

Public Document Pack

Tony Kershaw
Director of Law and Assurance

If calling please ask for:

Clare Jones on 033 022 22526
Email: clare.jones@westsussex.gov.uk

www.westsussex.gov.uk

County Hall
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RQ
Switchboard
Tel no (01243) 777100



18 October 2019

Dear Member,

County Council - Friday, 18 October 2019

Please find enclosed proposed amendments to the motions set out below which will be debated at the meeting of the County Council to be held on Friday, 18 October 2019.

Agenda No	Item
------------------	-------------

10(a)	Motion on Small Schools Federations (Pages 3 - 4)
--------------	--

Amendment by Mr Simmons attached.

10(b)	Motion on system of Council governance (Pages 5 - 6)
--------------	---

Amendment by Mr Jones attached.

Yours sincerely

Tony Kershaw
Director of Law and Assurance

To all members of the County Council

This page is intentionally left blank

County Council 18 October 2019

Item 10(a) - Notice of Motion from Dr O'Kelly

Small Schools Federations

Amendment by Mr Simmons

The current financial climate for small schools continues to be challenging. The government strategy for small schools is to aim, **where possible**, to keep them open and includes exploring federation before considering closure. This Council itself recognises the need for small schools to consider federation in its School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-22. Closure of **any** a small school **has the potential to have an adverse effect on** ~~can be devastating for~~ children, families and the rural communities **in which** they are **located** ~~in~~ and the School Effectiveness Strategy recognises **closure** this as only a final option.

The process of federation relies on school governors, who are volunteers, often with full time jobs and other commitments, and who do not always have the time and skill sets needed, to explore and develop the federation options fully themselves. Although the School Effectiveness Strategy outlines that the Council will support and challenge governing bodies who have considered the options, there is no formal process for assisting governing bodies in assessing the options open to them and developing possible federation agreements in the first place.

This Council believes that:

- (a) Small schools are **often located in** at the heart of ~~our smaller~~ **their** communities.
- (b) The federation process is not always straightforward ~~and without significant input~~ **and it can be beneficial to have support** from this Council from the earliest stages of the process, **if** governing bodies **agree that this would be helpful** ~~cannot easily explore federation on their own~~.
- (c) A ~~more~~ proactive approach to federation is more likely to keep our small schools open and viable and at the heart of ~~our~~ **their** rural communities.
- (d) Consulting on the possible closure of a school should only be considered **alongside** where all other options ~~have been exhausted~~.

This Council resolves to ask the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to:

- (1) Share knowledge about federation and how it can be achieved with all small schools including sharing best practice guidance from other local authorities;
- (2) **Continue the provision of** ~~Provide~~ officer support to governing bodies to consider federation including providing support to find possible partners and facilitate discussions;
- (3) **Continue to p**rovide practical tools and officer support during the partnership phase in helping to make all the transitional arrangements; and

- (4) Not to consult with the public as to the future of any school in West Sussex without having ~~gone~~ **thoroughly considered the benefits of going** through such a process with schools.

County Council 18 October 2019

Item 10(b) - Notice of Motion by Dr Walsh

System of Council governance

Amendment by Mr Jones

The County Council has been found 'inadequate' by HM Inspectorate, in respect of the Fire and Rescue Service, as well as in its provision of Children's Services by Ofsted, where the Government has appointed a Commissioner to run the service. The Member of Parliament for Mid Sussex has written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government expressing his "grave concerns about the governance of this authority" and asking him "to investigate why things have gone so wrong".

It is abundantly clear to all that there is a systemic failure of political leadership of West Sussex County Council encompassing all our major services, and further evidenced by the high turnover rate of most senior officers at Director level including Chief Executive over the last few years, and the churn of Cabinet Members.

The Council therefore resolves to **review** ~~scrap~~ the current Cabinet system of governance, where most major decisions are taken either by individual Cabinet Members, or occasionally by the whole Cabinet, and to replace it with **either the** Committee-based system **or an alternative arrangement which leads to far more transparent and collective decision-making**, ~~where all councillors play a part in decision-making~~, and for this to be in place by May 2020.

This page is intentionally left blank