

Chief Executive's Office

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**To: All Members of Cabinet:
RJ Phillips (Leader)
LO Barnett
AJM Blackshaw
H Bramer
JP French
JA Hyde
JG Jarvis
DB Wilcox**

9th August, 2007

Dear Councillor,

**MEETING OF CABINET
THURSDAY, 16TH AUGUST, 2007 AT 2.00 P.M.
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD (TBC)**

AGENDA (07/09)

**HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL - NOTICE UNDER REGULATION 15 OF THE LOCAL
AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS((ACCESS TO INFORMATION) REGULATIONS
2000 (AS AMENDED)**

Notice is hereby given that the following reports contain key decisions. When the decisions have been made, Members of the relevant Scrutiny Committee will be sent a copy of the decision notices and given the opportunity to call-in the decisions.

Item No	Title	Portfolio Responsibility	Scrutiny Committee	Included in the Forward Plan Yes/No
3	Brilley Church of England Primary School	Children's Services	Children's Services	No
4	Capital Investment in Schools in Herefordshire: A Way Forward	Children's Services	Children's Services	No

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.



Putting People First Providing for our Communities Preserving our Heritage Promoting the County Protecting our Future

County of Herefordshire District Council, PO Box 239, HEREFORD, HR1 1ZU

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2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest by members in respect of items on this agenda.

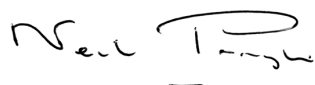
3. BRILLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

To consider the response on the consultation on the proposal to close Brilley Church of England Primary School with effect from 31st August 2007. (Pages 1 - 6)

4. CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS IN HEREFORDSHIRE: A WAY FORWARD

Cabinet to consider the options available on three school capital investment projects, and advise on which option should be pursued. Each project is dealt with as a separate report to help the understanding of the situation in each case. (Pages 7 - 20)

Yours sincerely,



N.M. PRINGLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Copies to: Chairman of the Council
Chairman of Strategic Monitoring Committee
Vice-Chairman of Strategic Monitoring Committee
Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees
Group Leaders
Directors
Head of Legal and Democratic Services



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- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.

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BRILLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CABINET

16TH AUGUST, 2007

Wards Affected

Kington

Purpose

To consider the response on the consultation on the proposal to close Brilley Church of England Primary School with effect from 31st August 2007.

Key Decision

This is a Key Decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in Herefordshire in an area comprising one or more wards.

Recommendation

THAT Brilley Church of England Primary School close on 31st August 2007.

Reasons

- There are no pupils on roll at the school at present.
- At the end of the spring term parents voted to transfer the pupils to another school.
- In future there is no prospect of a greater number of children wishing to attend the school.
- There have been no objections to the statutory notice to close the school.

Considerations

1. A review of school provision was started in the Kington, Weobley and Wigmore Area in the summer of 2006 in light of falling numbers of children in the county.
2. At this point there were only 28 pupils on roll and only 20 children under the age of 5 living in the area. In January 2007 there were 19 on roll broken down in terms of boys and girls in the following age groups

(see table on next page)

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
George Salmon, Head of Commissioning & Improvement – Schools & Services on (01432) 260802

Age	F	M	Total
4	2	1	3
5	3	2	5
6	0	1	1
7	0	5	5
8	0	3	3
9	0	2	2
Total	5	14	19

3. Following the initial consultation, a proposals document was issued in Spring 2007 recommending for Brilley that 'the maintenance of the status quo was not an option....' and 'consideration should be given to federation with another school'
4. Meetings were held at Brilley School with Governors, parents and the community and at Eardisley Primary School.
5. No school saw advantage in pursuing federation. In the meeting on 15th March 2007, parents and Governors at Brilley Primary School voted that given the current and likely future low numbers, formal steps should be taken to close the school and, to minimise the impact on current children, all 17 children (who remained at the school) be transferred to Almeley Primary School for the start of the summer term 2007.
6. The Cabinet agreed on 12th April to issue public notices proposing to close the school. Places were offered and transport made available for all 17 children to Almeley.
7. Notices were issued on 15th May, and comments from schools, community and other statutory consultees listed in Appendix 1 were invited by 31st July. No comments have been received.
8. Consideration of a number of factors is required prior to a decision on closure is required. These are listed below.
 - The likely effect of the discontinuance of the school on the local community
 - At the meeting on 5th March 2007 the community expressed support for the school not least because it was due to celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2008. Many of the parents and Governors, who sought the transfer of children from the school also have roles within the community, judged that the needs of the children must take priority. It is also pertinent to note that no objections have been received to the public notice.
 - The availability, and likely cost to the local authority of transport to other schools
 - This is dealt with in the financial implication section below.
 - Any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase

- The provision of alternative schools is more likely to make more children eligible to free transport, and therefore a reduction in motor vehicles is probable.
- Any alternatives to the discontinuance of the schools
 - This is dealt with in the alternative options sections below.

Alternative Provided Schools: In the public notices the existing catchment area is divided with the larger part of the area being provided in the future by Eardisley VA Primary School, and a smaller more northerly area to be served by Kington Primary School. The respective capacity and number on roll at these schools is as follows

School	Capacity	NOR (Jan 07)
Eardisley Primary School	105	88
Kington Primary School	210	198

The normal transport arrangements will apply with those under 8 living over 2 miles from the alternative school and those 8 and over living over 3 miles from the alternative provided school being eligible to free transport. Transport to Almeley for those who attended Brilley Primary School will continue for the period during which any of the 17 children attend Almeley. There is no change in the provided High School which remains Kington Lady Hawkins High School.

Financial Implications

Funding from Brilley Primary School is met from the Dedicated Schools Grant and Standards Fund. In 2006/07 it amounted to £189k. In future the Dedicated Schools Grant will be distributed to the remaining schools. There will be additional costs for transport which are met outside the Direct Schools Grant. It is estimated that this will be £25k per annum. However, against this all maintenance liabilities cease. The cost of outstanding maintenance has been estimated at £72k. On closure, the building reverts to the trustees.

Risk Management

Given the acceptance of the situation by parents and governors, albeit with reluctance, the closure of the school and alternative provision elsewhere minimises the risk to the education of children in the area.

Alternative Options

1. Keeping the school open.

At present Brilley Primary School exists in legal terms, but without any pupils. Staff have been given notice. It is possible for Cabinet to decide not to close the school but this would be perverse in the absence of any pupils.

2. Making Different Alternative Provision. The alternative schools of Eardisley and Kington have been chosen because of their geographical position in relation to the existing catchment area, and the fact that they are in the same partnership area of Kington Lady Hawkins High School. Other schools could be considered, e.g. Clifford but geography and different feeder high schools suggests this would give rise to more problems.

Consultees

Published in the Hereford Times on 17th May 2007.

Sent for posting on Brilley C of E Primary School Notice Board, Brilley Village Hall Notice Board and Brilley Parish Council Notice Board on 15th May 2007.

Sent to Eardisley and Kington Primary School headteachers on 15th May 2007.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Public Notice

Background Papers

None identified.

STATUTORY NOTICE OF A PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL

NOTICE is hereby given, in accordance with section 29 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, that the County of Herefordshire District Council as Local Authority intend to discontinue Brilley Church of England Primary School, Whitney-on-Wye, Hereford, HR3 6JG, on 31st August 2007. **[Explanatory Note 1 below]**.

It is proposed to provide for future pupils, living within the catchment area of Brilley Church of England Primary School, Whitney-on-Wye, Hereford, HR3 6JG at Eardisley Church of England Primary School and Kington Primary School. Eardisley CE Primary School and Kington Primary School have sufficient room to accommodate all pupils currently under the age 5 living within the area of Brilley. The Council, therefore, has no proposals to increase the number of places at Eardisley CE Primary School or Kington Primary School. Parents may alternatively seek admission to any other school. If parents want their child to go to a school which doesn't have places available then they would have a right of appeal. **[Explanatory Note 2 below]**. It is proposed that Eardisley Primary School will be the provided school for all the area currently served by Brilley, with the exception of the houses on or to the north of the minor road from Crossway on the A4111 to Brilley Mount on the C1072. The provided Primary School for this area will be Kington Primary School.

The proposed transport arrangements are for children living within the respective parts of the catchment area of Brilley to be offered appropriate free transport assistance for their journey to and from Eardisley CE Primary School or Kington Primary School each day, provided they live more than 2 miles (children under 8) or 3 miles (children 8 and over) from Eardisley CE Primary School or Kington Primary School or have other relevant circumstances covered by the Authority's home to school transport policy. **[Explanatory Note 3 below]**.

Any person may object to the proposals by sending their objection in writing to the Director of Children's Services, The Herefordshire Council, PO Box 185, Hereford, HR4 9ZR. The closing date of this consultation period is 31st July 2007. Within a month after the end of the objection period, the Herefordshire Council will send to the School Organisation Committee for the area copies of all objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with the Authority's observations on them. (Unless DfES issue regulations to abolish the role of the School Organisation Committee, in which case any objections will be reported to the Council.

Explanatory Notes.

Note 1

Brilley CE Primary School is a very small school with currently no children on roll following the transfer of 18 pupils to Almeley Primary School at the start to the summer term. The future of the school has been under consideration within the Review of the Kington, Weobley and Wigmore Areas. Recently, the Governing Body have concluded that, despite the school's very good work over several years, it would now be in the interests of the children for the school to close permanently as soon as possible. The Council have supported the governors' conclusion and have now authorised the issue of a public notice to discontinue the school on 31st August 2007.

Note 2

If the proposal to discontinue the school is approved, particular attention will be given to the needs of the pupils who will transfer to other schools, and to the resourcing of the receiving schools for the additional pupils involved. The extra transport costs and the additional costs for the receiving school(s) will be the first call on the annual revenue resources released. All remaining resources released (estimated at £60,000 annually) will be allocated through the L.M.S Formula to all other schools in the County.

Note 3

It is anticipated that transport will be in the form of a contracted vehicle, operating at suitable times on every day the school is in session. The provided transport will make stops before and after school to pick up/set down children at reasonable locations along its route.

George Salmon**Head of Commissioning & Improvement – Schools & Services on behalf of Herefordshire Local Authority****Date: 15.05.07**

CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS IN HEREFORDSHIRE: A WAY FORWARD

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CABINET

16TH AUGUST, 2007

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

Cabinet to consider the options available on three school capital investment projects, and advise on which option should be pursued. Each project is dealt with as a separate report to help the understanding of the situation in each case.

Key Decision

All Recommendations are Key Decisions because they are likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in Herefordshire in an area comprising one or more wards.

The Minster College and Westfield Special School

Recommendations

THAT Cabinet identify which option should be pursued in the development of The Minster campus given the possibilities identified and the officer recommended as set out below

- (a) **Progress be made on The Minster College alone, with resolution to the Westfield Special School accommodation issues being left until a countywide strategy for special schools has been developed;**
- (b) **(i) The Minster be re-developed for 900 11-16 students and 120 post-16 students (this is the recommended option) or**
(ii) The Minster be re-developed for 750 11-16 students and 120 post-16 students;
- (c) **Proposals for a Youth Centre created by the conversion of the existing design technology space be developed and considered as part of the Council's annual capital planning process;**
- (d) **Facilities for use by the Marches Consortium, and for industrial enterprise be provided, if funding is available from the consortium, and Advantage West Midlands accordingly and if a lease can be agreed which reflects the cost of the accommodation.**

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
George Salmon, Head of Commissioning & Improvement (Schools & Services) on (01432) 260802

Reasons

- (a) In the case of The Minster College, a capacity of 900 in the main school and 120 in the Sixth Form will meet projected need in Leominster, taking into account the 400 house development at Baron's Cross, and the likely popularity of the school. On the other hand, building capacity above the number of students currently on roll (698 including Sixth Form) will possibly undermine schools such as Weobley High School and Bromyard Queen Elizabeth High School.
- (b) Relocation of Westfield Special School on The Minster Campus is the solution currently available to bring much needed improvements in accommodation for that school. However, this solution may not allow for all the future demands on this service either within the county as a whole or in the northern part of it. The DfES has indicated that this element of funding can be held over, providing an opportunity to explore options for the whole service.
- (c) Youth facilities in Leominster are poor and are in a leased property. The conversion of an existing building opposite the Sports Centre and Swimming Pool provides a longer-term solution in an appropriate location. This should be subject to the Council's usual capital planning processes as neither the estimated costs nor the means of funding have been finalised.
- (d) Opportunities exist on The Minster Campus to maintain teacher training, adult education, and work training within The Minster development, and to secure them confirmation of funding from external bodies is sought. External use would then be managed through lease and user agreement.

Considerations

All the issues raised in this report need to be considered in the context of the falling numbers of pupils in the County. Reductions will continue in the Primary sector for the next 10 years and in the Secondary sector for the next 20 years. Migration into the County and new housing developments may reduce the extent of the fall in numbers, but will not reduce it significantly. Within this period, Central Government is pursuing the rebuilding of much of the school estate, both at Primary and Secondary level. The DfES and Partnerships for Schools are clearly pushing for these investment programmes to be based on sound strategic thinking. This is the context in which all three projects must be considered.

1. The following factors should be considered in the discussion on The Minster College scheme.
 - DfES have provided £19.3M for a 900 place 11-16 High School with 120 in the Sixth Form. This figure is calculated on the anticipated building costs in the first quarter of 2008.
 - The number of children under the age of 11 living in the catchment varies between 136 and 195 per year group.
 - There are 360 dwellings allocated in Leominster in the current UDP, and all indications suggest that the market towns will be the focus of further housing allocations to 2025.
 - At present the intake for September 2007 is 120 from a cohort of 195, with students from The Minster catchment area seeking places in Tenbury High School (9), Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat High School (8), Weobley High School (25), Wigmore High School (7) and Other Schools (30).

- If the numbers of children in the town do not increase significantly, there is a possibility that either The Minster would have empty places, or that The Minster like Whitecross High School & Specialist Sports College, would become oversubscribed, and the schools currently benefiting from children in that area would not continue to do so. For admission in September 2007, students living in The Minster catchment area obtained places in those schools listed in the previous paragraph. Both scenarios are real possibilities. However, it is impossible to predict with accuracy what will happen as so much depends on parental preference.
2. It was originally proposed to include Westfield Special School in the project. The following factors were considered in this:
- The DfES allocated £1.925M for special education needs provision within The Minster Project. This £1.9M is not sufficient to build a 'stand alone' special school, to present requirements set out by the DfES in their Building Bulletins. This has been costed at over £3M, and would provide a building of 1,341m²
 - Westfield Special School is in poor accommodation, built on a very limited site, at a time when the level of children's needs were not as severe as they are today. It serves the 5-18 age range currently
 - An integrated design was being pursued as one option. This involved older students from the special school being taught within the mainstream school. Separate provision was suggested for the primary aged children, and for the specialist areas, which children with severe needs require, whatever their age. This would allow the accommodation for the special school pupils to be reduced from 1,341m² to 1,004m². However, it is a compromise and further professional debate is required before this level of investment is committed.
 - This accommodation could be built for £2.2M, a shortfall of just under £300k. Although contractually committed in 2008, the monies would actually be spent in 2010/11 and 2011/12. The DfES have confirmed that the allocation of £1.925M could be held over until the Local Authority found a solution to its satisfaction.
 - A federated management structure would be required to ensure that the interests of both the children in mainstream school and in the special school were not compromised. Visits have been made to Telford and Teeside where such campus arrangement operate. In the Telford case a scheme at the cost of £80M was devised with a 3-4 year planning \ 'lead-in' time. In the absence of a significant budget and when specification has to be defined in a matter of months, there is a higher risk that the solution might not be as good as it should be particularly for the group of vulnerable children with severe needs. A countywide strategy for special schools is being developed and decisions could be clearer once this is in place.
3. The current youth facilities in Leominster are inadequate, and this has caused problems within the wider community. The County Youth Officer sees the ideal solution as a new building of 323m², similar to the one at Lady Hawkin's High School Kington. This would require a budget of £579,000. In the absence of that level of funding, conversion of an existing building is being considered. In the new building of The Minster College, the current Design/Technology block would be vacated. This block does require re-roofing and internal refurbishment, but would provide a space of 663m². Given its location next to the leisure centre and swimming pool, it is proposed that this building be converted to Youth centre use in 2010. The cost of this conversion work is not yet known. Section 106 funding may be available to pay

for this work. A S106 contribution of £250k is due but not yet received from the Barons Cross development for community facilities but there is a restriction on its use in that the landowner has to give consent to the spending proposals. Consideration could be given to the excess area in this building being leased to the external users listed below, on commercial terms, reflecting any capital contribution they may make. A capital project appraisal is needed in line with the Council's capital planning procedures to assess the business case for this proposal.

4. At The Minster College, Marches Consortium lease both ground for a mobile and accommodation for teacher training and other adult courses. On completion of the new school, all temporary accommodation should be removed. If the Marches do wish to have a presence on the site, this would be welcomed, but on the basis that the consortium provide the capital investment for such facilities. Similarly, there have been discussions with Advantage West Midlands in terms of the opportunities the Minster new build presents. It is suggested that the learning village currently housed in temporary accommodation on an industrial estate be relocated in permanent accommodation on The Minster site. The college supports this, but it is on the understanding Advantage West Midlands will provide the capital funding to achieve it.

Financial Implications

A capital grant, cash-flowed over a 4 year period, has been offered by the DfES. Its value reflects the specification levels expected by the DfES based in building costs in the first quarter of 2008. It is the Council's risk if inflation is higher. Early decisions are required to minimise that risk.

If the option to include Westfield Special School in the project is preferred, a shortfall of £300k is anticipated, with expenditure anticipated in 2010/11. This could be offset by use of the capital receipt from the existing site subject to further approval or against the capital allocations from the DfES in that year. The DfES have stated that in September 2007 local authorities will be told their capital allocations for the next 3 years.

Risk Management

The Minster College and Westfield Special School

- The DfES allocations are based on estimated building costs in March 2008. The Local Authority bears the risk that inflation is greater than projected or that the contract is not signed until far later in 2008. The project is being managed on Prince 2 principles. A decision by Cabinet will allow detailed tenders to be sought.
- If a combined Minster/Westfield project is pursued the move from separate institutions to integrated provision and management carries a service risk that provision will not meet students needs. This has been assessed, visits made to other examples in the UK, and assurances can be given that provision will be much better than is currently available, but doubt remains that the integrated option would provide the best long term solution.
- The Minster College will become either oversubscribed to the detriment of other schools or operate with surplus capacity. This issue will be considered within the wider review.

Alternative Options

These have been described in the 'Considerations' section.

Consultees

The Minster College and Westfield Special School

Appendices

Appendix 1. Plan of The Minster Campus

Background Papers

None

Wyebridge Academy

Recommendations

THAT Cabinet identify which option should be pursued in the development of Wyebridge Sports College

- (a) (i) **In the development of Wyebridge Sports College as an Academy, the school be built for 900 11-16 pupils, and 200 post-16 students or**
- (ii) **The sponsors be informed that the Council believes it to be more appropriate to build on academy with a capacity of 750 with 200 post-16 students**

The former is the recommended option.

Reasons

- (a) A capacity of 900 in Wyebridge Academy will provide sufficient space to serve the South Wye area, assuming that some pupils will still seek places in other high schools. Sixth Form provision is seen as a means to encourage post-16 participation in this area, and is provision, on which DfES is insisting. However for admission in September 2007 only 148 out of a resident cohort of 294 sought places at Wyebridge Sports College.

Considerations

The strategic nature of this decision in the context described within The Minster report also applies to this project.

1. Feasibility work is currently underway on the proposal that Wyebridge Sports College becomes an academy in 2009. The expression of interest jointly submitted by the Local Authority, the School Governors and the Diocese of Hereford proposed that the school should be built for an annual admission of 180 students given that the number of children living in the catchment area varies between 200 and 300, and the South Wye area is one area in the County, where no significant fall in the number of children is projected.

For admission to High Schools for September 2007, the 294 children in Year 6 living in the area chose the following High Schools;

Wyebriidge Sports College	148
Kingstone High School	56
Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School	14
St Mary's R C High School	30
Aylestone High School	23
Others include independent schools	29
Total	294

If the academy did admit 180 students per year, Kingstone High School is likely to have reduced numbers, potentially losing children to Fairfield High School and the academy. Additional children might be lost if the Waldorf Steiner Academy was built at Much Dewchurch.

In addition, new post-16 provision is proposed to encourage participation in continuing education. The current providers, Hereford Sixth Form College and the College of Technology have objected to this, but the DfES argue that a minimum of 200 additional places are needed if their aim of an 80% staying-on rate within the Academy is to be achieved.

The alternative would be to suggest to the Sponsors and DfES that it might be more appropriate to build to a lower capacity of 600 or 750. Although this would reduce the risk to other schools, it is unlikely to meet the demand from the South Wye area.

Financial Implications

The DfES offer the total costs of fees, construction, and furniture and equipment. An allocation of £20.1M has been offered by the DfES. A separate bid has been made for £250k to support the Local Authority's cost in design work to the stage that a contract is awarded. Partnerships for Schools have said that a decision on this bid should be made in time for a verbal report to be given to the Cabinet Meeting. If the bid is not approved in full, a decision would be needed if the Local Authority should challenge that decision or if the Local Authority should reconsider the whole proposal.

On completion the asset of land and building would be transferred under a long-term lease to the Sponsor, i.e. trustees appointed by the Diocese of Hereford. The academy is directly funded by the DfES in revenue terms and the transfer from Dedicated Schools Grant will be equal to the delegated budget for the school that the authority would have calculated through its local formula, had the school stayed in the maintained sector. The higher the number of students attending the Academy, the lower the numbers will be that attend other nearby schools and thereby reducing their total funding by a sum equivalent to the value of the loss of pupils. All other factors being equal this simply reflects the financial consequences of the changing popularity of schools.

Risk Management

Wyebriidge Academy

- The risk will be with the Local Authority in delivering the new accommodation on time, to budget, and to specification. Without firm information from Partnerships for Schools on each of these aspects the level of risk is difficult to assess. Additional capacity in terms of staff will be required. A bid for £265k is being made to Partnership for Schools to cover this.
- The Academy will become either oversubscribed to the detriment of other schools or colleges or operate with surplus capacity. This again will be considered in the wider review.

Alternative Options

These have been described in the 'Considerations' section.

Consultees

Wyebriidge School Governors

Appendices

None

Background Papers

Submissions of Interest for an Academy

Staunton-on-Wye Primary School

Recommendations

- Given the disparity between the overall places available in the area and projected pupil numbers in the wider area, the Council withdraws its support for the project to replace Staunton-on-Wye Primary School;**
- The future of the existing school be determined as part of the overall review;**
- The current accommodation be monitored in the meantime in terms of Health and Safety to ensure that children and staff are not placed at any risk.**

Reasons

- Despite the strong support the school currently has, provision of new buildings at Staunton-on-Wye is likely to attract children from Clifford, Madley, Eardisley and Weobley Primary Schools. The creation of a new school through changing the status of an existing school in the Golden Valley would be a better strategic option, and would provide aided provision in an area of the County where there currently is none.

Considerations

Again, this is a strategic decision to be taken in the context of future need for school places

across the County.

1. In the autumn of 2001 the DfES offered a 90% grant to the net costs of providing a new 3 class school at Staunton-on-Wye. This is an aided school with Church of England links, but operating separately to the Diocese of Hereford. 10% of the funding will be found by the School Governors. The Jarvis Educational Trust act as Foundation Governors, and have agreed to contribute to the 10% Governors' share. They also understand that the value of the existing school, which would remain in their ownership, would have to offset the gross costs of the new school.

The Local Authority, as it is required to do, has purchased a new site. Building of the new school has to be started before January 2012 or the site reverts to the original owners.

The current school is successful. Ofsted in their inspection in March 2006 concluded that the school is good.

There were 63 pupils on roll at the beginning of the summer 2007 term. Of these 29 lived outside the catchment area, but 5 have addresses closer to Staunton-on-Wye Primary School than any other school. There were only 18 pupils from the village of Staunton-on-Wye. The numbers of children under the age of 5 living in the area is 34, according to information from the Primary Care Trust as at 31st August 2006. Data on current and future numbers in the Weobley, Kington and, Kingstone, Peterchurch areas are shown in the tables set out in Appendix 2. As a guideline DfES and Audit Commission begin to be concerned when surplus places are more than 10% of the total, and more challenging questions are asked if that surplus figure increased to be over 20% of the total. It should be noted that % figures can be misleading when dealing with small numbers.

In the 2 consultation periods in the Review of School Provision in the Kington, Weobley and Wigmore areas there has been a high degree of support shown in letters and e-mails for the school and the project for new buildings. In a public meeting on 20th March, Governors, Parents, and members of the community unanimously supported the proposal for a new school arguing that;

- It would provide a high standard of education,
- It is popular and the Local Authority has a duty to support parental preference,
- It contributes to the regeneration of Herefordshire attracting young families in search of good education, good environment and good quality of life,
- The catchment area does not reflect proximity of many parents to the school,
- The 90% grant would be lost to the County and investment at Staunton-on-Wye may avoid Council expenditure in refurbishing other schools.

There is no doubt that the existing 3 storey Victorian building is unsuitable for 21st century teaching and learning. In the past the hall ceiling has collapsed, and roofing materials have fallen on to the playground. The fire exit is through the adjoining parts of the building, which are empty. The building is regularly checked from a Health and Safety viewpoint, and although safe at present, high levels of maintenance are required. If the new building was not to proceed, the school should close on the grounds that the current accommodation is not suitable for teaching and learning in the 21st Century, that there are Health and Safety issues, and access for disabled children to the upper floors is not available.

Although popular at present, in 1994 there were only 29 pupils on roll. Staunton-on-Wye is likely to remain a small hamlet. In terms of strategic investment it would be preferable if investment could be made in a school serving a more substantial community. It is noted that there are no Church of England aided schools in either Kingstone or Peterchurch school partnerships. Alternative provision could be explored for those seeking denominational places within the further work on the review.

The alternative is to proceed as originally planned in 2001. The next stage is for school Governors to appoint architects to proceed with detailed design work. This would allow the school to move into new accommodation in 2009/10 academic year. It is likely that the school in new buildings will become more popular albeit the School Governors have stated they do not wish to raise their admission number from 10. At a time of falling rolls this would have a detrimental impact on surrounding schools of Clifford, Eardisley, Madley, and Weobley. The latter serve larger villages and there is no strategic sense in closing these schools. Clifford Primary School is more vulnerable other than its role in serving children from Wales.

Financial Implications

The project to replace Staunton-on-Wye Primary School is the responsibility of the Governors of that school. The DfES do inflate their grant support in line with inflation. If the scheme proceeds, the Local Authority transfers the land on which the school is built to the Trustees, albeit retaining the playing-field (the provision of which is the Council's responsibility). If the project does not proceed the site acquired in January 2007 is returned to the original owner. (We are likely to face demands for the legal costs in conveying the land back to the original owners)

Risk Management

Staunton-on-Wye Primary School

The option leading to closure is contentious, and there is a statutory procedure to follow when closing a school. During this period, there may be a negative reaction within the school and community which undermines the current and future performance of the school and the children within it.

Alternative Options

Two have been described in the 'Considerations' section. The third is not to proceed with the new school, and for the school to continue in its existing accommodation. Although the school is maintained in this option, it is wrong to plan on the continued use of accommodation fundamentally unsuitable for school use in the 21st Century.

Consultees

Staunton-on-Wye Governors, Parents and Community

Appendices

Appendix 2. Primary Surplus Spaces data

Background Papers

Kington, Weobley, Wigmore Discussion Paper

Kington, Weobley, Wigmore Proposals Papers



HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
 THE MINISTER COLLEGE
 BSE PROJECT
 SKETCH A
 SITE PLAN NORTH
 Drawing No: 06/06/SKS
 Date: JAN 2007



Actual and projected Pupil Numbers on Roll in Kingstone, Kington, Weobley and Peterchurch Areas

Dfes No	School	Actual				Projected			Surplus 2011 No.	Surplus 2011 %	Known Children Within Catchment by age					
		NOR 2005	NOR 2006	NOR 2007	NOR 2008	NOR 2009	NOR 2010	NOR 2011			Capacity	0	1	2	3	4
2046	EWYAS HAROLD	104	98	106				139			14	16	16	7	20	15
2053	GARWAY	91	80	74				105			8	10	8	4	8	12
2095	KINGSTONE & THRUXTON	210	188	179				210			24	24	23	16	31	22
2104	MADLEY	156	152	163				168			11	16	24	15	17	11
3079	MUCH BIRCH CE	187	181	176				196			12	8	10	13	13	9
	KINGSTONE DISTRICT	2753	2705	2705	823	800	780	750	8.3	68	69	75	83	58	93	74
2001	ALMELEY	61	66	62				63			3	6	3	6	6	6
3007	(BRILLEY CE)	30	31	19				56			2	5	4	2	4	3
3035	EARDISLEY CE	95	86	88				105			9	8	15	15	10	12
2096	KINGTON	190	197	198				210			36	42	39	44	40	49
3366	PEMBRIDGE CE	94	91	93				95			10	15	9	16	10	15
	KINGTON DISTRICT	470	471	460	453	453	464	451	14.7	78	60	76	70	83	70	85
3015	CANON PYON CE	98	96	89				91			5	5	11	10	8	6
3026	CREDENHILL, ST MARY'S CE	156	156	156				210			38	28	40	36	36	42
3030	DILWYN CE	43	34	43				56			4	5	5	4	7	4
3378	STAUNTON-ON-WYE ENDOWE	64	64	63				70			3	8	6	6	11	5
2158	WEOBLEY	172	167	159				210			13	14	24	11	16	19
	WEOBLEY DISTRICT	533	517	510	492	501	496	480	24.6	157	63	60	86	67	78	76
2031	CLIFFORD	72	64	70				70			10	11	6	8	7	17
2101	LONGTOWN	48	44	52				56			3	4	12	8	15	12
2116	MICHAELCHURCH ESCLEY	54	49	59				56			0	1	1	1	5	0
2122	PETERCHURCH	71	79	71				105			16	20	19	15	13	17
	PETERCHURCH DISTRICT	245	236	252	245	247	237	287	17.4	50	29	36	38	32	40	46

NOR - Number of Pupils on Roll in Spring Term

Known Children within Catchment - this is based on data received from the PCT based on those children registered with G.P.'s listed according to their home address as at August 2006.

