

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

4 March 2020

Call-in Response

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

A call-in request relating to proposals for the reorganisation of rural and small schools in West Sussex ([CAB10 19/20](#)) has been considered and rejected by the Director of Law and Assurance in his role as Monitoring Officer.

The Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the reasons for the rejection of the call-in request as set out below.

Reasons for rejection

The Monitoring Officer confirms that the request for a call-in of the decision of the Cabinet in relation to small schools further consultation has been rejected.

The request was made on two grounds:

1. That significant new information had been presented since the scrutiny of the proposal and
2. That delay to the implementation of the decision would be in the best interests of the County Council.

Monitoring Officer's Assessment

I have considered all the material submitted in support of the request for a call-in. I have examined all the information being presented as new and significant and I have looked at the information previously provided both to the Scrutiny Committee and through both the public consultation exercise and the work of the scrutiny Task and Finish Group.

- **In relation to ground 1.** I have not found any of the material to amount to significant new information on the basis that it was not either available to or anticipated by the Scrutiny Committee at its last meeting. The Committee's recommendations and the subsequent cabinet decision were made with the benefit of this information and the representations aligned to it. There is no reason for concluding that the additional information would add materially to the information previously considered.
- **In relation to ground 2.** I consider that the rationale for the request for a delay is to enable the Committee to be seen to consider new information and that this would be in the interests of the Council's reputation and standing with the communities affected. That is also linked to a view that, to proceed with the proposal would compromise alternative plans the schools are pursuing and that

this would be contrary to the interests of the Council. My conclusion is that the first part of this rationale is contradicted by the finding that there is no new information to consider. The option to delay the decision to enable further options to be pursued was fully considered at the last scrutiny committee and considered fully by the cabinet and this assessment of what may or may not be the appropriate course in the interests of the County Council has already been carried out.

For these reasons the request is declined.

Tony Kershaw

Director of Law and Assurance

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Appendices: none

Background Papers: none