant social and economic disadvantage, with two academies; one for boys only and one which will be co-educational.

This proposal is for the Boys Academy. The lead sponsor would be David E. Hughes, a Birkenhead born business man, with co-sponsors the University of Liverpool, Birkenhead Sixth Form College, and Wirral Borough Council. The academy would open in 2010 on the site of one of the predecessor schools, Rock Ferry High School, in the south of the town, with its new building expected to be completed in 2012.

The three 11-16 schools which are non-selective secondary schools within a selective area, are located in areas of acute social and economic disadvantage; Rock Ferry is in the bottom 10% and Park is in the bottom 10-20% most disadvantaged nationally. Ridgeway is in the 20-30% most disadvantaged nationally. Rock Ferry's and Park's students are drawn from areas in the bottom 5% most deprived nationally; in 2008 over 50% of their students were entitled to free school meals. Ridgeway's students are drawn from areas in the bottom 19% most deprived areas nationally with 36% of students entitled to free school meals in 2008. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and students enter the school with below average literacy levels. Most students are from white British backgrounds and there are a small number of students from minority ethnic groups, of whom 1-2% in 2008 were at an early stage of speaking English. Park and Rock Ferry are Community schools and Ridgeway has Foundation status. All three schools have significant surplus places. There are currently 2124 students in total in the three schools and 1261 surplus places.

Student achievement at 16 of 5+A*-C grades at GCSE including English and maths in the three schools in 2008, was 26% at Park; 23% at Rock Ferry; and 37% at Ridgeway- well below both national and Wirral averages. Provisional results for 2009 are 27% at Park; 25% at Rock Ferry and 47% at Ridgeway. The school's CVA scores, in 2008, placed them in the top 25% of schools nationally. All three schools are in the National Challenge programme

It is proposed that Academy 2 (Boys) would have an admission number of 150

providing 750 11-16 places, which along with a PAN of 150 for the proposed co-educational Academy would result in a reduction of 1,868 total places overall.

The lead sponsor and co-sponsors for academy 2 (Boys) comprise what they intend will prove to be a top drawer team committed to ensuring the academy raises the ambitions and expectations of its students, achieves high standards, significantly raises student attainment, and is outstanding in everything it does. The academy will promote the concept of individual self-determination; constantly seeking to defeat the expectation that one's life script is written at birth and to instil the belief in students that what they ultimately achieve will be in their own hands. Borrowed from the social institution that is FC Barcelona, the motto of the academy will be "**more than a school**". In the current vernacular, it will establish the belief that doing well in school really is cool.

The Academy's specialisms will be Applied Learning and Business and Enterprise to capitalise on David Hughes's business acumen, the Sixth Form College's strengths, and the University's renowned business school and its Chinese/ Shanghai University links. The specialist curriculum will have a strong technically oriented focus which will include Engineering and Construction, the Built Environment, and aspects of Manufacturing and Product Design, underpinned by maths and science; a whole school approach will be adopted for the teaching of business and enterprise, students will have 'Business and Enterprise Passports' to record their work related learning and enterprise skills and knowledge, and positive attitudes towards risk taking and entrepreneurial attitudes will be cultivated. High flyers will be expected to apply for places at the most prestigious universities worldwide and students of all abilities will be expected to become the engineers; architects, builders, technicians and trades of the construction industry; specialists in all fields of science; and the business brains and entrepreneurs of the future.

All students will study as part of the new secondary curriculum the core curriculum, English, maths, science, foundation subjects, ICT, PE, citizenship; work related learning and enterprise, a course within any or all of the areas of the arts, design and technology, humanities, modern foreign languages if they wish to, will develop functional skills in literacy, numeracy, and ICT and will develop personal learning and thinking skills. Each student will be offered an individually tailored curriculum- with academic and vocational courses being given equal status- leading to a variety of academic and vocational qualifications for all abilities, for example GCSEs and applied GCSEs, BTECs, NVQs, A levels, Diplomas and Young Apprenticeships, and, utilising in particular our co-sponsors' expertise and employer networks, with clear progression pathways to FE, HE and worthwhile employment.

There will be a strong focus on playing sport in the curriculum and especially team sports, team participation, winning and losing and internal and external competition and activity; and a complementary focus on the arts and sciences and on making a contribution to the academy and wider community. Our students' skills and qualities in leadership, team working, communication, independent enquiry, self management, creative thinking, reliability and work ethic will be developed through curriculum programmes and projects and through competitive and collaborative activities to ensure students have a well rounded educational experience and to equip them for meaningful employment in an increasingly sophisticated labour market.

Students with the most need and gifted and talented students will be supported through learning mentors and all students will have access to a wide range of student and family support services through partnerships with the local authority and other statutory agencies for example "Gold standard" health and well being support and services

provided by Wirral NHS .

The academy will offer on site programmes of Saturday morning catch-up, summer holiday learning camps, reading and writing clubs and examination re-sits workshops. Local business people and local tradesmen and women, very possibly from the pool that have retired, will be actively encouraged to be involved in the education of the next generation of young men. The academy will make its facilities available 7-days-a-week, up to 16-hours-a-day to students, parents/carers and the community in general and will encourage adult learning and participation in recreational and social activities.

The academy will have strong leadership and management; the Principal and leadership team will have ambitions which match those outlined in our vision and our teaching and support staff will be of the highest quality with the skills, experience, knowledge, and understanding to inspire our students to excel.

This academy will be **more than a school**. It intends, in partnership with other local organisations, to be the very heartbeat of its community.

The name of the academy will be decided in feasibility.

1.2 Key statistics

| 1. Predecessor School – Educational attainment | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|------|-------------|------|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| | GCSE 5+ A* -C | | | | GCSE 5+ A* -C inc English and maths | | | |
| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
| National Average | 56.3 | 58.5 | 60.8 | 64.8 | 44.3 | 45.3 | 46.0 | 47.3 |
| LA Average | 57 | 58 | 61 | 66 | 45.4 | 46.3 | 48.4 | 50.2 |
| Park High School 1 | 29 | 31 | 41 | 52 | 13 | 16 | 23 | 26 |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 33 | 35 | 28 | 41 | 20 | 24 | 19 | 23 |
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 54 | 52 | 48 | 53 | 25 | 33 | 27 | 37 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| CVA Scores (KS2-4) | 2006 | | 2007 | | 2008 | | | |
| LA Average | 1007.8 | | 1009.7 | | 1009.4 | | | |
| Park High School 1 | 1000.8 | | 1014.9 | | 1021.0 | | | |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 1019.8 | | 1000.2 | | 1015.8 | | | |

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 1040.5 | 1037.2 | 1022.0 |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|

2. Predecessor School – Deprivation

| National figures quoted relate only to secondary schools | Pupil rank (based on number of secondary schools) out of 3377 of which 1 is the most deprived) | Site rank (school location) of which 0 is the most deprived and 100 is the least deprived | % students eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) |
|--|--|---|---|
| | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| National Average | - | - | 13.1 |
| LA Average | - | - | 23.1 |
| Park High School 1 | 152/3377 4.5% | 10-20% | 51.5 |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 128/3377 3.8% | 0-10% | 53.0 |
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 632/3377 19% | 20-30% | 35.7 |

3. Predecessor school – Basic characteristics

| National figures quoted relate only to secondary schools. | Students on Roll (3-11) | Students on Roll* (11-16) | Students on Roll (16-19) | School capacity 2009 | % with SEN statement | % of students with EAL |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | 2008 | 2008 |
| National Average | - | - | - | - | 2.0% | 10.6 % |
| LA Average | - | - | - | - | 2.3% | 1.5% |
| Park High School 1 | 0 | 811* | 0 | 1250 | 1.8% | 2.1% |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 0 | 584* | 0 | 1232 | 8.3% | 1.0% |
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 0 | 729* | 0 | 885 | 4.0% | 1.3% |

* Students on roll as at Jan 2009

| 4. Proposed Academy – Basic characteristics | | | | |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Planned number of students (3-11) | Planned number of students (11-16) | Planned number of students (16-19) | Planned maximum number | Specialism(s) |
| 0 | 750 | 0 | 750 | Applied Learning and Business and Enterprise |
| Proposed opening date | Target build completion date | Building route (BSF or National Framework) | Faith Designation | Name of Sponsor(s) |
| 2010 | 2012 | National Framework | None | Lead sponsor-David Hughes with The University of Liverpool, Birkenhead Sixth Form College, and Wirral MBC as Co-sponsors |

Section 2: The Predecessor Schools

| |
|--------------------|
| 2.1 Not applicable |
|--------------------|

2.2 Basic Characteristics

| | School 1 | School 2 | School 3 |
|---|--|---|--|
| School Name: | Park High | Rock Ferry High | Ridgeway High |
| School Address: | Park Road South, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 4UY | Ravenswood Avenue, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH42 4NY | Noctorum Avenue, Noctorum, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 9EB |
| Name of LA: Wirral | | LA Code: 344 | |
| Type of Establishment (Please mark one with an x) | | | |
| Community School | X | X | |
| Foundation School | | | X |
| Voluntary Aided (VA) School | | | |
| Voluntary Controlled (VC) School | | | |
| City Technology College | | | |
| Independent | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | |

| Is this a designated Faith School? (Please mark one with an x) | | | |
|--|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes with faith admissions | (Faith:) | (Faith:) | (Faith:) |
| Yes without faith admissions | (Faith:) | (Faith:) | (Faith:) |
| No | X | X | X |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Specialism(s) if applicable: | Sport | Performing Arts | Business and Enterprise and Language |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|

2.3 School Population

| | | Park High School 1 | Rock Ferry High School 2 | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|---|-----------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Admissions Number: | | 250 | 250 | 160 |
| Current number of students on roll as at: January 2009 | Year 7: | 150 | 92 | 130 |
| | Year 8: | 111 | 98 | 147 |
| | Year 9: | 173 | 113 | 147 |
| | Year 10: | 184 | 159 | 156 |
| | Year 11: | 193 | 122 | 149 |
| Number of Year 7 students admitted in: | | | | |
| | Sept 2005 | 200 | 153 | 157 |
| | Sept 2006 | 179 | 112 | 156 |
| | Sept 2007 | 111 | 96 | 148 |
| | Sept 2008 | 150 | 92 | 130 |
| Number of Year 12-13 students at the school in: | | | | |
| | Sept 2005 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Sept 2006 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Sept 2007 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Sept 2008 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage of pupil population who joined or left the school other than at the start or finish of the academic year: | | | | |
| | 2004/05 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | 2005/06 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | 2006/07 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | 2007/08 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

2.4 Admissions

| | | |
|---|----------|---|
| Please attach a copy of the current Admissions Policy | | |
| School 1 Park High | Attached | X |
| School 2 Rock Ferry High | Attached | X |
| School 3 Ridgeway High school 3 | Attached | X |

2.5 Leadership

| |
|--|
| <p>School 1 Park High</p> <p>Name of headteacher: Mr Steven McMahon</p> |
| <p>Headteacher has been in post for: 4 Years 0 Months as of 1st September 2009.</p> |
| <p>Rock Ferry High School 2</p> <p>Name of headteacher: Mr Peter Bennett</p> |
| <p>Headteacher has been in post for: 9 Years 0 Months as of 1st September 2009.</p> |
| <p>Ridgeway High School 3</p> <p>Name of headteacher: Ms Pauline Roberts</p> |
| <p>Headteacher has been in post for: 1 Year 0 Months as of 1st September 2009.</p> |

2.6 School Improvement

| | Park High School 1 | Rock Ferry High School 2 | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Intervention status (Please mark box(es) with an x) | | | |
| None | X | X | X |
| Special Measures | | | |
| Significant Improvement/Notice to Improve | | | |
| Warning Notice issued | | | |
| Causing Concern | | | |
| Interim Executive Board | | | |
| Required school to enter into partnership arrangements | | | |
| Added additional governors | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| Suspended delegated budget | | | | |
| Please provide details: | | | | |
| Does the predecessor school receive any external support and/or is it in receipt of a tailored external support package? | Yes – National Challenge | X | X | X |
| | Yes – other | | | |
| | No | | | |
| If other, please provide details: | | | | |

2.7 Finance

| | Park High School 1 | | Rock Ferry High School 2 | | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|--|--------------------|---|--------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Does the predecessor school currently have a budget deficit? | Yes | | Yes | | |
| | No | X | No | X | X |
| If yes, please provide details: | | | | | |

| | Park High School 1 | | Rock Ferry High School 2 | | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|---|--|---|--------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Does the predecessor school currently have an in-year deficit? | Yes | X | Yes | | |
| | No | | No | X | X |
| If yes, please provide details: | Budget deficit of £22,000 at time of writing - is expected to balance when the budget is resubmitted during Autumn 2009. | | | | |
| The LA should note that any deficit budget remaining at the point of school closure would not transfer to the academy. | | | | | |

Section 3: The Proposed Academy

3.1 Academy Population

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Gender (Mark one with an x) | |
| Co-Educational | |
| Single Sex Boys | X |
| Single Sex Girls | |

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Forms of Entry: | 5FE |
| Admissions Number: | 150 |
| Nursery (age 3-5): | 0 |
| Years 7-11 (age 11-16) | 750 |
| Years 12-13 (age 16-19): | 0 |

Please provide a detailed justification for the size of the proposed academy:

There are 23 secondary schools in Wirral, 6 of these are single sex selective schools (three boys, three girls), 6 are single sex non-selective schools (four girls, two boys), the remainder being mixed sex non-selective schools, two of which are Catholic secondary schools.

Within the Birkenhead review area, in September 2009 there will be three non-selective mixed schools – Ridgeway High, Rock Ferry High and Park High; two non-selective girls schools – Prenton High and Birkenhead High Academy and one selective boys grammar – St Anselm’s Catholic College.

Expected Year 7 admissions in September 2009 for the 6 schools are currently 680 (c 23 FE) of which 126 (c 4 FE) are for the boys selective school, 243 (c 8 FE) are for the two girls non-selective schools and 311 (c 10 FE) are for the three non-selective schools.

Pupil numbers entering Year 7 in the area are forecast to fall over the next few years, rising again to reach approximately 680 (23 FE) by 2018.

Park High School has a PAN of 250 for Year 7 with 811 students on roll in January 2009, and 439 surplus places, projected to reach 670 surplus places by 2018.

Rock Ferry High School has a PAN of 250 for Year 7 with 584 students on roll in January 2009 and 648 surplus places, projected to reach 831 surplus places by 2018.

Ridgeway High School has a PAN of 160 for Year 7 with 729 students on roll in January 2009 and 157 surplus places, projected to reach 302 by 2018.

It is proposed that the Boys Academy will have a PAN of 150 for Year 7. PANs of 150 for both the proposed Boys and Mixed Academies would result in a reduction of 1,868 total places overall and bring school provision in line with pupil population projections. It is anticipated that the Boys Academy if successful through its status and improved educational offer and intended increased attainment will admit to its planned admission number as an Academy. The PAN for the Boys Academy is the same as the admission number at Prenton High School for Girls.

3.2 All-age Academies

If the academy would provide primary school places, please provide the case for an all-age academy: N/A

If the academy proposes to cater for nursery students (age 3-5), please provide details of how this would fit with the LA's strategic plan for nursery education: N/A

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Does the LA confirm it would fund the capital costs of the primary and/or nursery element for the all-age academy? | Yes | |
| | N/A | X |

3.3 Proposed Opening Date in existing buildings

2010

3.4 Target Build Completion Date

2012

3.5 Specialism(s)

The academy would specialise in: Applied Learning and Business and Enterprise

3.6 Admissions

Please confirm that the academy's admissions policy and arrangements would be in accordance with admissions law, the School Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice as they apply to maintained schools.

Confirmed X

Please confirm that the admissions policy would ensure that the academy meets the statutory requirements (i.e. "provides education for students of different abilities who are wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which the school is situated").

Confirmed X

The academy would take up its place on the local admissions forum:

Confirmed X

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| If oversubscribed would the academy select up to 10% of its students by aptitude for the specialism? | Yes | |
| | No | N/A |
| If yes, please provide details of how the sponsor would develop a selection mechanism that is not dependent on ability: N/A | | |

Please provide any further details known about the proposed over subscription criteria and admissions policy. In particular, how the policy would lead to a balanced intake and whether "banding by ability" would be considered :

The Sponsors of Academy 2 are committed to adopting the same admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria as the local authority.

Banding- the local authority and the Sponsors have considered banding and believe that a mixed ability intake, as far as is possible in a selective system, would be achieved without the need for banding using the proposed oversubscription criteria.

Firm proposals for admissions would be decided during feasibility but are expected to be based on the following:

Admissions at Age 11, Year 7

The Admission Number of the Academy would be 150.

The Academy would admit all students with a Statement of Special Educational Need naming the Academy and to which the Academy has agreed.

Should the Academy be undersubscribed all applicants would be admitted.

Should the Academy be oversubscribed it would be expected that the following oversubscription criteria would be used:
Priority would be given in the following order:

1. Children who are in the care of the local authority.
2. Children who have a valid medical reason for a specific placement
3. Children who have a brother (including half-brothers or step brothers living in the same household) on roll at the Academy of statutory school age;
4. Children living nearest to the Academy using the shortest road route, unless it is possible to use a footpath which is considered a safe walking route

3.7 Exclusions

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| Please confirm that the academy would have regard to and have an independent appeal panel which acts in accordance with the Secretary of State's guidance on exclusions. | | |
| | Confirmed | X |

3.8 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

| | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| Please confirm that the proposed academy's SEN policy would have regard to meet the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice. | Confirmed | X |
| Would the academy be co-located with an SEN unit? If yes please note that the LA would bear all capital costs | Yes | |

| | | | | |
|---|-------------|-----|--------|-----|
| | | | No | X |
| If yes who would run the SEN unit? | The academy | N/A | The LA | N/A |
| Please provide details of the SEN unit: N/A | | | | |
| Please note that students in the unit should not be included in overall pupil numbers for the academy. If the academy is proposing to manage the unit, revenue funding to support the unit will be recouped from the Dedicated Schools Grant. | | | | |

3.9 The National Curriculum

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Please confirm that the academy would teach the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in English, maths, science and ICT to all students in years 1 to 6 (where these exist in the Academy) and years 7-11. | |
| | Confirmed X |

3.10 Behaviour Partnerships

| | |
|---|-------------|
| The academy would be part of a Behaviour Partnership and would work closely with the LA to improve behaviour and tackle persistent absence. | |
| | Confirmed X |

3.11 Vision

Context

This proposed academy will be formed as a result of the closure of three secondary schools in the Wirral, all of which are currently 11-16 co-educational. An understanding of the demography and the current number of single sex places in the Birkenhead area has uncovered a clear requirement for a boys' school to balance the needs of boys and girls in secondary education.

The catchment area for the academy is some of the most deprived areas of the borough, and in the bottom 4-19% most deprived nationally. Of the 2,124 students who attend the 3 predecessor schools approximately 48% are on free school meals and 17% are registered as being at school action plus of the SEN Code of Practice. Many of the students have low literacy and numeracy skills at the start of their secondary education and standards attained at 16 by many are well below Wirral and national averages.

The sponsors recognise the need for social and economic regeneration in the area. Unquestionably, this needs to be underpinned by significant and continuing improvements in educational outcomes. There is a real need for many more students across the Borough to succeed in core academic subjects and to enable the community to overcome high levels of deprivation which are now intergenerational.

It is intended that the academy will raise the self-esteem, aspirations and indeed the attainments and economic prospects of all of its students in an atmosphere of respect for and enrichment of the local community.

The sponsors are unanimously committed to developing a place of learning which will challenge low aspiration and inspire all and intends to involve the local community, most especially the parents/carers of students, in order to impact significantly upon the life opportunities of the young people that pass through its doors.

The Sponsors

The Lead Sponsor – David Hughes

The lead sponsor is Birkenhead born, educated at St. Anselm's and achieved a degree in Management Sciences at UMIST. He has a considerable track record of high performance in business. His particular interests are enterprise and retailing, following a successful career in retail spanning over 30 years, founding and controlling a £180m per annum turnover business. David Hughes has a wide range of interests and ambitions, with the desire to improve education standards at the very top of his list and as lead sponsor will provide strong leadership and governance, business acumen, expertise in results oriented management, and support for curriculum development particularly in employability skills through the engagement of local businesses/ sporting bodies etc to support the academy.

Co-Sponsors

The co-sponsors comprise what they intend will prove to be a top drawer team working in conjunction with the lead sponsor.

A key aim of the new academy will be to raise the ambitions and expectations of its students. To that end, the encouragement and involvement of Birkenhead Sixth Form College, the University of Liverpool, and Wirral MBC, as co-sponsors are expected to be significant factors. This will manifest itself not only by offering the complementary and additional services that access to their resources can achieve, but also by embedding, by their close involvement, the expectation that students can and should proceed to further and higher education or a job with training through both academic and work-based routes. Higher level qualifications through university or employment will become an expectation and not an exception in the lives of our students.

The University of Liverpool

The University of Liverpool was established in 1881 and is a member of the Russell Group of 20 leading research-intensive universities in the UK. It is a joint partner in the Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University based in Suzhou in China. The University excels in learning and teaching and offers over 200 degree programmes in subjects ranging from clinical and life sciences, law, architecture, physical sciences, engineering, management and the humanities. As a civic university, the University of Liverpool has a commitment to working locally and to widening access. As well as a continuing education programme for over 3000 adults in Merseyside and Cheshire, the University works with local schools and colleges to raise the aspirations of young people and encourage them to apply to university. The University of Liverpool is co-sponsor of the established North Liverpool Academy and of the developing Garston Enterprise Academy.

The University of Liverpool will offer as a co-sponsor: adult education provision based in the academy buildings; aspiration raising activities for those students who may not see university as a choice; access to staff development and training

for academy staff and joint activity with staff from the North Liverpool Academy and Garston Enterprise Academy to promote sharing of good practice; for example, access to international interns who can work with the academy for periods of up to three months on projects, e.g. tackling racism.

Birkenhead Sixth Form College

Birkenhead Sixth Form College has been established for 22 years and attracts students from across the Wirral. Although operating in a highly competitive market, the College has proved to be very successful and a popular choice with students and has a strong reputation in widening participation. There are over 1200 full time students aged 16-19 and over 2,000 part time student enrolments taking courses at levels 1- 4 including vocational options covering a range of subject areas. The College strongly supports the philosophy of raising expectations and ambitions for all young people within the community and will work with the academy to ensure that there are clear progression pathways into post 16 education and onto higher education as an associate college of the University of Liverpool; provide access to a wide range of networks across the Wirral; offer joint staff training and development activities and joint student initiatives to promote staying on in education; explore ways in which there may be opportunities to attain 'value for money' through close working relationships e.g. procurement opportunities/finance arrangements; and share expertise and knowledge on the engagement of adult learners and developing adult learning as part of the community programme within the academy.

Wirral Borough Council

The enthusiastic participation of the third co-sponsor, Wirral Borough Council, is most welcome and should provide the necessary oil to the machine - the enabling that brings the lead sponsor's vision to life.

The Council, as co-sponsor, will support the academy through a wide range of services and resources including school improvement, curriculum innovation, special educational needs, partnership working with other schools and colleges, networking, multi-agency working, adult learning, and will ensure the academy contributes to and benefits from social and economic regeneration.

The Broad Educational Ethos of the Academy

It was the Roman poet, Juvenal, who wrote "mens sana in corpore sano". The literal translation is "you will find a sound mind within a sound body". Put into modern idiom, that means it is easier to study and use the brain well when the physical body is fit and well. Academy 2 will NOT be a specialist sports academy, but its educational ethos is firmly founded in the core belief that fit, healthy, active students will perform better academically.

There will be a significant emotional investment in shared spirit and teamwork. Concepts from a different age of not letting your side down, pulling through for your partners and a commitment to healthy competition will be paramount within the academy. There will be a clear recognition that the twin impostors of success and failure should be treated with equanimity. Success and failure, victory and defeat are all integral parts of the human condition and a mature adult will understand and accept that proposition.

Because of the glorious arrival of the Olympic Games in London in 2012, there is now a clear governmental sports strategy ambition. That ambition is that all 5-16 year olds should be offered at least five hours of sports per week in their curriculum. The boys' academy will certainly achieve that.

The academy's clear intention is to achieve high standards, significantly raise student attainment, and to be outstanding in everything it does. The first 16 year olds to move on after five years of academy education on the new site will be the benchmark of what we intend to achieve.

The academy will aspire to:

- Develop successful learners who enjoy learning, make outstanding progress and achieve their full potential; and who are able to make healthy and safe decisions in life.
- Promote community engagement and social responsibility. Develop responsible citizens who celebrate human diversity and make a positive contribution to society;
- Foster creativity and critical thinking, and respect, tolerance and compassion;
- Act as a hub to support wider local services, with a particular emphasis on providing advice and guidance, access to services, family outreach programmes and parenting support in its widest form. The academy will be a centre for the community.

Currently the percentage of students achieving 5+ A*-C GCSE, including English and maths, are 27% at Park; 25% at Rock Ferry; and 47% at Ridgeway. The ambition of academy 2 is that within five years of opening on its new site, pass rates will be above the national average. Ambitious targets for 5A*-C incl Eng & Ma are, 2011 – 25%, 2012 – 31%, 2013 – 37%, 2014 – 43%, 2015 – 50%. Considerable emphasis will be placed upon achieving above average standards in the functional skills of English, maths and ICT. We expect the natural consequence of this to be that no young person will be lost to the system and become not in education, employment or training.

The ethos of the academy will be to encourage aspiration and endeavour and even more importantly to promote the concept of individual self-determination. It will constantly seek to defeat the expectation that one's life script is written at birth. Students from Academy 2 will progress to their adult life with the firm belief that what they ultimately achieve will be in their own hands. The current Government talks a lot about the need for greater social mobility. Most parents would see "mobility" as being their children acquiring greater skills and better employment opportunities than they themselves were able to achieve. Kick-starting social mobility again in Birkenhead will be one of the signs of this academy's success.

The academy will strive constantly to raise the realistic expectations and aspirations of its students. By working closely with the University of Liverpool and Birkenhead Sixth Form College, we expect to significantly broaden the horizons of our students. We will foster academic ambition and we will promote the expectation of progression to higher education. We will expect some of our students to apply for places at the most prestigious universities worldwide.

Simply by being a brand new, state-of-the-art academy, which is intended to be the best built and best equipped in the Wirral, there will be a massive investment in raising local self-esteem. The anticipated preferred site, adjacent to Tranmere Rovers Football Club, should produce a powerful synergy of expectation in an area where achievement in sport is valued above many other things.

Whilst there will be a strong focus on playing sport in the curriculum and

especially team sports, team participation, winning and losing and internal and external competition and activity there will also be a complementary focus on the arts and sciences, and on making a contribution to the academy and wider community, on to ensure our students have a well rounded educational experience. The clear aim of the academy is to turn out positive, confident, and caring young adults who are fit to take on the challenges of the 21st Century. Our students will be empowered to have a strong voice in the life and work of the Academy and community.

The academy will seek to recruit teaching staff who can offer positive role models to young men. As an example, we can foresee an English teacher who coaches one of the year rugby teams, but is equally at home standing on a stage and delivering a Shakespearian love sonnet.

Borrowed from the social institution that is FC Barcelona, the motto of the academy will be “**more than a school**”. In the current vernacular, it will establish the belief that doing well in school really is cool. It is worth restating that the academy will relentlessly drive up standards by establishing a positive, can-do attitude. Within that framework, recognition and reward for achievement will be encouraged.

The Specialisms

The Academy's core specialism will be Applied Learning. The principles of Applied Learning –to provide a curriculum and a range of qualifications which gives every student the chance to perform at their best and show what they are really capable of; to offer clear choice in progression routes to further or higher education and to meaningful employment; and to develop partnerships to offer more interesting and alternative career pathways, a broader skill base for their future employment, and to seek others who could teach our students new skills in new ways- will permeate all aspects of the Academy's wider curriculum and teaching and learning. As part of our specialism we will have a strong technically oriented focus which will include Engineering and Construction and the Built Environment, and aspects of Manufacturing and Product Design in line with the concept underpinning the recently announced University Technical Colleges being championed by Lord Baker.

To complement our Applied Learning specialism, Business & Enterprise will be our second specialism. Some of our students will be the future engineers, electronics professionals, and technicians in civil, mechanical, petro chemical, medical, marine and aeronautical engineering; the architects, builders, and trades of the construction industry; specialists in all fields of science; and the business brains and entrepreneurs of the future.

We will fully embrace and play a lead role for the area in the introduction and development of Diplomas in Engineering, Construction and the Built Environment, aspects of Manufacturing and Product Design, and in Science, and will develop academic and vocational programmes and work-based learning and clear progression routes to further and higher education and employment in these sectors.

The Academy will house on-site outstanding technical, vocational and ICT facilities. Through our College and University co-sponsors' established business links, and with other quality training providers, including providers and enablers sponsored by local industry, we will build local company partnerships with Hagelin, SameIco, Cammell Laird and Open House Products Limited to develop

our specialist curriculum, and teaching and learning practice, create opportunities for real life, work-based, and vocational learning to be experienced in a real and non-classroom environment, and develop the knowledge, skills, and understanding of both staff and students of opportunities in these sectors.

Maths and science for the 21st century will be cornerstones of the curriculum and our specialisms. We want our young people to be able to interrogate data, critically evaluate evidence and reach well-founded conclusions. We want them to understand the basis on which the modern world works and for them to be excited by it. Our maths specialists will make sure maths is integrated into the whole curriculum, and will develop materials and resources, and provide support for non specialist staff to ensure all of our students will be numerate. We will teach all 3 sciences, physics, chemistry, and biology, to underpin our Diploma programmes and as key areas of knowledge for functioning in the 21st Century, and in conjunction with other providers we will offer a wide range of courses both academic and vocational for all abilities within the field of engineering and construction.

We will take an innovative and all round approach to stimulate and enthuse our students, for example we will capitalise on our location by the River Mersey with its very obvious heritage to interest our students in marine studies and marine engineering, provide access to vocational learning in the technical and manual skills required for ship building and repair and provide extra curricula activities in sea cadet training and sailing.

The partnerships with the Sixth Form College and especially the University of Liverpool will give access to a range of educational opportunities and directions. On the Wirral, the University of Liverpool operates a veterinary science school and a large botanical garden and are already working in partnership with Unilever and the diploma consortia in engineering to deliver learning in the workplace. These are examples of what it is expected that these co-sponsors will be able to offer to encourage interest from our students.

Business and Enterprise: The Academy would take a whole school approach to teaching business and enterprise, building business and enterprise activities into all curriculum areas and giving learners 'Business and Enterprise Passports' to record their work related learning and enterprise skills and knowledge. We will cultivate positive attitudes towards risk taking and entrepreneurial attitudes.

All of our students will be competent in English, maths, and ICT, and the curriculum offer will include a range of business related programmes e.g. personal finances, economics, accounting, business studies, and business languages. We will also develop curriculum programmes, projects, competitive and collaborative activities to develop our students' skills and qualities in leadership, team working, communication, independent enquiry, self management, creative thinking, reliability and work ethic to equip students for meaningful employment in an increasingly sophisticated labour market.

We will capitalise on David Hughes's business acumen, the University's renowned business school and its Chinese/ Shanghai University links- and will expect to introduce and develop the Diploma in Business Administration and Finance and vocational qualifications for example in aspects of customer services, logistics, financial analysis and enterprise.

It is particularly expected that business, budgeting and personal finance skills will be well taught in the academy in the appropriate years. Business and enterprise

is the key interest of the lead sponsor and we anticipate every student leaving the academy will have a good understanding of personal finance.

The University of Liverpool runs a programme called 'Achieve' which helps students to develop employability skills and has employer involvement. A similar programme, using student and employer mentors could help both academy students and University students develop these important skills. Birkenhead Sixth Form College has a strong focus on Business Education-add an example

Teaching and Learning and Curriculum Opportunities for Students

All students will study as part of the new secondary curriculum the core curriculum, English, maths, science, foundation subjects, ICT, PE, citizenship; work related learning and enterprise, a course within any or all of the areas of the arts, design and technology, humanities, modern foreign languages if they wish to, will develop functional skills in literacy, numeracy, and ICT and will develop personal learning and thinking skills.

We will offer each student an individually tailored curriculum leading to a variety of academic and vocational qualifications for all abilities, for example GCSEs and applied GCSEs, BTECs, NVQs, A levels, Diplomas and Young Apprenticeships, that will be examined when appropriate. We will also work with Wirral Metropolitan College and other training providers to develop our vocational focus.

In years 7 and 8 students will follow a traditional curriculum, differentiated by need. Students will be assessed and set on entry, with the most able having access to two languages and enhanced lesson time in science, leading to three separate sciences at GCSE level.

The acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills will be a given and will form a core part of the curriculum for every year group. We will:

- Identify and tackle any weaknesses on entry quickly and effectively through targeted support and modified timetabling.
- Ensure less able students have literacy and numeracy lessons alongside their traditional English and maths lessons to ensure they were able to access a level 2 curriculum at the end of year 8.
- Implement individual and small group tuition for identified C/D borderline students in English and maths.
- Rigorously track students' progress to targets.
- Draw on the expertise of our co-sponsors and external consultants to carry out an audit of literacy and numeracy teaching and identify strengths, and areas for development, in order to improve the mainstream teaching of English and maths and to integrate literacy and numeracy into all subjects.

The curriculum at the Academy will be designed to take on the best elements of the 3 predecessor schools and the Sponsors will work the local authority and staff from the 3 schools to identify this best practice and embed it in the Academy's curriculum.

The academy intends to build a strong working relationship with its partner primary schools to support students through transition, develop teacher and pupil exchanges, provide access to the academy's resources and thus help to provide opportunities to further support the raising of standards in primary schools.

The academy intends to introduce the concept of vertical teaching to its curriculum. This means, in simple terms, that students will be taught on the basis

of their ability and achievement level and not on the basis of their calendar years. The educationalists call it “stage not age”. It is intended to encourage progress on the basis of ability and not on calendar age and we believe that it will fit students better for their adult life if some are able to move ahead quickly in some or all areas of their learning, fast tracked through opportunities provided by the Sixth Form College and University, whilst others will benefit from a slower pace, specialist support, and reinforcement activities. The academy will systematically and rigorously track individual student progress and make the necessary early interventions, whenever required, to accommodate high flyers and to provide additional support if progress is not meeting expectations.

14-19 Curriculum and Collaboration

In years 9-11 students will be able to follow both vocational and more traditional academic subjects. All students will take English, mathematics and double science, with the most able taking three separate sciences. All students will take at least one vocational subject and will then have a further range of options, including a second vocational subject according to their individual interests and aptitudes. The vocational courses the Academy proposes to offer includes courses covering : construction; bricklaying, carpentry, plumbing and electrical, engineering, IT, and business which are directly related to its specialisms, and additionally, media, music, and sport.

There would be built in flexibility for fast tracking or taking more time for more able and less able students as appropriate. Links with Birkenhead Sixth Form College will provide opportunities for early entry to exams and for starting A-level or equivalent courses earlier. Learning mentors would directly support students with the most need and gifted and talented students. Learning mentors will be supported with high quality data about every student’s progress and will meet regularly with Heads of Department, especially mathematics and English, to ensure the highest possible outcomes for all students.

Birkenhead Sixth Form College will provide a range of support in developing the curriculum and appropriate progression routes; planning strategies to enable the fast tracking of students, and linking across key stage 3 and 4 to enable opportunities for smooth and effective transition to be developed. There is also the possibility that joint teaching may be explored as the College already has experience of delivering programmes to year 10 and 11 students.

As part of the borough-wide 14-19 collaborative strategy, the academy will play a lead role in the development of diplomas related to its specialisms and will take part in reciprocal arrangements with other schools and academies, particularly the University Academy in the north of the town, colleges and work-based learning provides to ensure its students have access to courses and programmes which best meet their individual interests, abilities and aspirations and that students from other institutions can access the academy’s specialist curriculum. The academy will always recognise that there is more than one successful route through the blackboard jungle.

Birkenhead Sixth Form College and the University of Liverpool will provide impartial advice and support for staff, students and parents on progression routes into FE and HE and option choices, through one to one sessions, group sessions and bespoke taster activities, for example, through the University’s three day ‘Choose Science’ programme. The academy will work with other FE and HE providers to ensure students have access to the full range of opportunities and advice.

Enrichment Activities

There will be on site programmes of Saturday morning catch-up, summer holiday learning camps, reading and writing clubs and examination re-sits workshops to encourage students to achieve the standards that are reasonably expected but not set in stone for their calendar age.

Local business people and local tradesmen and women, very possibly from the pool that have retired, will be actively encouraged to be involved in the education of the next generation of young men.

Through its curriculum the Academy will seek to engage and enable the most desirable outcome, which is that positive, confident and socially integrated young adults progress from the academy and are primed to take on the challenges of a changing world.

The co-sponsors- the University of Liverpool and Birkenhead Sixth Form College- will help to achieve the academy's ambitions for the curriculum through:

- Joint staff development activities with the co-sponsors and other academies to help with identifying and sharing good practice in this area;
- The use of students from the University and Sixth Form College to provide mentoring for academy students in maths, English and science;
- Development of e-mentoring and associated activities to motivate young people;
- Student volunteers to work with academy students as subject tutors, on joint projects and as part of sports activities;
- Access to students as part of their degree programme, who will work with the academy to develop new curriculum material and will be assessed on this as part of their degree work;
- Enrichment work for gifted and talented students to support the 14-19 curriculum;
- Providing expertise in relation to curriculum development for the 14-19 curriculum;
- Providing supportive work with students to raise aspirations within subject areas;
- Joint activities and enrichment opportunities for students to promote engagement in learning and the raising of skill levels.

The Management, Leadership & Governance Policies of the Academy

The academy will have strong leadership and management. The academy's Principal and leadership team will have ambitions which match those outlined in our vision. Our teaching and support staff will be of the highest quality and will have the skills, experience, knowledge and understanding to inspire our students to excel.

The key to the whole process of leadership is that the management team and staff will create a sense of purposeful identity within the academy. A very strong sense of team spirit, a sense of belonging and a sense of self-worth will prevail.

We will seek to recruit and retain our staff through innovative and professional development and career progression opportunities. Performance management and the assessment of performance will be rigorous. The academy will champion the notion of lifelong learning and learning for life. Continuing professional development for all staff will be an expectation and an entitlement.

The academy will succeed by developing a partnership of committed groups and individuals whose common purpose is to raise standards, increase aspiration and equip our students with the skills needed to enhance the life chances of the people of Birkenhead and we will make sure that the composition of the Governing body reflects that commitment.

It is envisaged that the Governing Body of the Academy would be made up of 12-14 members who would be appointed by the Board of Trustees, and would comprise: 4 governors appointed by - David Hughes, the Lead sponsor; 2 appointed by Liverpool University Co-sponsor, 2 appointed by Birkenhead Sixth Form College; 1 governor appointed by Wirral MBC as Co-sponsor, 1 by Wirral MBC as the LA, 1 or 2 elected staff members, 1 or 2 elected parent/community members- and the Principal ex-officio.

The Principal will report directly to and be accountable to the Board of Governors.

Transition Planning

A detailed transition plan will be developed during feasibility. It is anticipated that the academy will occupy the Rock Ferry High School site from September 2010 and that it will move into its purpose built accommodation adjacent to this site, or on the same site, as appropriate, in September 2012.

The sponsors will work closely with the local authority to develop transition arrangements which safeguard the interests of all students and staff, ensure standards are maintained, continuity of learning is protected, attainment is enhanced, and students are well supported throughout this period.

Extended Activities and Interacting with the Local Community

The very foundation stone of the new academy's position in the community is its intent to intimately interact with the local community and especially with the parents/carers of students.

We will play our part in line with Wirral Council's Children and Young People's strategy, in providing a range of Extended Schools services which will include: study support and recreational activities offering young people a safe place to be from 8am to 6pm during term-time and more flexibly in the holidays; parenting support, including family learning; swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services for example health and well-being services, relationship advice, weight management, and sexual health in partnership with Wirral NHS; and community access to facilities including adult learning, ICT and sports facilities.

The academy intends to make its facilities available, uniquely 7-days-a-week, 16-hours-a-day to students, parents/carers and the community in general. Involvement and commitment to the cause by parents/carers and the entire community are seen as essential to the flowering of the academy.

The design of the academy will incorporate at its very heart a restaurant which, through a variety of means and innovative thinking, will be a hub of academy activity throughout the day; it will be more than a restaurant; the social heart of the academy and will operate up to 16 hours a day. Parents and carers will be able to get a breakfast early or a meal late if turning up to be involved in academy activity and community groups or volunteers will be able to "drop in" whilst taking part in activities, accessing services, or volunteering.

A key plan is to recruit retired members of the community to help in raising

reading standards and assisting development. This will be encouraged by making the restaurant available to those mentors at all times. Newspapers will be freely available in the restaurant and the quiet study areas of the academy. Students will be encouraged to read these to their mentors. Appropriate checks will be carried out on all mentors to protect the students.

Our sports facilities will be available to the local community, as will the food facilities and changing facilities to support them. The older generations will be encouraged to swap/trade their input of teaching and mentoring hours for hours returned/repaid to them through community activity by the students.

The building will be designed to encourage adult learning and participation in recreational and social activities. The aspirations and commitment of the whole community to life-long learning will be nurtured and developed. We will use the services of University students as volunteers to run clubs and societies and the involvement of the University Guild of Students to provide activities delivered by student societies, e.g., drama performances, and will provide venues for university led Continuing Education courses – formal courses for University credit, one day courses, reading groups, and adult education provided by other colleges and organisations.

This academy will be **more than a school**. It intends to be the very heartbeat of its community and will seek the overt assistance of the local professional sports club, Tranmere Rovers, to assist those aims. Professional footballers today are positive role models for young men promoting anti-drugs, healthy and fit lifestyle. We will also take part in the Playing for Success project based at Prenton Park.

The academy's sponsors are keen to work with Shaftsbury Youth Club to develop strong and effective partnership working, whilst maintaining the independence of both organisations, so that both parties benefit from their adjacent location; and to work with the youth club and local residents' associations to develop plans for making the best use of all the facilities so that young people in the area have access to a wide range of sport and recreational opportunities.

Clearly, the academy will collaborate particularly with Birkenhead Sixth Form College and Liverpool University within its wider Merseyside community, but through the sponsorship of Wirral Borough Council, it intends to remain close to the democratic process and the political and administrative functions of the community.

One thing that a boys' academy clearly has missing is girls! To promote confident social interaction, it is expected that there will be collaborative activities with the other schools in the area, particularly the other two academies and Prenton High School for Girls.

Use of the Charitable Trust Fund – Promoting Citizenship

It is envisaged that the income of the trust fund will be used to purchase/provide practical facilities to enable the students of the academy to fully integrate and interact with their retired mentors in extracurricular activities. More specifically, it means the providing of transportation facilities to encourage intergenerational interaction.

There will be intergenerational shared cultural activities. Whether that is accompanying pensioners to watch Tranmere Rovers play in complimentary seats reserved through their sponsorship, or assisting with visits to other cultural activities, we will promote good citizenship and a strong inter-generational bond.

Students will swap time offered by others to help them, back to their mentors in practical and social support. A virtuous circle.

The charitable trust will support and promote good citizenship and develop good citizens. The academy intends to be a cornerstone of its community. The academy will be **more than a school**.

Section 4: Sites and Buildings

4.1

The academy would be located at the following address:

On first opening the Academy would be located in the former Rock Ferry High School building, Ravenswood Avenue, Rock Ferry, Wirral, CH42 4NY.

The current proposal is that the school will re-locate to a new building on a site in Borough Road, Birkenhead. This site is partly owned by the council and partly by the independent Shaftesbury Youth Club. Negotiations are in progress with the Youth Club with a view to a land swap and redevelopment of their premises. This would facilitate the building of the new school on the current Youth Club field and also provide new youth facilities alongside the new school. If it is not possible to secure the Youth Club site, then the council will bring forward other location proposals for consideration.

The approximate size of the site to be transferred to the Academy Trust is: 6.5 hectares

Please confirm that the proposed academy would have access to playing fields of a sufficient size to deliver its proposed vision and curriculum

Yes

X

If not, please explain how would the PE curriculum be delivered:

Please provide details:

Please attach a copy of the Ordnance Survey Map with the boundaries of the Academy site clearly marked.

Attached

X

4.2

All parties are content with the selection of this site and no others are under consideration for this project.

Confirmed

X

| | |
|---|---|
| The site of the proposed academy is owned by (mark one with an x) | |
| LA | X |
| Diocese | |
| CTC Trust | |
| Other | X |
| If other, please provide details The site is currently part owned by the council and part owned by the independent Shaftesbury Youth Club | |

If it is not currently a school site, please provide details of the ownership and current usage of the entire site and details of who would bear the costs of acquiring the site:

The council's view is that the best site in Birkenhead for the location of the new school is on Borough Road in Birkenhead, on a site partly owned by the council and partly by the independent Shaftesbury Youth Club. The proposal is to build the new school on the Youth Club site fronting Borough Road and re-locate the Youth Club onto a new facility onto the adjoining council owned field, with the remainder being the school field. The new school would therefore be located next to a new Youth Facility.

It is intended that any playing field lost would be replicated by use of part of the facilities vacated at Ridgeway High School and Rock Ferry High School. It is intended that some part(s) of these council assets would be considered for release to contribute to the councils capital costs of the total project, including the youth locality. It is hoped to have a decision on the site proposals from the Shaftesbury Youth Club in the next three to four months.

The Academy's sponsors are keen to work with the Youth Club to develop partnership working, whilst maintaining the independence of both organisations, so that both parties benefit from their adjacent location, to maximise use of all facilities, and to ensure that young people in the area have access to a wide range of opportunities, facilities, and services.

Shaftesbury Youth Club was first established in Birkenhead in 1886, moving to the current site in Tranmere in 1971 with the provision of a brand new building. The club now offers a wide range of sporting, cultural and educational facilities to over 1,000 girls and boys aged between 8 and 21 years in a disciplined and safe environment under the guidance of professional youth workers, coaches and adult volunteer helpers. The club is open six evenings a week and daytime at weekend, after school and during school holidays. Youngsters have the opportunity to participate in outward bound activities plus exchanges with other European clubs. The club facilities, which are also available for community hire, include a sports hall, computer suite, café area, seminar rooms, plus two grass and two floodlit astro-turf pitches.

The club is a charitable organisation and its success depends not only on a voluntary committee that manages the centre and assists with fund raising but also the financial support of the wider community. In addition to the youth facilities, the club has a 'community project' strand to their work and provides facilities for a wide range of community groups including the Mount Estate Mums & Tots Group which delivers a valuable service to the local young families. Tranmere Rovers Football Club is adjacent to the Youth Club and also utilises the facility to provide educational programmes for their youth teams.

Note: If the site is currently a school site, it would be transferred at nil cost (or leased at nominal rent) to the Academy Trust prior to the academy opening, with terms agreed prior to Funding Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| If the site is owned by the LA does it intend to seek permission to dispose of any part of it? | Yes | |
| | No | |
| | N/A | X |

If yes, please provide details and confirm that you would abide by PfS guidelines regarding contributions to the capital cost of the academy project.

The Council is unlikely to dispose of the Ridgeway High School site, which will not be required long term for the Academies. Should it do so- the Council will abide by PfS guidelines on contributions to the capital costs of the academy.

The Council intends to continue using the Ridgeway High School site to provide community facilities.

The Council would seek to consider disposal of part of the Rock Ferry site to potentially fund the associated youth capital project.

If the academy proposes to open in existing buildings (Section 3.3) please provide a **brief** description of the age, size and condition of these buildings:

Park High School
The site area is 26,190 m2. The original school was built in 1960, and is in good condition having been significantly rebuilt and refurbished in recent years. The building and site are part of Wirral's 9 school PFI contract until 2031, currently held by Semperian PPP Investment Partners LP (www.semperian.co.uk). Disabled access is 100%.

Ridgeway High School
The total site area is 94,944 m2. The school occupies four principal buildings. The main school was built in 1974 – there is also a mid-1980's mobile classroom, and two further blocks built in the last 10 years. A community centre is located within the school's main building. The school also shares accommodation and services with a City Learning Centre, which also houses a Local Authority maintained library, also used by the school. The main building and mobile will require substantial refurbishment works over the next ten years. Disabled access is 50%.

Rock Ferry High School
The site area is 82,543 m2. The school occupies five principal buildings. The main school was built in 1938, the Sanderling Unit for students with SEN (BESD) was constructed in 1922. The remaining buildings comprise the Stoneleigh building (1955), Highfield building (1971) and Sports Hall (1980). There is also a caretaker's house on site (1922). There has been major investment at the site following various fires in recent years. The school will require substantial works over the next ten years. Disabled access is 60%.

4.3

Please provide details of discussions with LA planners or legal advisors on any likely planning or legal restrictions that could preclude academy building development, lead to abnormal costs or impact on the proposed programme:

There have been initial, positive discussions with the planning authority with regard to using the Borough Road site as the site for the new school. As part of the proposed site is owned by the Shaftesbury Youth Club, full details have not been available regarding the ground conditions, covenants and so on as no agreement has been reached yet on the site acquisition as part of the youth facility re-development. The site is flat and adjacent to all

main services, the Youth Club land has easy access from a main arterial road.

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Should it be necessary to co-locate primary schools, special schools, Pupil Referral Units, youth or community groups currently sharing the site, please confirm that the LA would bear associated capital and revenue costs. | |
| Yes (please give more information) | Not applicable (mark with a x) X |

Where required in response to site constraints or as a result of remodelling, please provide details of a decanting plan for existing occupants during construction and details of who would pay the associated costs:
Decanting is not anticipated.

| | |
|---|---|
| Please confirm that the LA would meet the cost of any off- site works that may be associated with the development of the academy. | |
| Confirmed | X |

4.4

| | |
|---|---|
| The Department intends to deliver all procurement through Partnerships for Schools (PfS) and Local Authorities. If approved, this academy would be procured through: (Please mark one with an x) | |
| BSF Local Education Partnership | |
| PfS National Framework Procurement likely to be combined with PfS framework for Birkenhead High Academy for Girls (Academy 1) | X |

Section 5: Agreements

5.1 Sponsor Agreement

Some categories of sponsor (listed below) are not required to make a financial contribution to the endowment fund, or to sign a Deed of Gift. The Department would nonetheless expect the Academy Trust to establish the means of receiving and to use reasonable endeavours to raise donations.

Name of Lead Sponsor: David Hughes

| |
|---|
| Amount of sponsorship to be contributed: £500,000.00 |
| Name of co-sponsor/s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University of Liverpool • Birkenhead Sixth Form College • Wirral MBC |
| Amount of sponsorship to be contributed: N/A |
| Governance arrangements i.e. composition of the trustee board and the governing body: <p>Final proposals for the composition of the Trustee Board and the Governing Body would be decided during feasibility but it is envisaged that there would be up of 6 Trustees who would set the strategic direction of the Academy. They would be made up of representatives of the Lead Sponsor- David Hughes (2), Co-sponsor The University of Liverpool (1), Co-sponsor Birkenhead Sixth Form College (1), the Chair of the Governing Body of the Academy (1) and a representative of the Secretary of State (1).</p> <p>It is also envisaged that the Governing Body of the Academy would be made up of 12-14 members who would be appointed by the Board of Trustees, and would comprise: 4 governors appointed by - David Hughes, the Lead sponsor; 2 appointed by The University of Liverpool Co-sponsor, 2 appointed by Birkenhead Sixth Form College; 1governor appointed by Wirral MBC as Co-sponsor, 1 by Wirral MBC as the LA, 1or 2 elected staff members, 1 or 2 elected parent/community members- and the Principal ex-officio.</p> <p>Please note: sponsors other than local authorities would appoint a controlling majority of the governing body</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| *The following categories of sponsor are not required to make a financial contribution to the endowment fund. Please indicate if sponsor/s fall into any of the categories below: | |
| Existing sponsor who has already contributed £2million as financial sponsorship | |
| University/College | X |
| School or other educational establishment | |
| Diocese | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Please confirm that sponsors understand and are content with the roles and responsibilities of the Sponsor, as set out in <i>Sponsorship Guide: Establishing an Academy</i> . | |
| Confirmed | X |

5.2 Local Authority Agreement

| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| Does the LA agree to all aspects of this proposal, including the admissions criteria proposed in Section 3? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| Does the LA confirm that it would bring forward proposals for the closure of any predecessor schools? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Is this proposal included (or due to be included) within the LA's BSF Strategy for Change? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

If you have answered no to any of these questions, please provide full details:

If this project involves a predecessor school, please provide details of the proposed consultation that the LA would undertake on its closure:

Wirral MBC will undertake closure of the three predecessor schools, Park High School, Rock Ferry High School, and Ridgeway High School as follows:

| Date | Indicative Timeline |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 st October 2009 | Report to Cabinet on EOI including required consultation process and closure timeline. |
| 21 st October 2009 | Commencement of formal closure consultation (6 weeks) |
| 27 th November 2009 | Conclusion of formal closure consultation |
| 14 th January 2010 | Report to Cabinet |
| 28 th January 2010 | Statutory Notice published- statutory closure consultation begins (6 weeks) |
| 10 th March 2010 | Statutory closure consultation closes |
| 15 th April 2010 | Report to Cabinet |
| 31 August 2010 | Schools close |

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1 September 2010 | Academy opens |
|------------------|---------------|

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| Where staff at existing schools transfer to an academy, please confirm that the LA agrees to indemnify the academy in respect of all employment costs relating to the period prior to the transfer, which will include without limitation the costs arising out of any equal pay claims relating to that period. | Confirmed | X |
|--|-----------|---|

Please confirm that the LA would contribute towards the costs associated with TUPE as follows:

1. to meet all costs – including any severance, redundancy or associated pension costs associated with any restructuring resulting from or arising out of:

- an academy inheriting staff from more than one school
- Academy operating on fewer sites than predecessor school(s);
- Academy offering fewer places than at the predecessor school(s);
- the predecessor school(s) being overstaffed; or
- the predecessor school(s) running at a deficit.

2. to meet 50% of any other severance and associated costs incurred by an academy not covered by the criteria above.

All costs referred to relate to those incurred in the run up to the academy opening or at the point of opening (allowing time for the academy to follow due process) and not some time thereafter.

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Confirmed | X |
|-----------|---|

5.3 Neighbouring Local Authority Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| If the proposed academy is likely to have an impact on schools in neighbouring local authorities have these authorities been consulted about this academy project? | Yes | |
| | No | |
| | N/A | X |
| Where applicable please provide details: | | |

5.4 Governing Body Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Is the Governing Body of any predecessor school(s) content with this proposal? | Yes | |
| | No | |

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| | N/A | |
| <p>Where applicable please provide details:</p> <p>The governing body of park High School met on 28th September- and voted to support/ not support the proposal.</p> <p>The governing body of George Rock Ferry High School met on 28th September - and voted to support/ not support the proposal.</p> <p>The governing body of Ridgeway High School met on 28th September - and voted to support/ not support the proposal.</p> | | |

5.5 Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Has the local LSC been consulted on and agreed to any proposed post -16 provision? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

| | | |
|---|-----|--|
| Is a letter confirming support attached? | Yes | |
| | No | |
| If no - Please provide copies of any correspondence and give details of LSC objections: | | |

5.6 Diocese Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Where the relevant predecessor school is a VA school, please confirm that the Diocese/Archdiocese has agreed to this proposal and has formal Board of Education / Diocesan Schools Commission agreement. | Yes | |
| | No | |
| | N/A | X |
| Where applicable please provide details: | | |

5.7 Miscellaneous

| | | |
|---|--------|---|
| <p>The Department has established a Framework for the Project Management of academy projects following an open competition. This arrangement has been made to ensure compliance with the government procurement regulations and avoid lengthy competition processes. The ten project management companies appointed to our Framework have been selected on the basis of their experience, expertise and commitment to deliver a quality service.</p> <p>Please confirm that all parties are content for a Project Management company to be selected from the DCSF framework.</p> <p><i>*Please note that alternative arrangements may be agreed for multiple sponsors through discussion with the Project Lead.</i></p> | | |
| | Agreed | X |

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| Please confirm that all parties understand and are content with the roles and responsibilities of the Sponsor, Project Steering Group, Academy Trust, LA and PfS in relation to the academy buildings, as set out in <i>Delivering Academy Buildings through PfS</i> : | | |
| | Confirmed | X |

Please provide details of any known impediments, risks, conditions or hazards not mentioned elsewhere in this document:

None known.

DRAFT

5.8 Signatory details

We fully support all aspects of this Expression of Interest and agree to use it as a basis for the future development of an academy project.

Signature

(For and on behalf of David E. Hughes, the lead sponsor)

Name in full: David E. Hughes

Position:

Date:

Signature

(For and on behalf of The University of Liverpool, a co-sponsor)

Name in full: Sir Howard Newby

Position: Vice Chancellor

Date:

Signature

(For and on behalf of Birkenhead Sixth Form College, a co-sponsor)

Name in full: Peter Cummings

Position: Chair of the Corporation

Date:

Signature

(For and on behalf of Wirral MBC, as a co-sponsor)

Name in full:

Position:

Date:

Signature

(For and on behalf of Wirral MBC, as the local authority)

Name in full:

Position:

Date:

DRAFT

Section 6: Contact details

Name of lead sponsor, representative: David E. Hughes/ Lisa Gregory-Jones PA

Address:

Email: LisaGregory-Jones@thestoreroom.co.uk

Tel: 07957 463819

Mobile:

Fax:

Name of The University of Liverpool, co-sponsor, representative: Dr Anne Qualter, Head of Educational Development.

Address: University of Liverpool, 126 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, L69 3GR

Email:a.qualter@liv.ac.uk

Tel: 0151 794 3280

Mobile:

Fax:

Name of Birkenhead Sixth Form College, co-sponsor, representative: Kathryn Podmore, Principal

Address: Park Road West, Birkenhead, CH43 8SQ

Email:kyp@bsfc.ac.uk

Tel: 0151 651 3706

Mobile:

Fax:

Name of Wirral MBC, as co-sponsor, representative: Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch (Learning & Achievement).

Address: Wirral Children & Young People's Department, Council Offices, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD.

Email:markparkinson@wirral.gov.uk

Tel: 0151 666 4297

Mobile:

Fax:

Name of Wirral MBC, as the local authority, representative: Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch (Learning & Achievement).

Address: Wirral Children & Young People's Department, Council Offices, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD.

Email: markparkinson@wirral.gov.uk

Tel: 0151 666 4297

Mobile:

Fax:

School 1

Name of Park High School, predecessor school, representative: Headteacher, Mr Steven McMahon.

Address: Park Road South, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 4UY

Email: headteacher@parkhigh.wirral.sch.uk

Tel: 0151 652 1574

Mobile:

Fax: 0151 653 6760

School 2

Name of Rock Ferry High School, predecessor school, representative: Headteacher Mr Peter Bennett.

Address: Ravenswood Avenue, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH42 4NY.

Email: headteacher@rockferryhigh.wirral.sch.uk

Tel: 0151 645 6917

Mobile:

Fax: 0151 643 1236

School 3

Name of Ridgeway High School, predecessor school, representative: Headteacher, Ms Pauline Roberts.

Address: Noctorum Avenue, Noctorum, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 9EB

Email: headteacher@ridgeway.wirral.sch.uk

Tel: 0151 678 3322

Mobile:

Fax: 0151 678 6571

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**UNIVERSITY ACADEMY OF BIRKENHEAD
(working title)
IN WIRRAL**

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR AN ACADEMY
REPLACING THREE PREDECESSOR SCHOOLS**

Section 1: 1.1 Executive Summary

It is proposed to replace three co-educational secondary schools, Park, Rock Ferry, and Ridgeway High Schools, in Birkenhead, an area of the Wirral which has significant social and economic disadvantage, with two academies; one for boys and one which will be co-educational.

The proposal is for a co-educational Academy. The lead sponsor would be the University of Chester, supported in co-sponsorship by Wirral Metropolitan College and Wirral Borough Council. The University Academy of Birkenhead would open in 2010 on the sites of two of the predecessor schools, Park and Ridgeway High Schools and would consolidate on the Park High School site, in the North of the town, following refurbishment.

The three 11-16 schools which are non-selective secondary schools within a selective area, are located in areas of acute social and economic disadvantage; Rock Ferry is in the bottom 10% and Park is in the bottom 10-20% most disadvantaged nationally. Ridgeway is in the 20-30% most disadvantaged nationally. Rock Ferry's and Park's students are drawn from areas in the bottom 5% most deprived nationally; in 2008 over 50% of their students were entitled to free school meals. Ridgeway's students are drawn from areas in the bottom 19% most deprived areas nationally with 36% of students entitled to free school meals in 2008. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and students enter the school with below average literacy levels. Most students are from white British backgrounds and there are a small number of students from minority ethnic groups, of whom 1-2% in 2008 were at an early stage of speaking English. Park and Rock Ferry are Community schools and Ridgeway has Foundation status. All three schools have significant surplus places. There are currently 2124 students in total in the three schools and 1261 surplus places.

Student achievement at 16 of 5+A*-C grades at GCSE including English and maths in the three schools in 2008, was 26% at Park, 23% at Rock Ferry, and 37% at Ridgeway- well below both national and Wirral averages. Provisional results for 2009 are 27% at Park; 25% at Rock Ferry and 47% at Ridgeway. The schools CVA scores in 2008 placed them in the top 25% of schools nationally. All three schools

are in the National Challenge programme.

It is proposed that the University Academy of Birkenhead would have an admission number of 150 providing 750 11-16 places, which along with a PAN of 150 for the proposed Boys Academy would result in a reduction of 1,868 total places overall.

The sponsors for the University Academy of Birkenhead have worked in close collaboration to formulate a unique and strongly supported transformational response to the needs of young people, families and the wider community of Birkenhead.

Our vision is based on Three Pillars of Learning - *Sense of Personal Worth; Personalised and Lifelong Learning; Partnerships and Networks* to secure student and staff achievement, success, happiness, and productivity. Key aspects of our vision are:

Students would be empowered to have an influential and meaningful voice in the life and work of our Academy and community and would feel and be involved in their own and others' learning.

We would develop leadership at all levels, with explicit strategies for staff, students and families to hold each other to account, make extensive and intelligent use of data on pupil progress, and ensure that all teachers were competent at 'mentoring for learning' in order to maximise student achievement. Working with the University of Chester we plan to become a centre of excellence for the initial training of teachers and the continuing professional development of all staff to raise standards.

The Academy would be at the learning heart of the community, reaching beyond the site of the Academy to facilitate Lifelong Learning for all the people of Birkenhead, providing a community resource both inside and outside of the traditional school day and forming a hub for wider local services and activities, particularly through partnerships with health and the co-located Multi-Professional Children and Young People's Locality Team.

The Academy would become an outstanding place of learning and achievement, organised for every student's success and happiness with Personalised Learning at its core. Students would initially follow the broad features of the National Curriculum and would progress through Key Stage 3 in two years to provide more time for GCSEs, diplomas and broad life and learning skills development in Key Stage 4.

At Key Stage 4 we would offer the full range of qualifications, become a centre of excellence in the development of integrated academic and vocational routes to further and higher education and employment with every student having a rich, integrated and productive experience across academic and vocational settings. Students would be able to use the extensive business network and partners of the University of Chester, Wirral Metropolitan College, and the Wirral Council to develop new opportunities and to extend their horizons.

Literacy and Numeracy would be a major focus. We would work with primary schools and families "upstream" to target support to minimise under-achievement, have a strong emphasis on teaching Literacy and Numeracy across the curriculum at Key Stage 3, ensure all staff have the skills to teach and support Literacy and Numeracy, and would draw on specialist expertise and support in Maths and English from our co-sponsors, the University of Chester and Wirral Metropolitan College.

We would specialise in Enterprise and Applied Learning and in Health and Social Care building on the strong foundations for Business and Social Enterprise within the current

schools and drawing on our sponsors' expertise and extensive resources in these areas, and on the skills and talents of people from outside the Academy and from our neighbourhood and local communities - to develop curriculum materials which would excite and motivate our learners; enable our students to apply core learning skills and the full range of traditional academic disciplines to practical and meaningful settings, gain a real understanding of subject disciplines, especially English, Mathematics and Science and their link with technologies, innovation and enterprise, and ensure our students would become familiar and confident in their interaction with a wide range of industries and professions.

High quality, world-class technology would be integral to the learning, management, and organisation of the University Academy and the realisation of the Academy's vision. Students would be able to access information systems remotely (e.g.in the Academy, from home or elsewhere) to support curriculum breadth and independent study and/or research. The University of Chester and Wirral Metropolitan College will offer particular expertise in the development and use of IT and new technologies in learning, including Virtual Learning Environments and control technologies.

We would make extensive use of our sponsors' expertise and resources for example-enrichment programmes such as lectures and masterclasses, mentoring and tutoring support, access to extensive campus facilities, a strong network of employer and business links, student and staff work placement schemes, advice and support for students on routes into further and higher education, specialist support to meet the needs of students facing significant learning and behavioural challenges, and social and economic regeneration programmes, and that of our staff, and other partners, to raise aspirations, to develop a deeper and broader culture of lifelong learning and to equip our students, and others, with the knowledge, skills, understanding and self-confidence required for a brighter future – a future that they will need to shape for themselves.

The name of the academy will be decided in feasibility.

1.1 Key statistics

| 1. Predecessor School – Educational attainment | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|------|------|------|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| | GCSE 5+ A* -C | | | | GCSE 5+ A* -C inc English and maths | | | |
| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
| National Average | 56.3 | 58.5 | 60.8 | 64.8 | 44.3 | 45.3 | 46.0 | 47.3 |
| LA Average | 57 | 58 | 61 | 66 | 45.4 | 46.3 | 48.4 | 50.2 |
| Park High School 1 | 29 | 31 | 41 | 52 | 13 | 16 | 23 | 26 |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 33 | 35 | 28 | 41 | 20 | 24 | 19 | 23 |
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 54 | 52 | 48 | 53 | 25 | 33 | 27 | 37 |

| CVA Scores (KS2-4) | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| LA Average | 1007.8 | 1009.7 | 1009.4 |
| Park High School 1 | 1000.8 | 1014.9 | 1021 |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 1019.8 | 1000.2 | 1015.8 |
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 1040.5 | 1037.2 | 1022 |

2. Predecessor School – Deprivation

| National figures quoted relate only to secondary schools | Pupil rank (based on number of secondary schools) out of 3377 of which 1 is the most deprived) | Site rank (school location) of which 0 is the most deprived and 100 is the least deprived | % pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) |
|--|--|---|---|
| | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| National Average | - | - | 13.1 |
| LA Average | - | - | 23.1 |
| Park High School 1 | 152/3377 4.5% | 10-20% | 51.5 |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 128/3377 3.8% | 0-10% | 53.0 |
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 632/3377 19% | 20-30% | 35.7 |

3. Predecessor school – Basic characteristics

| National figures quoted relate only to secondary schools. | Pupils on Roll (3-11) | Pupils on Roll* (11-16) | Pupils on Roll (16-19) | School capacity 2009 | % with SEN statement | % of pupils with EAL |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | | | | | 2008 | 2008 |
| National Average | - | - | - | - | 2.0 | 10.6 % |
| LA Average | - | - | - | - | 2.3% | 1.5% |
| Park High School 1 | 0 | 811* | 0 | 1250 | 1.8% | 2.1% |
| Rock Ferry High School 2 | 0 | 584* | 0 | 1232 | 8.3% | 1.0% |
| Ridgeway High School 3 | 0 | 729* | 0 | 885 | 4.0% | 1.3% |

* Pupils on roll as at Jan 2009

| 4. Proposed Academy – Basic characteristics | | | | |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Planned number of pupils (3-11) | Planned number of pupils (11-16) | Planned number of pupils (16-19) | Planned maximum number | Specialism(s) |
| 0 | 750 | 0 | 750 | Enterprise and Applied Learning |
| Proposed opening date | Target build completion date | Building route (BSF or National Framework) | Faith Designation | Name of Sponsor(s) |
| 2010 | 2011 | Existing PFI contractor | None | Lead sponsor- University of Chester with Wirral Metropolitan College and Wirral MBC as Co-sponsors |

Section 2: The Predecessor Schools

| |
|---------------------|
| 2.1 Not applicable. |
|---------------------|

2.2 Basic Characteristics

| | School 1 | School 2 | School 3 |
|---|--|---|--|
| School Name: | Park High | Rock Ferry High | Ridgeway High |
| School Address: | Park Road South, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 4UY | Ravenswood Avenue, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH42 4NY | Noctorum Avenue, Noctorum, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 9EB |
| Name of LA: Wirral | | LA Code: 344 | |
| Type of Establishment (Please mark one with an x) | | | |
| Community School | X | X | |
| Foundation School | | | X |
| Voluntary Aided (VA) School | | | |
| Voluntary Controlled (VC) School | | | |
| City Technology College | | | |
| Independent | | | |

| | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|--|
| Other (please specify) | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|--|

| Gender and age range (Please mark with an x) | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Co-Educational | X | X | X |
| Single Sex Boys | | | |
| Single Sex Girls | | | |
| Age Range 11-16 | X | X | X |
| Age Range 11-19 | | | |
| Other Age Range (e.g. Middle Schools) | | | |

| Is this a designated Faith School? (Please mark one with an x) | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes with faith admissions | (Faith:) | (Faith:) | (Faith:) |
| Yes without faith admissions | (Faith:) | (Faith:) | (Faith:) |
| No | X | X | X |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Specialism(s) if applicable: | Sport | Performing Arts | Business and Enterprise and Languages |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|

2.3 School Population

| | | Park High School 1 | Rock Ferry High School 2 | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|--|-----------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Admissions Number: | | 250 | 250 | 160 |
| Current number of pupils on roll as at: January 2009 | Year 7: | 150 | 92 | 130 |
| | Year 8: | 111 | 98 | 147 |
| | Year 9: | 173 | 113 | 147 |
| | Year 10: | 184 | 159 | 156 |
| | Year 11: | 193 | 122 | 149 |
| | | | | |
| Number of Year 7 pupils admitted in: | Sept 2005 | 200 | 153 | 157 |
| | Sept 2006 | 179 | 112 | 156 |
| | Sept 2007 | 111 | 96 | 148 |
| | Sept 2008 | 150 | 92 | 130 |
| | | | | |
| Number of Year 12-13 students at the school in: | Sept 2005 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Sept 2006 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Sept 2007 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Sept 2008 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|--|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| Percentage of pupil population who joined or left the school other than at the start or finish of the academic year: | 2004/05 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | 2005/06 | N/ | N/A | N/A |
| | 2006/07 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | 2007/08 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

2.4 Admissions

| | | |
|---|----------|---|
| Please attach a copy of the current Admissions Policy | | |
| School 1 Park High | Attached | X |
| School 2 Rock Ferry High | Attached | X |
| School 3 Ridgeway High school 3 | Attached | X |

2.5 Leadership

| |
|--|
| <p>School 1 Park High</p> <p>Name of headteacher: Mr Steven McMahon</p> <p>Headteacher has been in post for: 4Year(s) 0 Months as of 1st September 2009.</p> |
| <p>Rock Ferry High School 2</p> <p>Name of headteacher: Mr Peter Bennett</p> <p>Headteacher has been in post for: 9 Years 0 Months as of 1st September 2009.</p> |
| <p>Ridgeway High School 3</p> <p>Name of headteacher: Ms Pauline Roberts</p> <p>Headteacher has been in post for: 1 Year 0 Months as of 1st September 2009.</p> |

2.6 School Improvement

| | Park High School 1 | Rock Ferry High School 2 | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Intervention status | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| (Please mark box(es) with an x) | | | | |
| None | | X | X | X |
| Special Measures | | | | |
| Significant Improvement/Notice to Improve | | | | |
| Warning Notice issued | | | | |
| Causing Concern | | | | |
| Interim Executive Board | | | | |
| Required school to enter into partnership arrangements | | | | |
| Added additional governors | | | | |
| Suspended delegated budget | | | | |
| Please provide details: | | | | |
| Does the predecessor school receive any external support and/or is it in receipt of a tailored external support package? | Yes – National Challenge | X | X | X |
| | Yes – other | | | |
| | No | | | |
| If other, please provide details: | | | | |

2.7 Finance

| | Park High School 1 | | Rock Ferry High School 2 | | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|--|--------------------|---|--------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Does the predecessor school currently have a budget deficit? | Yes | | Yes | | |
| | No | X | No | X | X |
| If yes, please provide details: | | | | | |

| | Park High School 1 | | Rock Ferry High School 2 | | Ridgeway High School 3 |
|--|--------------------|---|--------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Does the predecessor school currently have an in-year deficit? | Yes | X | Yes | | |
| | No | | No | X | X |
| If yes, please provide details: | | | | | |
| | | Budget deficit of £22,000 at time of writing - is | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | expected to balance when the budget is resubmitted during Autumn 2009. | | |
| <p>The LA should note that any deficit budget remaining at the point of school closure would not transfer to the academy.</p> | | | |

Section 3: The Proposed Academy

3.1 Academy Population

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Gender (Mark one with an x) | |
| Co-Educational | X |
| Single Sex Boys | |
| Single Sex Girls | |

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Forms of Entry: | 5FE |
| Admissions Number: | 150 |
| Nursery (age 3-5): | 0 |
| Years 7-11 (age 11-16) | 750 |
| Years 12-13 (age 16-19): | 0 |

| |
|---|
| <p>Please provide a detailed justification for the size of the proposed academy:</p> <p>There are 23 secondary schools in Wirral, 6 of these are single sex selective schools (three boys, three girls), 6 are single sex non-selective schools (four girls, two boys), the remainder being mixed sex non-selective schools, two of which are Catholic secondary schools.</p> <p>Within the Birkenhead review area, in September 2009 there will be three non-selective mixed schools – Ridgeway High, Rock Ferry High and Park High; two non-selective girls schools – Prenton High and Birkenhead High Academy and one selective boys grammar – St Anselm's Catholic College.</p> <p>Expected Year 7 admissions in September 2009 for the 6 schools are currently 680 (c 23 FE) of which 126 (c 4 FE) are for the boys selective school, 243 (c 8 FE) are for the two girls non-selective schools and 311 (c 10 FE) are for the three non-selective schools.</p> <p>Pupil numbers entering Year 7 in the area are forecast to fall over the next few years, rising again to reach approximately 680 (23 FE) by 2018.</p> <p>Park High School has a PAN of 250 for Year 7 with 811 pupils on roll in January 2009, and 439 surplus places, projected to reach 670 surplus places by 2018.</p> <p>Rock Ferry High School has a PAN of 250 for Year 7 with 584 pupils on roll in January 2009 and 648 surplus places, projected to reach 831 surplus places by 2018.</p> <p>Ridgeway High School has a PAN of 160 for Year 7 with 729 pupils on roll in January 2009 and 157 surplus places, projected to reach 302 by 2018.</p> |
|---|

It is proposed that the Mixed Academy will have a PAN of 150 for Year 7, which along with a PAN of 150 for the proposed Boys Academy would result in a reduction of 1,868 total places overall and bring school provision in this area in line with pupil population. It is anticipated that the Academy will admit to its planned admission number as an Academy.

3.2 All-age Academies

If the academy would provide primary school places, please provide the case for an all-age academy: N/A

If the academy proposes to cater for nursery pupils (age 3-5), please provide details of how this would fit with the LA's strategic plan for nursery education: N/A

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Does the LA confirm it would fund the capital costs of the primary and/or nursery element for the all-age academy? | Yes | |
| | N/A | |

3.3 Proposed Opening Date in existing buildings

2010

3.4 Target Build Completion Date

2012

3.5 Specialism(s)

The academy would specialise in: Enterprise and Applied Learning and in Health and Social Care

3.6 Admissions

Please confirm that the academy's admissions policy and arrangements would be in accordance with admissions law, the School Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice as they apply to maintained schools.

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Confirmed | X |
|-----------|---|

Please confirm that the admissions policy would ensure that the academy meets the statutory requirements (i.e. "provides education for pupils of different abilities who are wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which the school is situated").

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Confirmed | X |
|-----------|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| The academy would take up its place on the local admissions forum: | |
| Confirmed | X |

| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| If oversubscribed would the academy select up to 10% of its pupils by aptitude for the specialism? | Yes | |
| | No | X |
| If yes, please provide details of how the sponsor would develop a selection mechanism that is not dependent on ability: | | |

Please provide any further details known about the proposed over subscription criteria and admissions policy. In particular, how the policy would lead to a balanced intake and whether “banding by ability” would be considered :

The Sponsors of the University Academy of Birkenhead are committed to adopting the same admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria as the local authority.

Banding- the local authority and the Sponsors have considered banding and believe that a mixed ability intake, as far as is possible in a selective system, would be achieved without the need for banding using the proposed oversubscription criteria.

Firm proposals for admissions would be decided during feasibility but are expected to be based on the following:

Admissions at Age 11, Year 7

The Admission Number of the Academy would be 150.

The Academy would admit all pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need naming the Academy and to which the Academy has agreed.

Should the Academy be undersubscribed all applicants would be admitted.

Should the Academy be oversubscribed it would be expected that the following oversubscription criteria would be used:

Priority would be given in the following order:

1. Children who are in the care of the local authority.
2. Children who have a valid medical reason for a specific placement
3. Children who have a sibling (including half-siblings or step siblings living in the same household) on roll at the Academy of statutory school age;
4. Children living nearest to the Academy using the shortest road route, unless it is possible to use a footpath which is considered a safe walking route

3.7 Exclusions

| | |
|--|---|
| Please confirm that the academy would have regard to and have an independent appeal panel which acts in accordance with the Secretary of State’s guidance on exclusions. | |
| Confirmed | X |

3.8 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-----------|---|
| Please confirm that the proposed academy's SEN policy would have regard to meet the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice. | | Confirmed | X |
| Would the academy be co-located with an SEN unit? If yes please note that the LA would bear all capital costs | | Yes | |
| | | No | X |
| If yes who would run the SEN unit? | The academy | The LA | |
| Please provide details: The proposed Academy would be expected to use its financial, staffing, and accommodation resources flexibly to meet the wide range of pupil need. The LA would wish to commission up to 40 inclusive places in this Academy for pupils with learning difficulties, both specific and moderate, combined with social and emotional difficulties, to replace the Sanderling Unit currently located on the Rock Ferry site. | | | |
| Please note that pupils in the unit should not be included in overall pupil numbers for the academy. If the academy is proposing to manage the unit, revenue funding to support the unit will be recouped from the Dedicated Schools Grant. | | | |

3.9 The National Curriculum

| | |
|---|---|
| Please confirm that the academy would teach the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in English, maths, science and ICT to all pupils in years 1 to 6 (where these exist in the Academy) and years 7-11. | |
| Confirmed | X |

3.10 Behaviour Partnerships

| | |
|---|---|
| The academy would be part of a Behaviour Partnership and would work closely with the LA to improve behaviour and tackle persistent absence. | |
| Confirmed | X |

3.11 Vision

Context

The opportunity for Rock Ferry, Ridgeway and Park High Schools to be re-born as the two new Academies for Birkenhead is a massive vote of confidence in the future for a strong but challenged community. The schools of Birkenhead have responded with determination and notable successes but a step change is now required if the dream of sustaining and exceeding those achievements is to be realised. Educational achievements and the life advantages they bring depend on many

different contributions and resources – strong and meaningful partnership with families and carers, rigorous attention to the full range of the individual needs of every one of the young people and a continuous and consistent pursuit of quality and innovation in teaching and learning. These will be among the priorities for the new University Academy for North Birkenhead. A key underlying challenge for Birkenhead, however, is about mindsets - to raise aspirations, to develop a deeper and broader culture of lifelong learning and to equip people with the knowledge, skills, understanding and self-confidence required for a brighter future – a future that they will need to shape for themselves. Having a mindset for learning and enterprise that translates into action is a critical component for individual and community responses to these challenges.

The reality for our three schools in Birkenhead is tough. For a number of reasons, including the availability of more places in schools outside Birkenhead, the overall level of attainment of students as they enter secondary education has been getting lower over the last five years but with some signs of a rise in the last year. The performance of students leaving the three schools has been much higher than might have been expected but the challenge is high. The response of the partners promoting the University Academy will be aspirational, humane and relentlessly focused on building long-term sustainable achievements on day-by-day learning gains.

Transition Planning

A detailed transition plan will be developed during feasibility. It is anticipated that the academy will occupy the Park and Ridgeway High School sites from September 2010 and that it will consolidate onto the Park site on completion of the refurbishment works in September 2012.

The sponsors will work closely with the local authority to develop transition arrangements which safeguard the interests of all students and staff, ensure standards are maintained, continuity of learning is protected, attainment is enhanced, and students are well supported throughout this period.

The Sponsors

The University of Chester, the lead sponsor, is a small University with approximately 15,000 students, some 97% of which are from state schools. It has a substantial teacher training department and works with a range of schools in the Chester/Wirral/Halton local authorities providing professional development programmes for both primary and secondary school teachers. The University is also lead sponsor of the Ellesmere Port Academy.

Wirral Metropolitan College, co-sponsor, has 3,000 full-time students and 13,000 part-time and its curriculum focuses on skills for life, employability and work. The College has Centre of Vocational Excellence status for both Health and Care and Construction, extended partnership arrangements with five local Universities, is taking a lead role in the provision of all the new Diploma lines, has extensive experience in new builds, having recently completed a major new build programme, and is intending to recruit a new directorate level role who will take the lead on the Academy development.

Wirral MBC is also a co-sponsor.

Ethos and Core Values

The University of Chester, the main sponsor for the University Academy of Birkenhead, has worked in close collaboration with Wirral Metropolitan College and

Wirral Council, the co-sponsors, to formulate a unique and transformational response to the needs of young people, families and the wider community of Birkenhead. Our vision has been jointly developed and is strongly supported. We will promote consideration and respect, restore hope and trust, raise aspirations and standards and, critically, do things better. We will encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of humanity and faith, promoting spiritual values through the experience it will offer to all its pupils. The leadership and management of the University Academy would ensure that these values and this ethos was articulated throughout the Academy and maintained in its day-to-day activities and curriculum.

The sponsors of the University Academy of Birkenhead believe in learning and the powerful contribution it makes to personal and collective inspiration, growth and wellbeing. Our Academy will be a place of shared knowledge, practical skills and rich learning, with an underpinning commitment to social justice and social cohesion. Birkenhead and its future matter very much to us and so does every single learner, of whatever age, in this community. We want to work closely with external partners, especially the community and the sponsors of the South Birkenhead Academy, so that together we can do the best for Birkenhead. The Academy will be outwards-facing, looking beyond local strengths and resources to draw upon ideas and best practice wherever we can find it.

Vision

In order to facilitate, through the Academy, the transformational education that this implies we have adopted the following three principles or **Three Pillars of Learning** that - *Sense of Personal Worth; Personalised and Lifelong Learning; Partnerships and Networks*. These principles express in more practical terms our underpinning values and objectives and will shape the ethos upon which we propose that the University Academy of Birkenhead should be built. The University Academy will use this framework to deliver a vision that should produce high quality and sustainable outcomes for every student and staff member. The Academy will open up new possibilities and routes for growth and development by challenging existing aspirations and working beyond traditional boundaries.

A fundamental principle of this vision is the creation of a productive partnership between the Academy and the community in Birkenhead. This partnership will play a key role in the delivery of radical, transformation and regeneration in the area. In order to achieve this, the Academy will have a particular focus and identity, becoming a centre of excellence in Enterprise and Applied Learning and (Health and Social Care).

Our Academy would nurture the health, safety, and self-fulfilment of every student and member of staff. Every individual would be valued, accorded dignity and treated as of equal worth, so that each student, member of staff, or community partner would have high levels of access and opportunity for learning and development. Human diversity would be celebrated within a strong framework of respect for both the individual and for social cohesion. To do so, we would nurture qualities of respect, tolerance, forgiveness, generosity, compassion, enthusiasm, self-discipline, honesty, co-operation and thoughtful loyalty. A values-based learning environment and ethos would be created that would articulate our core values and would nurture and develop students of every and all backgrounds to enable them to be healthy and safe, to enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution to society and to attain economic well being.

For us it is vital that the experience of every student will be both “academic” and “vocational” because we see the integration of academic and vocational elements as the best way of preparing them for their current and future development. We will

seek to develop more detailed and specific student entitlements but one priority entitlement will be for each and every student to have a rich, integrated and productive experience across academic and vocational settings.

Everyone who studies or works at the Academy would be challenged and supported to achieve their personal best and be well equipped to lead happy and productive lives. We would ensure that we regularly monitored and evaluated all Academy policies and practices to secure genuine inclusion and a strong contribution to the Every Child Matters agenda. Students would be able to access opportunities for learning, extended learning, recreation and enjoyment, regardless of any learning disability or barriers associated with gender, race, culture or belief. They would understand and benefit from the Academy's commitment to outcomes which support the development of the whole person, their wellbeing and life chances.

We are committed to respond positively and imaginatively to additional and specific needs in general and of students in particular. Following an agreement in principle, further discussions at the Feasibility Stage will be undertaken with Wirral Council on the development of an appropriately resourced and supported mainstream provision that would be more flexible and inclusive than a straightforward replacement of the Sanderling base currently situated at Rock Ferry High School. We would also want to build on the opportunities provided by the decision to co-locate a multi-professional locality team on site.

This vision for the University Academy of Birkenhead will be open to challenge, review and change as new circumstances emerge – this is a learning vision. It would be realised through commitment and discipline within the framework of the three key pillars for learning.

Governance of the University Academy

In addition to the University, College and Local Authority sponsor appointments and elected representatives of staff and parents the sponsors would seek to recruit governors with a wide range of business expertise, engaging their extensive employer networks, and operating in local, national and international business arenas to support the Academy's specialist curriculum. They would also seek to recruit governors from community and voluntary sector organisations who know and keep in touch with local realities. All governors would be expected to demonstrate a high level of involvement and engagement with the Academy through regular attendance and active engagement at meetings and events and through the use of communications technology.

It is envisaged that the Governing Body of the Academy would be made up of 11-15 members who would be appointed by the Board of Trustees, and would comprise: 5/6 governors appointed by - the University of Chester the Lead sponsor; 2/3 appointed by the Co-sponsor Wirral Metropolitan College; 1 governor appointed by Wirral MBC as Co-sponsor, 1 by Wirral MBC as the LA, 1 or 2 elected staff members, 1 or 2 elected parent/community members- and the Principal ex-officio.

University Academy Specialisms

The University Academy would specialise in a) **Enterprise and Applied Learning** and (b) **Health and Social Care**. This would allow our learners to apply core learning skills and the full range of traditional academic disciplines to practical and meaningful settings. There are strong foundations for Business and Social Enterprise within the current schools that will contribute to the new Academy and the sponsors have extensive resources to contribute in relation to

Health and Social Care. Both offer meaningful contexts for the effective building of knowledge and application of learning.

Applied learning is the practical application of theory that allows learners the opportunity to actively engage with the curriculum they are studying. Applied learning is doing what you know as well as knowing what to do – a “can-do” approach. Applied learning is more relevant and meaningful to learners as it allows for learning within different contexts and environments. For example applied learning encourages:

- Linking understanding and learning activities to jobs and other life roles e.g. using applied mathematics or science in family life or leisure interests.
- Interaction with experienced adults, workers and specialist professionals e.g. understanding and managing competitive instincts alongside professional athletes, business entrepreneurs or local politicians.
- Real life investigations and active inquiry e.g. investigations and surveys on behalf of the Academy Student Council, curriculum research projects, product testing, and feasibility studies.
- Learning through doing e.g. developing personal strength and resilience through performing arts, communicating through presentations and formal debates, encountering different forms of belief through direct experience of faith communities, learning what it is to become skilled at care through working in supported settings with very young children or vulnerable adults.
- Interaction with other learners through group work e.g. team-building, team-work, team-based assessment within the curriculum and opportunities to experience and reflect on team-working in family, leisure and work-based settings.
- Learning in different environments e.g. working outwards from “safe” learning centres inside the Academy to experience different forms of the same learning in contrasting settings – perhaps the use of good questioning in a local firm’s customer care department, a magistrates court, pub quiz and a council meeting or the risks associated with poor spelling or grammar for shop-workers, health and safety and personal texting.

The expertise and support of the three sponsors would bring a valuable new dimension to the Academy in encouraging the promotion of appropriate forms of Applied Learning and Learner Inquiry and Research for learners of all ages and interests inside and outside the Academy. Applied Learning reflects the interest of sponsors in: promoting access to learning for individuals, groups and the community; action research and reflective learning; supported entry to and support through learning; and work-focused vocational and professional development. Building on Primary school experience and working with our family of schools, our aim would be to promote awareness of work and the world of work as early as possible. Applied learning is also essential to the vision for the New Diplomas and the Academy would aim to play a full part locally in this development.

To meet this challenge effectively we would develop a clearly understood, integrated or holistic framework for activity within the school – each part of the life of the Academy would make a contribution to the learning and life outcomes. We would want to explore the use of an integrated approach such as that developed by Edison Learning.

The transition from Primary schools would be managed very carefully and full recognition would be given to the Applied learning achievements of the students on entry to the Academy to minimise learning loss at age 11 and to maximise long-term learning potential. We would arrange Summer School opportunities for new entrants,

including a series of concentrated summer learning opportunities at Wirral Metropolitan College and engagement with University students over a more extended period following entry to the Academy.

The University Academy would therefore adopt tried and tested as well as innovative means to:

- Provide a curriculum which would give every single one of our learners the chance to perform at their best, through theoretical and practical study.
- Offer a range of qualifications and at appropriate levels so that every single one of our learners would have the chance to show what they really can do.
- Extend learner information, advice and guidance (IAG) to allow every single one of our students to have a clear understanding of life chances and opportunities and so to realise their potential.
- Provide qualifications under the Foundation Learning tier and provide the opportunity for learners to undertake the personal development profile in supporting their vocational choices
- Drive up the numbers of young people achieving level 1, 2 and 3 qualifications (including English and Mathematics) and reducing and eventually eradicating the incidence of NEET (young people “not in education, employment or training”).
- Extend progression routes so that every single one of our learners would have genuine, clear choices and opportunities.
- Provide work placement opportunities for our learners to experience at first hand the world of work and to develop clear routes to further and higher education and meaningful work and employment.

Students in the University Academy would be able to gain a real understanding of subject disciplines, especially English, Mathematics and Science (e.g. Applied Science GCSEs, First Diploma Applied Science) and their link with technologies, innovation and enterprise. They would become familiar and confident in their interaction with a wide range of industries and professions.

The University Academy would develop a strong ethos to support its specialisms which would pervade all aspects of school life. We would develop curriculum materials which would excite and motivate our learners. We would encourage work with the local community, including the imaginative use of communications technologies, and provide curriculum enrichment activities and involvement in national initiatives and competitions to raise standards of teaching and learning and attainment, especially in English, Mathematics and Science across the curriculum. We would also work in close partnership with local business to provide opportunities to demonstrate the relevance of these disciplines within a working context.

We believe that our combination of specialisms enhance the intellectual discipline of all learners and increase their understanding of the world in which they live and can make a vital contribution.

The following development of this framework provides more detailed information about the Framework for our Vision.

The Three Pillars of Learning

P1. DEVELOPING THE INDIVIDUAL'S SENSE OF WORTH AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WIDER ORGANISATION AND COMMUNITY.

All learners and their families, irrespective of ability, belief, gender or ethnicity would be welcome at the University Academy as equal members of the Birkenhead learning community. We will not introduce selective admissions arrangements. Particular emphasis would be placed upon the development of the whole person, nurturing the individual's spiritual, moral and social health so that they can explore and articulate their understanding of right and wrong and offer a clear rationale for their views. All students' cognitive, emotional and behavioural skills would be carefully developed and enhanced during their time with us. All learners at the Academy would be encouraged to celebrate and take pride in their own and other's achievements and would progress from the University Academy well equipped to enjoy a happy and productive life.

Student voice

Students would be empowered to have an influential and meaningful voice in the life and work of our Academy and community and we would ensure this permeated throughout all our Academy policies and practices. The Academy will be committed to promoting a strong student voice that will include an active Student Council. Students would feel and be involved in their own learning and appreciate the importance of interdependence in learning and become skilled at taking part in collective learning. The Academy would be organised for every student's success, with structures developed to ensure the safety and security of each student. Vulnerable students would know there would be a supportive team around them, who would understand their needs and would act swiftly to help them.

Leadership and organisation

The sponsors recognise the critical importance of leadership for success. Our Academy would develop leadership at all levels to support the delivery of our ethos and vision, convey the significance of our Three Pillars of Learning and secure student and staff achievement, success, happiness and productivity. The Academy management structure would be devised to ensure that organisational structures, time and people were organised for every student's success. Clear lines of accountability would be maintained, with explicit strategies for staff, students and families to hold each other to account, in order to maximise student achievement. We would make extensive and intelligent use of data on pupil progress, linked to our Information Management System, to reflect on the effectiveness of teaching arrangements and Academy organisation. The organisation of the academy and design of the building would accommodate the varying group sizes, staffing, session frequencies, and length of day required to deliver flexible learning pathways and meet the requirements needed to deliver the new secondary curriculum.

The University Academy would ensure that all teachers were competent at 'mentoring for learning', an important expression of leadership, and would develop mentoring skills for and in young people and adults. We plan to become a centre of excellence for the initial training of teachers and the continuing professional development of all staff and to meet the criteria for national recognition as soon as possible.

The Academy leadership team and the Trustees have a critical role and they would together ensure that a culture of teamwork, harmony and productivity was created and sustained throughout the Academy. Meaningful opportunities would be created for students to be involved in the organisation and running of the Academy. In summary our Academy would be distinguished by its emphasis on the development of distributed leadership at all levels.

Learning in the wider community and valuing everyone's contribution to the success of the University Academy.

Learner horizons and aspirations would be extended beyond the immediate community by providing signposting and access to a varied menu of study support and enrichment activities. The skills and talents of people from our neighbourhood and local communities would be used as a resource for supporting teaching and learning. We would seek to employ or otherwise draw upon people from outside the Academy who have experience of our specialisms, especially in Business or Social Enterprise, Health and Social Care. We would work with industry and business partners to help the Academy identify and promote the key skills and aptitudes students would need to contribute to the community of Birkenhead and beyond, to gain employment and be effective at work. Students would be able to use the extensive business network and partners of the University of Chester, Wirral Metropolitan College, and the Wirral Council to develop new opportunities and to extend their horizons. Together these strategies would enhance the self-esteem, confidence, sense of personal worth and social conscience of each member of the Academy .

P2. PERSONALISED AND LIFELONG LEARNING FOR ALL

The University Academy would become an outstanding place of learning and achievement, organised for every student's success and happiness with Personalised Learning at its core. Through Personalised Learning we would aim to raise educational standards significantly by relating learning to the aptitudes and interests of students. By using such strategies as assessment for learning, inquiry-based and evidence-based learning, accelerated learning, and learning styles profiling, each student would find the University Academy a place within which they could grow as people and build up their personal capabilities. Part of our purpose will be to support the development of reflective learners and practitioners who are confident in themselves, skilled and skilful in practice, working alone and with others.

The University Academy would be at the learning heart of the community, reaching beyond the site of the Academy to facilitate Lifelong Learning for all the people of Birkenhead. It would be a "tower of strength" for learning, providing a community resource both inside and outside of the traditional school day, forming a hub for wider local services and activities. The Academy would be a place of learning, inquiry and enjoyment, a centre of excellence in the development of academic and vocational routes to further and higher education and to work and employment.

Personalised learning and the curriculum

We would challenge each student to achieve their personal best and develop an interest in lifelong and independent learning. We would strive to ensure that all our students would continue their learning into higher or further education, employment or work based training and thus enable them to achieve economic well being and make a positive contribution to society. These aspirations would be achieved through providing a world-class educational environment. Experience of other Academies already supported by the University of Chester has demonstrated the value of sharing the experience of curriculum development and delivery partners. One such partner with a strong track-record is Edison Learning and it would be our intention to explore the scope for applying their E2 Curriculum framework to the University Academy of Birkenhead.

The learning required for the 21st Century and the goals for the Government's and Wirral Children's Plan would be achieved through a rich and challenging skills-based curriculum and targeted interventions. Students would initially follow the broad

features of the National Curriculum in our planning, though we would keep this under review, looking for opportunities to innovate with the staff and community. The Academy would propose to allow students to progress through Key Stage 3 in two years so that they could allocate more time to their GCSEs, diplomas and broad life and learning skills development in Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 4 we would work in partnership with other providers to offer the full range of qualifications linked to current and future frameworks and would meet the needs of our learners and the community of Birkenhead. The University Academy would become a centre of excellence in the development of integrated academic and vocational routes to further and higher education and employment.

The three schools that will form the basis of the two new Birkenhead Academies have been judged “good” or “outstanding” by Ofsted and one judged “outstanding” with many examples of good added value - and yet attainment in key areas is well below Wirral and national averages. The challenge for the University Academy is to create an outstanding learning environment in which levels attained by students can rise to meet those of other schools and areas. Our aim will be to provide wider opportunities for all students to learn and become proficient in skills that will support them throughout their lives - to reach good standards of literacy and numeracy as well as being financially literate, having well developed skills for employability.

Inevitably, the teaching and learning of Literacy and Numeracy will be a major focus of the programmes across the University Academy. Attainment in English and Maths upon entry will be the subject of close analysis and our work with primary schools and families will be targeted on “upstream” support to minimise under-achievement, through the deployment of staff and Academy student mentors for under-achieving primary pupils. We plan to work closely with other secondary schools and academies in a coordinated programme of work with primary schools and specifically plan to run a summer school for new entrants to support their transition into the University Academy with particular attention to Applied Literacy and Numeracy.

Throughout Key Stage 3 there will be a strong emphasis on teaching Literacy and Numeracy across the curriculum and all staff (teaching and support staff) will be supported with training and development opportunities to ensure that they are able to work in support of the Academy’s priority focus on Applied Literacy and Numeracy. Through the University of Chester and Wirral Metropolitan College the Academy will benefit from specialist expertise and support in Maths and English, including contexts for applied Literacy and Numeracy.

The three existing schools have already benefited from additional investment in response to National Challenge. **[Examples of practice from three schools to be inserted – Mark Parkinson to arrange]** The University Academy will incorporate these programmes and agree further research- and evidence-led initiatives. These will be constructed to be appropriate to the context of our students, and designed in the light of a careful analysis of their needs and experience of successful prior developments. Taken together these programmes would justify high aspirations and setting challenging targets for the students to reach. **[Revised stretching targets to be added here – Mark Parkinson to arrange. This will replace the section deleted above]**

The University of Chester will seek to offer an annually agreed programme of enrichment to enhance the Academy’s teaching activities and the processes of student development, including: lectures and masterclasses from University academics; mentoring and tutoring support for Academy students from University of Chester students, as a vehicle for raising standards and developing self-esteem and confidence; visits to the University’s campuses in Chester and Warrington and

access to the University's extensive campus facilities, including laboratories, sports facilities and libraries; support for strategies to draw in sponsorship to the Academy; support to the Academy in building a strong network of employer and business links; assistance with the promotion of student and staff work placement schemes; advice for Key Stage 4 students on routes into further and higher education; support with the higher education entry process from University admissions tutors; promoting Academy staff participation in a programme of ongoing professional development, with access to accreditation via the University; exploring the development of on site foundation degree provision; developing an international programme of enrichment activities, drawing on the University's links with schools and universities overseas.

The Wirral Metropolitan College has an extensive programme of supported entry that would be targeted at students in the Academy facing significant learning challenges. This would include: Vocational Access Courses; First Steps to: Business, Administration and IT; Foundation Learning Tier; Pre-Uniformed Service; Princes Trust Volunteers Award. It is envisaged that this expertise will provide a strong foundation for an important transitional and developmental dimension to progression in learning and personal development, particularly in relation to personalised learning, with a vocational and life skills focus.

Wirral Council will bring high quality support in a number of key areas, including: securing access to networks with other schools and colleges and links between the work of the Academy and social and economic regeneration programmes in Birkenhead and across the Borough that will contribute to narrowing gaps in achievement and life chances, raising aspirations and outcomes for children and young people. The Council will also: facilitate partnership, multi-agency and integrated working so that children, young people, parents and families are fully supported to meet their needs; create strong links with the universal Youth Offer and Youth Participation; help the Academy to promote community cohesion and community engagement; and support building projects and PFI related issues; support the Academy through a range of inclusion strategies, including behaviour, attendance and meeting the needs of children with Special Educational Needs, so that children are helped to achieve their best regardless of their ability or need; link to programmes of parent and family support as well as lifelong learning for children and their families.

The pervading culture of the Academy would be one in which every student feels that they can succeed and in which their aspiration to be life-long learners would be supported and encouraged. For this to become a reality all these partner contributions are vital.

Using technology to support learning in an information age

High quality, world-class technology would be integral to the learning, management, and organisation of the University Academy and the realisation of the Academy vision. Students would be able to access information systems remotely (e.g.in the Academy, from home or elsewhere) to support curriculum breadth and independent study and/or research. This would be available at all times of the day and week, supported by systems to for e-safety. The learning platform would also support the development of teaching and learning plans and professional development of staff.

The University of Chester and Wirral Metropolitan College will offer particular expertise in the development and use of IT and new technologies in learning, including Virtual Learning Environments and control technologies. The University has an extensive campus based IT system, to which the Academy would have access. During Feasibility, the University will explore with other sponsors and local partners strategies to resource and, where appropriate, provide intelligence, systems support and equipment for the Academy and its students. Wirral Council brings

applied ICT expertise in school-based learning to the Academy partnership.

Building on this unparalleled combination of expertise and resources we plan to develop open access learning environments for students and all other We will be discriminating and challenging about new and emerging technologies, looking for ways to exploit existing technologies to the full as well as ensuring that we are up to date with the latest developments through active links with national and international organisations.

Developing the Academy workforce

All staff would be encouraged and supported to develop higher-level skills. The leadership team would ensure that each member of staff would be accountable for the success of their individual learners and would have high expectation of their own and their students' learning and development. Over time, the University of Chester will work with the Academy to develop research into effective learning thereby supporting the raising of standards. The overall staff development programme would be further supported by providing access for Academy staff to a range of opportunities.

Supporting community learning and aspirations

The Academy would be at the heart of the community, offering a focus for supporting the learning of a wide range of community members – for them personally as well as for the support they can provide to the young people enrolled in the Academy. Where possible, it would become a hub for wider local services and activities during and outside the traditional school day. A priority for consideration for such a learning hub would be the current Ridgeway Site, perhaps in association with the City Learning Centre.

The University Academy would ensure that its facilities are available for a wide range of adult education, leisure activities, and community use and would be designed to be accessible to all, on a broader basis, including the early morning, evenings, weekends, or holiday periods. We would extend and stagger the school day in order to facilitate personal and where possible, community learning needs and support or establish in key locations outside the Academy a number of learning hubs to provide neighbourhood learning support sites.

The University Academy would seek to provide facilities on its main site that would be of interest to local people and local businesses as well as offering practical experiences for students. We are particularly excited by the possibility of developing health services in partnership with the Primary Care Trust, which has already indicated a strong commitment to engagement with us, and by the co-location on the Academy site of neighbourhood offices or staff, including especially the Wirral Multi-Professional Children and Young People's Locality Team which has now been agreed in principle. By opening up our facilities to the wider community and working in partnership with other agencies to support the needs of the locality, we would be helping to support and energise other local and national initiatives aimed at increasing wellbeing, skills and enterprise.

Our partnership with local schools and educational institutions would be particularly important to the overall future success of the Academy and in delivering the radical, transformational change and regeneration in the Birkenhead area. We would be fully engaged "upstream" with Early Years settings and Primary Schools and "downstream" with post-16 providers including our Academy co-sponsor, Wirral Metropolitan College and Birkenhead Sixth Form College.

P3. RECOGNISING AND DEVELOPING THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

The University Academy will work closely within existing and new networks and partnerships to ensure that all students have access to a comprehensive range of services and support. It is central to our vision that we will work closely and productively with parent/carers, the local community, other educational institutions, support services and the business world. Effective partnerships will provide the support and range of opportunities that individual learners and the community of Birkenhead need to succeed. The University Academy will develop and maintain an active and affirming relationship with public, private, voluntary, community and faith groups in Birkenhead. Our partnerships will be forged by learning from and building on existing links.

Partnerships with students, parents and carers

The Academy will build genuine partnerships with students and families, based on inclusive support, in order to ensure that families were made fully aware of their child's successes and any problems that they were facing. The Academy will be committed to "Think Family" and undertake regular "learner-friendly" and "family-friendly" audits on its policies and practices. We will promote Family Learning and support families at risk or in need by developing a well coordinated and proactive approach to meeting needs, in partnership with external and community support agencies. We would work closely with Parent and Community Champions. Even better levels of family support for good attendance will be one of our priorities. This would ensure that all students would have access to available opportunities and range of support to ensure that the local dimensions of the Every Child Matters agenda and the national Children's Plan would be delivered to exemplary standards.

Partnerships with other agencies

The University Academy would provide additional services for children, young people and families, building on the innovative work already developed with the Children's and Young People's Services, Wirral Primary Care Trust Community Protection, Leisure and Sports and other statutory and voluntary service providers. We would ensure that our communication and operating systems with other agencies were robust and effective.

Partnerships with the wider community

A key challenge for the Academy will be to build trust and effective communications with the wider community. Our aim will be to both "reach out and welcome in" and in so doing we will contribute to the development of good social networks and links in Birkenhead. A good example is one of our partnership objectives which will be to maximise the quality and engagement of the Academy with older people in the community and so promote intergenerational bonding and cultural consciousness. This will have major potential benefits for both younger and older people.

The University Academy will support the overarching priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership through its Sustainable Communities Strategy. We will provide support for community cohesion and sustainability, through socio-economic, health and environmental programmes.

It is central to our Vision that we will work closely and productively with parent/carers, the local community, other educational institutions, support services and the business world. These partnerships will be reflected in the governance arrangements.

The sponsors would wish, finally, to confirm that an Endowment Trust Fund would be established for the University Academy and that they would use their best

endeavours collectively to attract funds either directly or indirectly which would be used to provide support for additional activities such as curriculum enrichment or summer schools and essential support such as breakfast clubs or clothing grants.

Section 4: Sites and Buildings

4.1

The academy would be located at the following address:

On first opening in existing buildings the Academy would operate as a split site Academy utilising the former Park High School, Park Road South, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 4UY and former Ridgeway High School, Noctorum Avenue, Prenton, CH43 9EB- and will consolidate on the Park site on completion of the transition process.

Park High School is part of the Wirral Joint PFI scheme across 9 schools. The contract runs until 2031, and is currently operated by Semperian PPP Investment Partners LP.

The approximate size of the site to be transferred to the Academy Trust is: approx.26 hectares.

The LA is seeking clarification from the DCSF as to the legal implications of integrating Academy status with the existing PFI contract.

Please confirm that the proposed academy would have access to playing fields of a sufficient size to deliver its proposed vision and curriculum

Yes

X

If not, please explain how would the PE curriculum be delivered:

Please provide details:

Please attach a copy of the Ordnance Survey Map with the boundaries of the Academy site clearly marked.

Attached

X

4.2

All parties are content with the selection of this site and no others are under consideration for this project.

Confirmed

X

| | |
|--|---|
| The site of the proposed academy is owned by (mark one with an x) | |
| LA | X |
| Diocese | |
| CTC Trust | |
| Other | |
| If other, please provide details: Park High School is part of the Wirral Joint PFI scheme across 9 schools. The contract runs until 2031, and is currently operated by Semperian PPP Investment Partners LP (www.semperian.co.uk). | |

If it is not currently a school site, please provide details of the ownership and current usage of the entire site and details of who would bear the costs of acquiring the site: N/A

Note: If the site is currently a school site, it would be transferred at nil cost (or leased at nominal rent) to the Academy Trust prior to the academy opening, with terms agreed prior to Funding Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| If the site is owned by the LA does it intend to seek permission to dispose of any part of it? | Yes | |
| | No | X |
| | N/A | |
| If yes, please provide details and confirm that you would abide by PfS guidelines regarding contributions to the capital cost of the academy project. The Council is unlikely to dispose of the Ridgeway High School site, which will not be required long term for the Academies. Should it do so- the Council will abide by PfS guidelines on contributions to the capital costs of the academy. The Council will require capital to invest in the new Youth facility, should Academy 2 proceed on the current Shaftesbury Youth Club site. The Council intends to continue using the Ridgeway High School site to provide community facilities. | | |

If the academy proposes to open in existing buildings (Section 3.3) please provide a **brief** description of the age, size and condition of these buildings:

Park High School
The site area is 26,190 m2. The original school was built in 1960, and is in good condition having been significantly rebuilt and refurbished in recent years. The building and site are part of Wirral's 9 school PFI contract until 2031, currently held by Semperian PPP Investment Partners LP (www.semperian.co.uk). Disabled access is 100%. The school can accommodate 1250 pupils.

Ridgeway High School

The total site area is 94,944 m2. The school occupies four principal buildings. The main school was built in 1974 – there is also a mid-1980's mobile classroom, and two further blocks built in the last 10 years. A community centre is located within the school's main building. The school also shares accommodation and services with a City Learning Centre, which also houses a Local Authority maintained library, also used by the school. The main building and mobile will require substantial refurbishment works over the next ten years. Disabled access is 50%.

Rock Ferry High School

The site area is 82,543 m2. The school occupies five principal buildings. The main school was built in 1938; the Sanderling Unit for pupils with SEN (BESD) was constructed in 1922. The remaining buildings comprise the Stoneleigh building (1955), Highfield building (1971) and Sports Hall (1980). There is also a caretaker's house on site (1922). There has been major investment at the site following various fires in recent years. The school will require substantial works over the next ten years. Disabled access is 60%.

4.3

Please provide details of discussions with LA planners or legal advisors on any likely planning or legal restrictions that could preclude academy building development, lead to abnormal costs or impact on the proposed programme:

Some refurbishment work will be required for this Academy in the predecessor school, Park High School. Park High School is part of the Wirral Joint PFI scheme across 9 schools. The contract runs until 2031, and is currently operated by Semperian PPP Investment Partners LP (www.semperian.co.uk). Any refurbishment works will have to be carried out by the PFI contractor under the terms of the PFI contract.

Should it be necessary to co-locate primary schools, special schools, Pupil Referral Units, youth or community groups currently sharing the site, please confirm that the LA would bear associated capital and revenue costs.

Yes (please give more information) X

Ridgeway-A community centre is located within the school's main building. The school also shares accommodation and services with a City Learning Centre, which also houses a Local Authority maintained library, also used by the school.

The Council intends to retain these facilities on this site.

Rock Ferry- the Sanderling Unit for pupils with SEN (BESD) is within the school and it is intended that this resourced unit will be relocated to the University Academy of Birkenhead. It will be funded, capital and revenue, by the Council and will be operated by the Academy.

The LA's Multi-disciplinary Area Team for North Birkenhead would be co-located in the

Not applicable (mark with a x)

| | |
|--|--|
| Academy. The building can accommodate 1250 pupils and the Team would make use of accommodation not required by the Academy's 750 pupils. | |
|--|--|

| |
|--|
| <p>Where required in response to site constraints or as a result of remodelling, please provide details of a decanting plan for existing occupants during construction and details of who would pay the associated costs:</p> <p>The Park site adjoins Birkenhead Park, which is a Grade I Listed landscape, and precludes any expansion of the existing site.</p> <p>Some decanting may be required during refurbishment of the former Park High school buildings. These costs would be met from the capital funding.</p> |
|--|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Please confirm that the LA would meet the cost of any off- site works that may be associated with the development of the academy. | |
| Confirmed | N/A |

4.4

| | |
|---|-----|
| <p>The Department intends to deliver all procurement through Partnerships for Schools (Pfs) and Local Authorities.</p> <p>If approved, this academy would be procured through: (Please mark one with an x)</p> <p>NB Park High School is part of the Wirral Joint PFI scheme across 9 schools. The contract runs until 2031, and is currently operated by Semperian PPP Investment Partners LP (www.semperian.co.uk). Any refurbishment works will have to be carried out by the PFI contractor as required in the terms of the contract.</p> | |
| BSF Local Education Partnership | N/A |
| PfS National Framework | N/A |

Section 5: Agreements

5.1 Sponsor Agreement

Some categories of sponsor (listed below) are not required to make a financial contribution to the endowment fund, or to sign a Deed of Gift. The Department would nonetheless expect the Academy Trust to establish the means of receiving and to use reasonable endeavours to raise donations.

| |
|---|
| Name of Lead Sponsor: University of Chester |
|---|

| |
|--|
| Amount of sponsorship to be contributed: N/A |
| Name of co-sponsor/s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wirral Metropolitan College. • Wirral MBC |
| Amount of sponsorship to be contributed: The sponsors will use their best endeavours to raise funds for the Endowment Trust for the Academy. |
| Governance arrangements i.e. composition of the trustee board and the governing body: Final proposals for the composition of the Trustee Board and the Governing Body would be decided during feasibility but it is envisaged that there would be up of 5 Trustees who would set the strategic direction of the Academy. They would be made up of representatives of the Lead Sponsor- the University of Chester (2), Co-sponsor Wirral Metropolitan College (1), the Chair of the Governing Body of the Academy (1) and a representative of the Secretary of State (1). It is also envisaged that the Governing Body of the Academy would be made up of 11-15 members who would be appointed by the Board of Trustees, and would comprise: 5/6 governors appointed by - the University of Chester the Lead sponsor; 2/3 appointed by the Co-sponsor Wirral Metropolitan College; 1governor appointed by Wirral MBC as Co-sponsor, 1 by Wirral MBC as the LA, 1or 2 elected staff members, 1 or 2 elected parent/community members- and the Principal ex-officio. Sponsors also intend to appoint associate student governors. An advisory board of parent/community representatives would also be established. Please note: sponsors other than local authorities would appoint a controlling majority of the governing body |

| | |
|--|---|
| *The following categories of sponsor are not required to make a financial contribution to the endowment fund. Please indicate if sponsor/s fall into any of the categories below: | |
| Existing sponsor who has already contributed £2million as financial sponsorship | |
| University/College | X |
| School or other educational establishment | |
| Diocese | |

| |
|---|
| Please confirm that sponsors understand and are content with the roles and responsibilities |
|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| of the Sponsor, as set out in <i>Sponsorship Guide: Establishing an Academy</i> . | |
| Confirmed | X |

5.2 Local Authority Agreement

| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| Does the LA agree to all aspects of this proposal, including the admissions criteria proposed in Section 3? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| Does the LA confirm that it would bring forward proposals for the closure of any predecessor schools? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Is this proposal included (or due to be included) within the LA's BSF Strategy for Change? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

If you have answered no to any of these questions, please provide full details:

| If this project involves a predecessor school, please provide details of the proposed consultation that the LA would undertake on its closure: | |
|--|--|
| Wirral MBC will undertake closure of the three predecessor schools, Park High School, Rock Ferry High School, and Ridgeway High School as follows: | |
| Date | Indicative Timeline |
| 1 st October 2009 | Report to Cabinet on EOI including required consultation process and closure timeline. |
| 21 st October 2009 | Commencement of formal closure consultation (6 weeks) |
| 27 th November 2009 | Conclusion of formal closure consultation |
| 14 th January 2010 | Report to Cabinet |
| 28 th January 2010 | Statutory Notice published- statutory closure consultation begins (6 weeks) |
| 10 th March 2010 | Statutory closure consultation closes |
| 15 th April 2010 | Report to Cabinet |
| 31 August 2010 | Schools close |

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1 September 2010 | Academy opens |
|------------------|---------------|

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| Where staff at existing schools transfer to an academy, please confirm that the LA agrees to indemnify the academy in respect of all employment costs relating to the period prior to the transfer, which will include without limitation the costs arising out of any equal pay claims relating to that period. | Confirmed | X |
|--|-----------|---|

Please confirm that the LA would contribute towards the costs associated with TUPE as follows:

1. to meet all costs – including any severance, redundancy or associated pension costs associated with any restructuring resulting from or arising out of:

- an academy inheriting staff from more than one school
- Academy operating on fewer sites than predecessor school(s);
- Academy offering fewer places than at the predecessor school(s);
- the predecessor school(s) being overstaffed; or
- the predecessor school(s) running at a deficit.

2. to meet 50% of any other severance and associated costs incurred by an academy not covered by the criteria above.

All costs referred to relate to those incurred in the run up to the academy opening or at the point of opening (allowing time for the academy to follow due process) and not some time thereafter.

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Confirmed | X |
|-----------|---|

5.3 Neighbouring Local Authority Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| If the proposed academy is likely to have an impact on schools in neighbouring local authorities have these authorities been consulted about this academy project? | Yes | |
| | No | |
| | N/A | X |
| Where applicable please provide details: | | |

5.4 Governing Body Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Is the Governing Body of any predecessor school(s) content with this | Yes | |
|--|-----|--|

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| proposal? | No | |
| | N/A | |
| <p>Where applicable please provide details:</p> <p>The governing body of park High School met on 28th September 2009 - and voted to support/ not support the proposal.</p> <p>The governing body of George Rock Ferry High School met on 28th September 2009 - and voted to support/ not support the proposal.</p> <p>The governing body of Ridgeway High School met on 28th September 2009 and voted to support/ not support the proposal.</p> | | |

5.5 Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Has the local LSC been consulted on and agreed to any proposed post -16 provision? | Yes | X |
| | No | |

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Is a letter confirming support attached? | Yes | |
| | No | |

If no - Please provide copies of any correspondence and give details of LSC objections:

5.6 Diocese Agreement

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Where the relevant predecessor school is a VA school, please confirm that the Diocese/Archdiocese has agreed to this proposal and has formal Board of Education / Diocesan Schools Commission agreement. | Yes | |
| | No | |
| | N/A | X |

Where applicable please provide details:

5.7 Miscellaneous

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>The Department has established a Framework for the Project Management of academy projects following an open competition. This arrangement has been made to ensure compliance with the government procurement regulations and avoid lengthy competition processes. The ten project management companies appointed to our Framework have been selected on the basis of their experience, expertise and commitment to deliver a quality service.</p> <p>Please confirm that all parties are content for a Project Management company to be selected from the DCSF framework.</p> <p><i>*Please note that alternative arrangements may be agreed for multiple sponsors through discussion with the Project Lead.</i></p> | |
| Agreed | X |

Please confirm that all parties understand and are content with the roles and responsibilities of the Sponsor, Project Steering Group, Academy Trust, LA and PfS in relation to the academy buildings, as set out in *Delivering Academy Buildings through PfS*:

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| | Confirmed | X |
|--|-----------|---|

Please provide details of any known impediments, risks, conditions or hazards not mentioned elsewhere in this document:

None known.

DRAFT

5.8 Signatory details

We fully support all aspects of this Expression of Interest and agree to use it as a basis for the future development of an academy project.

Signature

(For and on behalf of the University of Chester, the lead sponsor)

Name in full: Professor Tim J. Wheeler DL

Position: Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Date:

Signature

(For and on behalf of Wirral Metropolitan College, a co-sponsor)

Name in full: Mike Potter CBE

Position: Principal and Chief Executive

Date

Signature

(For and on behalf of Wirral MBC, as a co-sponsor)

Name in full: Councillor Phil Davies

Position: Lead Member for Children and Young People

Date

Signature

(For and on behalf of Wirral MBC, as the local authority)

Name in full: Steve Maddox

Position: Chief Executive

Date

Section 6: Contact details

Name of the University of Chester, lead sponsor representative: Dr Colin Hankinson, Director of 14-19 and Academy Development.

Address: Vice Chancellor's Office, The University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, Cheshire, CH1 4BJ

Email: c.hankinson@chester.ac.uk

Tel: 01244 512179

Mobile:

Fax:

Name of Wirral Metropolitan College co-sponsor representative: Peter Trigg, Head of Learning.

Address: Wirral Metropolitan College, Conway Park Campus, Europa Boulevard, Conway Park, Birkenhead, CH41 4NT.

Email: Peter.Trigg@wmc.ac.uk

Tel: 0151 551 7777

Mobile:

Fax:

Name of Wirral MBC, as co-sponsor representative: Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch (Learning & Achievement).

Address: Wirral Children & Young People's Department, Council Offices, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD.

Email: markparkinson@wirral.gov.uk

Tel: 0151 666 4297

Mobile:

Fax:

Name of Wirral MBC, as the local authority representative: Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch (Learning & Achievement).

Address: Wirral Children & Young People's Department, Council Offices, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD.

Email: markparkinson@wirral.gov.uk

Tel: 0151 666 4297

Mobile:

Fax:

School 1

Name of Park High school, predecessor school, representative: Headteacher, Mr Steven McMahon

Address Park Road South, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 4UY

Email: headteacher@parkhigh.wirral.sch.uk

Tel: 0151 652 1574

Mobile:

Fax: 0151 653 6760

School 2

Name of Rock Ferry High School, predecessor school, representative: Headteacher Mr Peter Bennett

Address Ravenswood Avenue, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH42 4NY.

Email: headteacher@rockferryhigh.wirral.sch.uk

Tel: 0151 645 6917

Mobile:

Fax: 0151 643 1236

School 3

Name of Ridgeway High School, predecessor school, representative: Headteacher, Ms Pauline Roberts

Address Noctorum Avenue, Noctorum, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 9EB

Email: headteacher@ridgeway.wirral.sch.uk

Tel: 0151 678 3322

Mobile:

Fax: 0151 678 6571

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