



meeting	CABINET	
date	14 November 2007	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Greasley Beauvale DH Lawrence Infant and Greasley Beauvale Junior Schools, Newthorpe Section 28 and 29 Notice

Purpose of report

1. This report informs Cabinet of the approval by the Schools Adjudicator to amalgamate the above-named schools in their existing premises to form a single primary school with effect from 1 September 2008.
2. This proposal is a key decision as defined by the category 'Opening, merging or closing schools' in the Constitution and was first published in the Forward Plan in February 2007.

Information and advice

Background

3. A formal proposal was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 April 2007 and under the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 that were still in force at that time, the LA was required to publish a Section 28 and 29 Notice. An appropriate Notice was subsequently published on 4 May 2007 which proposed that a new school be established in the existing premises of the schools from September 2008.
4. There was a six week period following the publication of the Notice during which objections and comments could be made.
5. During the representation period new statutory regulations came into force on 25 May 2007. These regulations, which emanated from the Education and Inspections Act 2006, superceded the provisions under which the above-mentioned Notice was published.
6. As the LA's proposal had not been determined by 25 May, the proposal fell to an independent Schools Adjudicator to determine its outcome.

7. The Notice expired on 15 June 2007 and two letters were received by the LA. One letter objected to the above proposal and one commented on it. Copies of these letters were sent to the Schools Adjudicator as required by the new regulations.
8. The formal decision of the Schools Adjudicator (SA) to approve the amalgamation of Greasley Beauvale Infant and Junior schools was notified in a letter dated 12 October 2007 from the Office of the SA.

Statutory and policy implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, crime and disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material, they have been described in the text of the report. Attention is, however, drawn to the following:-

Personnel implications

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

Financial implications

11. The budget for the new school will be calculated on the same basis as other primary schools of a similar size. This means that there will be an eventual projected saving of approximately £75,000 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 enable a smooth transition to a single primary school.
13. It is the intention that funding will be sought to enable the new primary long term to operate solely on one of the existing school sites and in a single building. In advance of this, the LA 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.

Equal opportunities implications

14. Equal opportunities issues for staff will be addressed within an agreed 'enabling document' and which will follow an agreed standard format.

Implications for service users

15. When the proposal is implemented, pupils on roll at both schools at the time of closure will automatically transfer to the new school as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION

16. That Cabinet note the decision by the Schools Adjudicator to approve the LA's proposal to amalgamate Greasley Beauvale DH Lawrence Infant and Greasley Beauvale Junior Schools in their existing premises to form a single primary school with effect from 1 September 2008.

COUNCILLOR JOYCE BOSNJAK

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services

Reasons for recommendation

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

Other options considered

18. These were previously reported to Cabinet on 18 April 2007. The proposal contained within this report is the preferred option.

Legal Services' comments (LM/30.10.2007)

19. The report is for noting only.

Strategic Director of Resources' financial comments (NDR)

20. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background papers available for inspection

- (1) Letter dated 12 October 2007 from the Office of the Schools Adjudicator confirming the SA's decision.
- (2) Written responses received during the statutory representation period of the published notice.

Electoral division affected

Beauvale

M19C1944