
Children and Young People’s Services Scrutiny Committee – Small Schools Task and Finish Group

7 April 2020

Small Schools Proposals

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Summary

Following consultation on options for five rural and small schools in November 2019, this Scrutiny Task and Finish Group met to consider the outcomes of the process and the options planned for each school. This was then considered by the Children and Young People’s Services Scrutiny Committee on 9 January 2020, prior to Cabinet taking a decision to undertake a statutory consultation on specific proposals for the five schools.

The statutory consultation commenced on 3 February 2020 and closed on 16 March 2020. The attached draft decision report (Appendix A) outlines the output from the consultation and the proposed recommendations for those schools. The report also includes

- the community impact assessment of any possible closure
- an analysis of available local school places and
- an evaluation of the school’s viability for a quality education offer for the community within which the school is sited.

Following this meeting, any comments and recommendations will be presented to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills for his consideration ahead of the decision being taken by the Cabinet Member, following consultation with Cabinet.

Focus for scrutiny

Members will have the opportunity to consider and question the output of the latest consultation and the further analysis work completed to inform decisions.

The Task and Finish Group is asked to comment on the attached draft Cabinet Member decision report and the supporting annexes and provide comment to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills prior to the formal decision being taken. For each of the five schools, the key areas for scrutiny to consider include:

- (1) The consultation and analysis. Have all significant concerns and issues been addressed?
- (2) The Community Impact Reports. Have any significant impacts been mitigated sufficiently? Have those raised in paragraph 3.7 of the report been resolved? For example, will children be able to access alternative high-quality education locally and are adequate arrangements in place for achieving this?
- (3) For schools with new structure and governance arrangements being progressed – are the proposals sufficiently developed and supported?

- (4) The risk implications and mitigations (Section 6 of the report) and other options (Section 7) – does this demonstrate that the proposals meet the organisation objective of the School Effectiveness Strategy – ‘*Primary schools will be of a sufficient size to be viable in the future, offer a high quality and broad curriculum, attract pupils from the local community in which the school is sited and provide strong outcomes for children?*’

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate to inform the recommendations for the Cabinet Member.

Details

The background and context to this item for scrutiny are set out in the attached reports (listed below), including resource and risk implications, Equality, Human Rights, Social Value, Sustainability and Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessments.

Tony Kershaw

Director of Law and Assurance

Contact Officer: Katherine De La Mora, 0330 22 22535

Appendix A: Draft Decision Report: Consultation on proposed reorganisation of rural and small schools in West Sussex

Appendices to Decision Report:

Appendix 1 – Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School Consultation Analysis Summary report

Appendix 2 – Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School Community Impact Assessment report

Appendix 3 – Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School - Annex to the report

Appendix 4 – Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School Consultation Analysis Summary report

Appendix 5 - Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School Community Impact Assessment report

Appendix 6 – Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School - Annex to the report

Appendix 7 – Warninglid Primary School Consultation Analysis Summary report

Appendix 8 – Warninglid Primary School - Annex to the report

Appendix 9 – Stedham Primary School and Harting C of E Primary School meeting with Local Authority and Diocese on 16th March 2020, minutes and enhanced federation status report.

Appendix 10 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers

None