

**10 February 2014****Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION STANDARDS AND  
INCLUSION****MATTERSEY AND WINTHORPE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS:  
PROPOSALS FOR THE DELIVERY OF EARLY YEARS EDUCATION PLACES****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks the approval of Committee to consult with the staff, governors and parents/carers of the above-named schools and other interested parties about the proposals to provide early years places at the schools.

**Information and Advice**

2. It is Government policy that early years education places can be delivered through Local Authority maintained schools and providers in the private, voluntary and independent sectors.
3. Having considered the implications of providing such places for children living in their catchment areas, the governors of Mattersey and Winthorpe primary schools have decided they wish to develop this provision at the earliest opportunity.
4. Formal requests to initiate the statutory process concerning early years provision has been received by the County Council's Strategic Place Planning and School Admissions (SPP & SA) service from both schools. The SPP & SA service has reviewed the current take up of early years education places in the areas and acknowledges the potential benefits of the proposals for the respective schools. The proposals will provide additional early years places and increase opportunities for parental choice. They will support the schools' aims to provide continuous education from ages 3 through to 11 years.

**Consultation**

5. Under the current provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006), the County Council is required to publish a Section 19 Notice where it is proposed to lower the age limit of admission to a community school by one year or more. Prior to publication however, it is also a requirement for the County Council to consult with local people so that they can give their views.
6. It is intended to consult with staff, governors and parents/carers of the Mattersey and Winthorpe primary schools and any other interested parties deemed appropriate.

7. Members attention is however drawn to new DfE statutory regulations known as the '2013 Regulations' that, if given Ministerial approval, would become effective from 28 January 2014. Under these new regulations Local Authorities responsible for proposing school infrastructure change, such as described in this report, would no longer need to formally consult with interested parties but would still be required to formally propose such proposals by publishing statutory notices.
8. It is current corporate policy for the County Council to openly engage with members of the public about the services it provides for them and to listen and respond to people's views and concerns through consultation. It is therefore recommended that should the above-mentioned new regulations come into force prior to the date of this Committee meeting, a formal consultation with those identified in paragraph 1 of this report should still proceed.

### **Other Options Considered**

9. The closure during December 2013 of a local pre-school playgroup in Mattersey has reduced parental choice for early years provision. The only other feasible option available to the school for parents who wish their children to receive early years education between the ages of 3-4 years, is to send them to alternative early years providers outside of the village.
10. There is currently no early years provision within the Winthorpe community and the nearest alternative provider is located one and a half miles away from the school.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

11. The proposals outlined in this report are perceived as being in the best interests of both schools and their respective communities.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Implications for Service Users**

13. Children and families will have access to early years education in their immediate locality.

### **Financial Implications**

14. There are no financial implications arising from this report. However, should approval be sought for the publication of statutory notices, any subsequent report would include financial implications.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty Implications**

15. If approval was to subsequently be given for these proposals to proceed, the proposals will ensure the availability of an early years education place for all children whose parents wish them to have one.
16. Equal opportunities issues for staff will be addressed within an agreed enabling document which will follow an agreed standard format.
17. Prior to requesting any formal approval for the implementation of the proposals referred to in this report, consideration will be given to undertaking Equality Impact Assessments in due course.

## **Crime and Disorder Implications**

18. Appropriate consideration has been given to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is the view of the County Council that these early years places proposals do not pose a significant risk to increasing criminal activity within the locality of the two schools.

## **Human Rights Implications**

19. Parental preference will be facilitated.

## **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

20. By providing local early years education places, the need for travelling to alternative providers by car can be reduced.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That:-

- 1) consultations be approved with the staff, governors and parents/carers of Mattersey and Winthorpe Primary Schools and other appropriate interested parties, to consider the proposals to provide early years places at the schools
- 2) a further report be submitted to this Committee on the outcome of the consultations with recommendations for action.

**John Slater**

**Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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### **Constitutional Comments (LM 21/01/14)**

21. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

### **Financial Comments (KLA 24/01/14)**

22. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

- 1) Letter dated 13 January 2014 from the governors of Mattersey Primary School
- 2) Letter dated 21 January 2014 from the governors of Winthorpe Primary School

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **Electoral Divisions and Members Affected**

Misterton:	Councillor Liz Yates
Collingham:	Councillor Maureen Dobson

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