

16 July 2012

Agenda Item: 8**REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER, SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS SERVICE****ST. AUGUSTINE'S COMMUNITY INFANT & NURSERY AND ST.
AUGUSTINE'S COMMUNITY JUNIOR SCHOOLS, WORKSOP - OUTCOME
OF PUBLISHED SECTIONS 11 AND 15 NOTICE: SCHOOLS
ADJUDICATOR'S DECISION****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report informs the Committee of the approval by the Schools Adjudicator (SA) to amalgamate the above-named schools in their existing premises to form a single 3-11 years primary school, inclusive of early years provision, with effect from 1 April 2013.

Information and Advice

2. A formal proposal was agreed to be published by the former Cabinet at its meeting on 14 March 2012. In accordance with the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006), the County Council is required to publish a Sections 11 and 15 Notice. An appropriate notice was subsequently published on 30 March 2012 which provided details of the proposal referred to in paragraph 1 of this report. It is however brought to Members' attention that to allow for the Human Resources enabling process to be conducted in an appropriate manner, the intended initial implementation date of January 2013 had to be revised.
3. There is a six week period following the publication of notices during which objections and comments can be made. During the representation period which expired on 11 May 2012, no representations were received.
4. In accordance with the current statutory regulations under the EIA 2006, proposals promoting new schools fall to independent Schools Adjudicators to decide the outcome of such proposals.
5. The formal decision of the Schools Adjudicator to approve the amalgamation of St. Augustine's Infant and Nursery and St. Augustine's Junior Schools was notified in a letter dated 31 May 2012 from the Office of the SA.

Other Options Considered

6. Two other possible options for the future of these two schools were considered:
 - both schools to remain independent but form a federation

- both schools remain as separate infant and junior schools

7. The particular benefits of amalgamation include:

- making more efficient use of the available accommodation on the site to benefit not only the two schools, but also the local community as a whole;
- a larger, single primary school will benefit from a combined budget and be a more viable provision of educational places for the community it will serve.

Reasons for Recommendation

8. Under the current provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, proposals promoting new schools fall to independent Schools Adjudicators to decide the outcome of such proposals.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of service users, finance, equal opportunities, 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

10. When the proposal is implemented, pupils on roll at St. Augustine's Infant and Junior Schools at the time of closure will automatically transfer to the new school as appropriate.

Financial implications

11. When the St. Augustine's Infant and Junior Schools are amalgamated, the budget for the new school will be calculated on the same basis as other primary schools of a similar size. This means there would be a projected revenue saving of approximately £72,000 per annum.
12. The arrangements will be that the new school will retain 100% of the identified savings in the first year, 60% in the second year, 40% in the third year and 20% in the fourth year. This gradual reduction will provide the new school with resources that will help to enable a smooth transition to a single primary school.
13. It is the intention that the new primary school will operate from the existing buildings. In advance of this, the Local Authority would wish to work with the new school's governing body, headteacher and staff to determine, in the best interests of the children, the most appropriate way of utilising the existing accommodation.

Equalities Implications

14. Equal opportunities issues for staff will be addressed within an agreed enabling document which will follow an agreed standard format.
15. As part of the process of making decisions and changing policy, public authorities are required by law to think about the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics (as defined by equalities legislation) and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not
16. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are a means by which a public authority can assess the potential impact that proposed decisions/changes to policy could have on the community and those with protected characteristics. They may also identify potential ways to reduce any impact that a decision / policy change could have. If it is not possible to reduce the impact, the EIA can explain why. Decision makers must understand the potential implications of their decisions on people with protected characteristics.
17. An EIA has been undertaken and is available as a background paper. Decision makers must give due regard to the implications for protected groups when considering this report.

Human Resources Implications

18. The governors of the new school will be supported by County Council officers to ensure that decisions about staffing in the school are made in accordance with employment law and the Local Authority's previously determined policies.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the Committee notes the decision by the Schools Adjudicator to approve the County Council's proposal to amalgamate St. Augustine's Infant & Nursery and St. Augustine's Junior Schools in their existing premises to form a single 3-11 primary school, including provision for early years education places, with effect from 1 April 2013.

Marion Clay
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Constitutional Comments

19. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (NDR 13/06/12)

20. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 11 to 13 of the report.

Background Papers

- 1) Report to Cabinet on 14 March 2012 'St. Augustine's Community Infant & Nursery and St. Augustine's Community Junior Schools, Worksop – possible amalgamation' (previously published)
- 2) Sections 11 and 15 Notice (published on 30 March 2012)
- 3) Letter from the Office of the Schools Adjudicator confirming the SA's decision (dated 31 May 2012)
- 4) Equality Impact Assessment

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 Division and Member Affected

Worksop East: Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle

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