

SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN

Report By: Head of Policy and Resources

Wards Affected

Countywide.

Purpose

1. To report on the consultations undertaken on the revised pupil statistics, on Hereford City Primary School provision and on Leominster Primary School provision.

Financial Implications

2. None.

Report

3. At the meeting on 26th May, 2004 the committee resolved that:
 - (a) the statistical update be issued to consultees for information and content;
 - (b) the Committee confirm their support for a primary school at Staunton on Wye;
 - (c) the Committee request a review of primary school provision be undertaken in Hereford City and the results of the review be reported to the next meeting;
 - (d) a debate be initiated on the future pattern of primary school provision in Leominster.
4. In the consultations on the general statistical update, only one reply was received. The letter from the Learning and Skills Council is appended to this report (Appendix 1). The comments relate to the policy section of the plan. The Committee are asked to consider if they wish the School Organisation Plan to be amended to take account of these comments.
5. On the question of primary school provision in Hereford City, all headteachers of those schools in the Hereford 'pyramid' were invited to a meeting on 22nd September. Appendix 2 was issued to attendees of the meeting showing estimated numbers of children in the areas. These figures do not include potential housing developments south of the river. Discussion centred on the following issues:
 - (i) the continued fall of pupil numbers over the next 5 years, as the larger year groups leave to go to high school, but the belief that over the last three years the number of pupils entering reception classes has stabilised;
 - (ii) the variation in trends within the city, with the areas north of the city facing a continued fall, and the areas south of the river facing a possible rise in pupil numbers as indicated by known children data.

6. Given the stability in admission numbers, into reception in the last 2/3 years it was felt that no radical change was needed. Two schools are considering a reduction in admission numbers. St Paul's C of E Primary School propose to reduce their admission number from 68 to 60 from September, 2006 onwards (admissions in 2003/2004 have been 45 and 46 respectively). Discussions are continuing with Trinity Primary School where the current admission number is 84. The Hereford City issue was raised in Education Scrutiny Committee. The need to monitor the potential growth of numbers south of the river was highlighted.
8. The future provision in Leominster has been debated in pyramid meetings of all the Leominster schools on 23rd June, 2004, at the North Herefordshire Local Area Forum, (7th September), and a combined meeting of the Leominster Junior and Infants schools (15th September). It was acknowledged that Leominster Town population had increased significantly (see table below).

Census Year	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
POPULATION	6,290	6,405	7,079	9,079	10,037	11,104

9. The geography of the town had also altered. However, there was no support expressed in any of the meetings for the idea of a separate primary school to serve the western side of the town. There was general consensus that provision on the existing site should be improved.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

- (a) **the School Organisation Plan be amended to reflect the Learning and Skills Council's comments and the amended document be approved;**
- (b) **the approach on Hereford City Primary Schools be approved;**
- and**
- (c) **to consider if any further action is needed in Leominster.**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified