

MEETING : THE SCHOOL PLANNING SELECT PANEL
DATE : 1 SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF : The Principal Manager – Planning and Development
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TRANSFORMING LEARNING COMMUNITIES (TLC): REPORT OF THE OPTIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE LOCALITY REVIEW FOR ALSAGER, CONGLETON, SANDBACH AND HOLMES CHAPEL

INTRODUCTION

1 This Discussion Paper sets out the outcomes of the informal consultations held on the options identified by the Locality Review of this area and makes recommendations for further actions.

2 The Panel received a Discussion Paper on the emerging options for the Locality at its meeting on 2 June 2008. The Panel made recommendations to the Children's Services Executive that it authorised the announcement of a number of options, and hold informal consultations on them.

3 These recommendations were accepted by the Children's Services Executive on the 12 June 2008. The options for informal consultation were presented to meetings of Headteachers, Chairmen of Governing Bodies and other stakeholders on 25 June 2008. The Panel's recommendations, as adopted by the Children's Services Executive for consultation, are set out in **Appendix 1**. Parents of pupils and governors of all schools in the locality were advised of the options on 25 June and were invited to attend informal public "drop-in" sessions. These sessions took place on the 30 June in Alsager, on 1 July in Sandbach and on 2 July in Congleton.

4 A consultation document describing the emerging options, and seeking responses to them by the 5 August 2008, was issued. **Appendix 2** provides a summary of the feed-back obtained through the informal "drop-in" sessions and also summarises the issues raised in response forms, emails and letters about the options. The response forms, emails and letters will be available for inspection by Members in each of the Members Group Rooms during the week prior to the meeting of the Panel, and will also be available for reference during the course of the Panel Meeting.

5 Members are encouraged to read the feed-back documentation to gain an overview of the range of perspectives expressed and the nature of concerns raised. Members are asked to note particularly that the governing bodies of Sandbach Community Primary School, Church Lawton Primary School, Chelford CE Primary School, Holmes Chapel Primary School and Black Firs Primary School have all made formal responses to the consultation document. As part of their response, in almost all cases alternative options have been put forward. All these submissions are included as **Annexes to Appendix 2**.

6 The Panel is invited to make recommendations to the Children's Services Executive, which meets on the 9 September 2008 on whether to proceed to formal consultations on any or all of the options identified previously and to consider the possibility of amending the initial options in the light of representations made and the latest knowledge of projected pupil numbers presented in this report. The paper is being made available to the Cheshire East Cabinet, which meets on 8 September. Any advice from that body will be reported orally to the Children's Services Executive.

THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

7 As in previous reviews, the announcement of options has resulted in a considerable amount of public interest. The review featured in a "phone-in" programme on Silk FM during which officers responded to calls from members of the public about the review and the options being consulted upon.

8 Both the Alsager and Sandbach "drop-in" sessions were extremely well attended by parents, staff, governors and other local people. By comparison, the drop-in session in Congleton was very quiet.

9 In total, over 250 letters, messages and response forms have been received, again mostly relating to the emerging options relating to Church Lawton Primary School and to Sandbach Community Primary School.

10 The feed-back on the informal consultation options obtained through the drop-in sessions and through the response to the consultation document are both summarised in **Appendix 2**.

UPDATED PUPIL FORECASTS

11 The paper received by the Panel in June was written using the projected pupil numbers derived from the January 2007 PLASC but also in the light of the then unconfirmed pupil projections based on the 2008 PLASC for individual schools, on which headteachers had had a chance to comment. That process has now been completed and has allowed the overall aggregate projections to be made and confirmed. The outcome is showing a slightly different picture for the locality as a whole, and for areas within it. Whereas the overall level of surplus places in the primary sector for the locality had been forecast to rise to 18.5% by 2012, that figure has now been revised downwards to a projection of 15.9% overall surplus places by the same time. Now that the final confirmed set of projections is available, the options which were the subject of informal consultation over the summer have necessarily been reviewed in the light of this revised information as well as in the light of the consultation feed-back. There appear to be implications, particularly for the proposals for Sandbach. These are discussed below.

DISCUSSIONS OF OPTIONS AND ASSOCIATED TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGES

(a) The Possible Closure of Church Lawton Primary School With Effect From 1 September 2009

12 The overwhelming majority of responses in relation to the possible closure of Church Lawton Primary School were opposed to the options. The main points made are summarised in **Appendix 2**. Respondents frequently made reference to the community aspect – that the school was the only location in the community for meetings and its removal would effectively leave Church Lawton bereft of any such

amenity. Frequent reference was also made to the perceived expertise which the school has developed in relation to children with special educational needs.

13 The Governors of Church Lawton Primary School have put forward an alternative proposal (see **Annex to Appendix 2**). The essential features of this proposal are

- to reduce the net capacity of the school to 75 children
- to use the remaining physical space in the school to house child care provision, a unit for children with special educational needs and a life long learning centre

14 The option as put forward attempted to meet the anticipated concerns of the local community about the absence of a school facility by considering the potential to relocate St Gabriel’s Roman Catholic Primary School into the present Church Lawton premises. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury have confirmed that they do not wish this possibility to be pursued. There remains the alternative of the building being used to support the broader delivery of Children’s Services in the Alsager locality, and it may be that the incoming Cheshire East Authority will see an alternative use for the building.

15 However, for the moment Cheshire is not currently looking to place a resourced school for SEN pupils in this locality. In the Alsager area there are 14 pupils with a statement of special educational needs and these pupils are currently being catered for within their local mainstream setting. Church Lawton Primary School has one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. The proposed unit which forms part of the Governor’s alternative proposal does not therefore at this stage appear a viable proposition.

16 The proposal made by the Governors of Church Lawton to reduce the school’s PAN to 75 does not sufficiently address the need identified by the review to remove surplus places in the rural area outside Alsager. Seven alternative primary schools are within 2 miles of Church Lawton Primary School, and just two of these – Rode Heath Primary and Scholar Green Primary – will have enough surplus places in the future for the projected number of pupils attending Church Lawton Primary. The latest forecasts show

	January 2008 actual		January 2010 forecast		January 2013 forecast	
	NOR	Surplus Places	NOR	Surplus Places	Nor	Surplus Places
Church Lawton	68	37	66	39	58	47
Rode Heath	157	53	158	52	159	51
Scholar Green	152	28	146	34	136	44

(this table assumes a reduction in net capacity at Scholar Green to 180)

Members will wish to take into account the strongly expressed views of the broad community about the impact of the loss of its school, but will also be aware of the stark nature of the picture painted by the above data.

The Panel may therefore wish to recommend that this option, but no longer containing the possible relocation of St Gabriel’s Roman Catholic Primary School, be the subject of statutory public consultation.

(b) The possible location of Cranberry Primary School into one building, with a net capacity of 210

17 The responses received in relation to this option expressed concerns related to the possible future need for more places in Alsager town because of housing developments and changes to the use of the current premises of the Manchester Metropolitan University.

18 The most recent information on live births shows a continuing decline both in the wider area around Alsager and in the town itself. Housing completions have numbered about 45 per year over the last 10 years but this has not had any noticeable effect on the total number of pupils in the schooling system. The current Regional Spatial Strategy shows a continuing expectation of approximately 45 dwellings per annum because of restraints on development in Alsager related to the priority given to the regeneration of the nearby Potteries. There has been a recent change, however, in the expectation of dwellings resulting from the MMU site. This figure has doubled from 150 to 300, and at some future date this may generate as many as 50 pupils of school age. The most recent forecast data for Alsager shows only a very marginal increase in projected numbers of pupils by 2012 compared to the projection based on the January 2007 PLASC.

19 It is therefore suggested that the Panel may wish to recommend that the proposed reduction in net capacity at Cranberry Primary School go ahead, but that the nursery unit remain in place in the former infant school building and that the remaining premises be used to support broader developments in Children's Services in such a way that any future need to enlarge the working capacity of Cranberry Primary School be not compromised.

(c) The possible closure of Sandbach Community Primary School with effect from 1 September 2010

20 The potential closure of Sandbach Community Primary School has encountered considerable opposition, as described in **Appendix 2**. Key aspects of the objections are

- the importance of the school to its local community which is an area of relative deprivation
- the quality of support which the school provides to individual children
- the walking distance to the main alternative school (Offley Primary School)
- the perception that Sandbach Community Primary School children would not be welcomed by receiving schools
- the perception that the school performs very well for the children who attend it
- the view that the location of a Children's Centre in Sandbach would be more appropriate at Sandbach Community Primary School, and a 14-19 centre more appropriate at Offley Primary School.

In addition to the many letters, response forms and emails supporting the school a petition containing 956 signatures has also been received.

21 The Governing Body at Sandbach Community Primary School has made an extensive response to the consultation (**see Annex to Appendix 2**) in which it makes an alternative proposal. This is centred on the location of the Children's Centre at a still functioning Sandbach Community Primary School, with accommodation for 14-19 education located elsewhere. The same proposal is made in a responses by Sandbach Youth Council.

22 Previous pupil projections have indicated that a total PAN for the Sandbach area of 265, with 175 of these places being in Sandbach town itself, would be appropriate. This is the figure which would be reached if the current proposals went ahead. However, the most recent projections based on the January 2008 PLASC data show a slower decline in pupil numbers in Sandbach than had previously been expected. It now appears that we can expect at least five more pupils per primary age-group than previously. A total PAN for Sandbach town of 175 would have left 5.7% spare capacity in the town's schools according to previous projections. However, were this figure now to be achieved the projection is that it would leave only 1.1% of spare places in the town in total. This means in practice that the present option could not go ahead with any degree of confidence that sufficient pupil places would then be available in Sandbach town itself should actual pupil numbers vary slightly from current projections.

23 The revised forecasts imply that a total PAN for the primary schools in Sandbach town should be at least 185, giving a forecast surplus capacity of 6.4%. This could be achieved in one of two ways.

Alternative 1

- The closure of Sandbach Community Primary
- The retention of 420 places at Offley Primary
- The Children's Centre would need to be located in the premises of the former Sandbach Community Primary, together with retained nursery and co-located Children's Services

Alternative 2

- The retention of Sandbach Community Primary with 105 places
- Offley Primary becoming 315 places in a single building
- The Children's Centre could be located at Sandbach Community Primary with co-located Children's Services
- The remaining building at Offley Primary could be considered for development as a 14-19 centre

24 An obvious disadvantage of Alternative 1 is that it provides no certain location for the development of 14-19 education, since priority needs to be given to establishing a Children's Centre and to developing co-located Children's Services. Support for 14-19 education remains an important part of the TLC review in the locality as a whole. Alternative 2 has the advantage of very closely matching projected pupil numbers for both Sandbach Community Primary and for Offley Primary and would offer the potential for expanding the size of Offley Primary to the 350 figure envisaged in the current proposal, should future numbers in Sandbach require this.

25 Alternative 2 has the essential features of the alternative proposal put forward by the Governors of Sandbach Community Primary. It should be considered now as an alternative option for consultation principally because of the need to ensure an adequate supply of school places in the town in the light of the most recent projections of pupil numbers.

26 There is no doubt that Sandbach Community Primary serves an area of social need. Were it to be retained as what would be a small primary school, this would be consistent with Cheshire's emerging approach to small primary schools generally. The ranking of the super output area which contains the school in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation places it just outside the DCSF's definition of "disadvantaged"

using in the formulation of Children's Centre policy. Nevertheless it is in the 310 most disadvantaged areas nationally.

27 Sandbach Community Primary was made subject to special measures following an Ofsted inspection in June 2002, and was removed from that category two years later. A further inspection in November 2005 confirmed it "a good school with many strengths". The most recently available Contextual Value Added (CVA) data relates to 2007, and shows a decline from 2006, placing the school at the 81st percentile nationally. Attainment at Key Stage 1 for 2007 also shows a decline from the previous year and is significantly lower than the national average.

28 Should Alternative 2 be pursued, Members will wish to be assured that the quality of education provided to children at a retained Sandbach Community Primary could be guaranteed in the long term, and that therefore collaborative arrangements involving other local primary schools, possibly working towards federation, would be an important element of any such viable option.

29 Considerable comment has been received about the implications of closure of Sandbach Community Primary for the travel arrangements of children to alternative schools, principally Offley Primary. Currently 75% of children walk to Sandbach Community Primary – a much higher percentage than the Cheshire average of about 52% for primary aged children. The School Travel Team Manager has reviewed the route between the school and Offley Primary, which is considered generally safe, however the additional walking distance is just over 1km which may cause difficulty for some parents. Offley Primary have three walking buses which have been risk assessed, two of which operate currently. Should Sandbach Community Primary close, a further walking bus from the school, or a minibus driven by volunteers are possible means of assistance.

30 Both alternatives would need to be the subject of early feasibility studies of the proposed uses of the buildings and the associated capital input required, and neither could be given effect until September 2010 because of the size of existing pupil cohorts.

31 Members may wish to recommend the adoption of one, or potentially both, of the two alternatives above as a basis for formal consultation.

(d) The possible reduction in size of Daven Primary School to give a net capacity of 210

32 No responses have been received in relation to this proposal and it may be therefore that Members of the Panel will wish to recommend that it go forward for formal consultation unamended.

(e) The possible re-designation of part of the accommodation of Chelford CE Primary School to give a net capacity of 60

33 The governors of Chelford CE Primary School have made an alternative proposal that the net capacity be reduced to 77 (**see Annex to Appendix 2**). However, this would be extremely difficult to achieve in physical terms, since it is necessary to adapt the use of the accommodation to match the then calculated net capacity. It is therefore suggested that Members may wish to continue formal consultation around the present proposal to remove from the school's use one classroom, giving a revised net capacity of 60.

(f) The possible removal of temporary accommodation from the site of Holmes Chapel Primary School and a reduction in the school's net capacity and PAN at a future date should this become warranted.

34 The response of the governing body of Holmes Chapel Primary School is included in **Annex to Appendix 2**. Revised pupil forecasts do not at this stage make the retention of this possibility necessary, and it is therefore suggested that Members may wish to recommend that the response of the governing body be noted and that this possible option for future change be remitted to the new Cheshire East Council.

(g) The possible development, in collaboration with Governing Bodies and the Church of England Diocese of Federated groupings of the following schools

Chelford CE VC, Peover Superior Endowed, Lower Peover CE VA, Marton and District CE VA, Brereton CE VA, Smallwood CE VC, Astbury St Mary CE VA, Scholar Green, Woodcocks Well CE VC and Goostrey Community

35 This proposal has resulted in a very small amount of correspondence which has either sought clarification about the nature of what might take place, or has pointed to practical difficulties involved in federated working. An initial meeting between officers and headteachers has taken place to answer some specific Federation questions and while there has been no adverse reaction as such, some headteachers have confused the arrangements that would operate under Federation with collaborative arrangements such as those currently taking place through Education Improvement Partnerships.

36 The effective development of practical Federated arrangements between groupings of primary schools is seen as an important element in delivering TLC outcomes. Discussion with all interested parties as envisaged through the options announcement does need to continue, and Members may wish to recommend that the Local Authority's input to these discussions be strengthened by the development by officers of some broad long-term expected outcomes (in terms of the management of surplus places and in terms of the quality of curriculum delivery, for the group of schools identified through the review). These broad expectations could then be used as the means by which continued monitoring of the developing federated arrangements takes place over the coming months.

37 Should the results of such monitoring warrant it, Members may also want to recommend that officers be asked to develop alternative proposals for school amalgamations should it appear that the Federation approach is not likely to achieve the required outcomes, and to remit the matter at that point to the Cheshire East authority for further consideration.

(h) Proposals to change published admission numbers

38 The only proposal which has generated a significant response has been that for Black Firs Primary School. It is recognised that the net capacity calculation for the premises occupied by the school, given their usage, is somewhat problematical. The school has suggested that a net capacity of 270 and a revised PAN of 38 be adopted. It is recommended that this change be agreed. Members may wish to recommend the revised proposed changes be the subject of consultation as part of the admission arrangements for September 2010.

(i) Financial implications

39 The majority of the revised options put forward in this paper have minimal financial effect to those previously reported. However the option to retain Sandbach Community Primary School does mean that the anticipated revenue formula savings of £112,000 on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will not be achieved.

(i) Transformational Change

40 The recommendations made below contain key opportunities as discussed here and in previous reports, to make transformation changes in the delivery of Children's Services. These are set out below

Opportunities for Transformational change associated with Options	
Location	Nature of development
Church Lawton Primary	Premises available for future use by Cheshire East authority
Cranberry Primary Alsager	Second building available to develop co-located Children's Services
Sandbach Community Primary/ Offley Primary	
Alternative 1	Children's Centre and co-located services at Sandbach Primary
Alternative 2	Children's Centre and co-located services at Sandbach Primary Building at Offley available to develop 14-19
Daven Primary/Marlfields Primary Congleton	Co-located Children's Services/Inclusion provision at Daven/Marlfields
Chelford Primary	Co-located Children's Services in re-designated accommodation

RECOMMENDED:

That the School Planning Select Panel recommends the Lead Member for Children's Services

1 to authorise statutory public consultation on the possible closure of Church Lawton Primary School with effect from September 2009;

2 to authorise statutory public consultation on

either:

2a the closure of Sandbach Primary School with effect from September 2010, with the released school building being used to accommodate a Children's Centre for Sandbach together with co-located Children's Services

or:

- 2b** the reduction in the net capacity of Offley Primary School to 315 places located in a single building, and the alternative use of the premises of the former Offley Infant School as a centre for delivering 14-19 education for the locality to be investigated; the reduction in the net capacity of Sandbach Primary School to 105 places with the Children's Centre for Sandbach and co-located Children's Services in the released accommodation.

Alternatively:

- 2c** Members may wish both options to be the subject of statutory public consultation.
- 3** To invite the Chester Diocesan Board of Education and the Governors of Chelford CE Primary School to develop proposals for the revision of the school's net capacity to 60 by re-designation of the use of one classroom.
- 4** To submit to the Cheshire East Unitary Authority information relating to pupil numbers in the Holmes Chapel area together with the proposed means for reducing capacity at Holmes Chapel Primary School should this be warranted at a future date.
- 5** To authorise consultations and to request officers to develop proposals in respect of the group of schools identified for potential Federations, as described above.
- 6** To authorise statutory consultation as part of the admission arrangements for September 2010 in respect of the list of schools at paragraph 7 of Appendix 1, with the amendment in respect of Black Firs Primary School mentioned above.
- 7** To authorise consultation as part of the admission arrangements for September 2010 on reduction in the published admission number for Cranberry Primary School from 45 to 30, and to ask officers to develop proposals for the use of the released former infant school building which retained it for use as a nursery and which enable the development of co-located Children's Services in such a way that the future potential use of the building for an expanded Cranberry Primary School, should this become warranted, is not compromised.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Checklist for Members Reports and relevant matters have been included.

Local Members

Cllr M Asquith, Cllr R Fletcher, Cllr S Wilkinson, Cllr K Oliver, Cllr P Mason, Cllr W Wolstencroft, Cllr D Brickhill, Cllr N Price, Cllr R Giltrap

**RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES EXECUTIVE
ON 12 JUNE 2008**

**TRANSFORMING LEARNING COMMUNITIES (TLC): REPORT ON THE OPTIONS
IDENTIFIED BY THE LOCALITY REVIEW FOR ALSAGER, CONGLETON,
SANDBACH AND HOLMES CHAPEL**

RECOMMENDED:

That the Lead Member for Children's Services approves the recommendations set out below on the emerging options for the Transforming Learning Communities Locality Review for Alsager, Congleton, Sandbach and Holmes Chapel, and on holding informal consultations in early July 2008 on these options:

- 1 the closure of Church Lawton Primary School with effect from 1 September 2009 or 2010, with the school building being used either to re-house St Gabriel's RC Primary School or to support the delivery of broader Children's Services in the Alsager locality; and**
- 2 the closure of Sandbach Primary School with effect from 1 September 2010, with the released school building becoming a shared resource for the delivery of 14-19 education in the locality; and**
- 3 the reduction in size of Daven Primary School with effect from 1 September 2009 or 2010, to give a capacity of 210 and a PAN of 30, with the released accommodation becoming available as a centre to support multi-agency working in the Congleton locality and as a base for key stage 4 inclusion work in the town. A further possibility may be support for the delivery of special educational needs. There should be a review of the operation of primary school catchment areas in and around Congleton; and**
- 4 the re-designation of part of the accommodation of Chelford CE Primary School in consultation with the School Governors and the revision of the school's Net Capacity and PAN with effect from September 2009; and**
- 5 the removal of temporary accommodation from the site of Holmes Chapel Primary School and a reduction of the school's Net Capacity and PAN at a future date should this become warranted; and**
- 6 the development, in collaboration with Governing bodies and the Church of England Diocese of Federated Groupings of the schools set out in the Appendix; and**
- 7 the proposals in below in respect of changes in Published Admission Numbers, to go forward for consultation as part of the Admission Arrangements for September 2010; and**

School	Current Net Capacity	Proposed Net Capacity	Current PAN	Proposed PAN
Haslington Primary	329	280	50	40
Brereton CE	150	147	30	21
Sandbach Heath St Johns	150	180	30	25
Marfields Primary	180	210	30	30
Buglawton Primary	178	210	30	30
Astbury St Mary CE	112	126	16	18
Scholar Green	210	180	30	25
Alsager Highfields	233	233	40	37
Smallwood CE	112	126	16	18
Woodcocks' Well CE	103	89	15	12
Goostrey Primary	182	209	26	30
Black Firs Primary	240	240	40	34
TOTAL	2179	2230	353	320

8 the proposals below in respect of reductions in Net Capacities at schools with surplus capacity to be further investigated.

School	Current NC	Proposed NC	Comment
Chelford CE	90	60	Re-designation of 1 classroom
Offley Primary	420	350	Use of 1 site
Cranberry Primary	315	210	Use of 1 site
TOTAL	825	620	

TRANSFORMING LEARNING COMMUNITIES (TLC): REPORT ON THE OPTIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE LOCALITY REVIEW FOR ALSAGER, CONGLETON, SANDBACH AND HOLMES CHAPEL: ISSUES RAISED AT THE INFORMAL CONSULTATION SESSION AND IN CORRESPONDENCE

INTRODUCTION

The following summarises the main points which have been raised in relation to each option. Members are encouraged to read the feedback documentation to see the range of individual perspectives expressed. This will be available for inspection by Members in each of the Members group rooms in the week prior to the Panel Meeting and also at the Panel Meeting itself.

Where schools have provided submissions setting out their views and alternative suggestions, these are included as Annexes to this Appendix.

POSSIBLE CLOSURES OF SCHOOLS

Church Lawton Primary School

95 forms, 75 letters/e-mails and a petition with 615 signatures were received. These were overwhelmingly opposed to the proposal to close the school. Points which were frequently made were

- the importance of retaining a school for the local community
- a caring ethos of the school
- the disruptive effect of closure on children currently attending the school
- the quality of the teaching and overall education provided at the school
- the need to retain small village schools
- the favourable pupil-teacher ratio at the school
- the belief that its location made Church Lawton a rural school even though it was not officially so classified
- the possibility that numbers at the school might recover in the future
- the individual attention which children perceive and the wide range of after school activities are available
- the importance of the existence of a school in the village specifically to senior citizens for their meetings and for the holding of the village annual fair

Less frequently mentioned points were

- the detrimental environmental effects of children being taken to alternative schools by car
- the inappropriateness of closing a school for financial/economic reasons
- the reduction in parental choice should the school close
- the school's particular expertise with children who had special educational needs

The range of respondents to the consultation was extremely wide: parents, grandparents, and other relatives, ex-pupils, ex-teachers as well as some of the current pupils, all were involved. In some cases respondents made the point that they had moved into the area specifically in order to access the kind of education available at Church Lawton Primary School.

The drop-in session at Alsager Civic Centre on 30 June was very well attended, and again all the above points were made during the evening together with others listed in the available documentation. 4 letters/e-mails and 1 form referred to the possible relocation of St Gabriel's RC Primary School, and this was also raised at the drop-in centre. All of these comments were opposed to this possibility.

SANDBACH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

7 forms, 47 letters/e-mails and 2 petitions, one with 956 signatures and one with 180 signatures were received. These were overwhelmingly opposed to the possible closure of the school. Points which were frequently made were

- the school is at the heart of the vulnerable community
- the school provides high quality support for vulnerable children especially regarding emotional aspects of learning
- the school would be a better location for the Children's Centre for Sandbach than Offley Primary School

Other points, made less frequently were

- the school is ideally located for developing integrated service delivery around a vulnerable community
- Offley Primary School would be a better location for a 14-19 centre than Sandbach Primary School as it is closer to main transport links
- new housing is planned for the area served by the school
- concerns about the safety of the walking route to the alternative school at Offley
- the threat to the Wesley Avenue Playgroup if a children's centre were to be located at Offley Primary School

Respondents were parents, children at the school, a Tenants Association and the Wesley Avenue Playgroup, amongst others.

The drop-in session at Sandbach Town Hall on Tuesday 1 July was extremely well attended by parents and children from both Sandbach Community Primary School and Offley Primary School. Both communities expressed their opposition to the proposals, making all of the above points together with others summarised in the documentation.

POSSIBLE REDUCTIONS IN THE SIZE OF SCHOOLS

Daven Primary School, Congleton

No responses were received concerning the proposal.

Chelford CE Primary School

One email – concerning a technical aspect of the proposal – was received from the Diocese of Chester. A letter was also received from the Governing Body of Chelford CE Primary School in which an alternative proposal of a reduction in net capacity at the school to 77 is made. This is reproduced in the Annex.

Offley Primary School, Sandbach

No correspondence was received in relation to the proposal to reduce net capacity to 350 pupils. However, a number of parents of children attending Offley Primary

School attended the drop-in session at Sandbach Town Hall on 1 July. The points which they made are summarised in the documentation. Key concerns were

- that siblings of children currently attending school could not obtain a place there if the PAN is reduced
- the capacity of the school to take children from a closing Sandbach Community Primary School

Cranberry Primary School, Alsager

1 letter was received, from the Chair of the Interim Governing Body. This asked that future potential housing developments in Alsager be taken into account when considering the proposal to reduce the net capacity at Cranberry Primary School. The same request was made by parents attending the drop-in session on 30 June, as summarised in the documentation.

Holmes Chapel Primary School

A total of 3 letters/e-mails were received, including a letter from the Governing Body which urges that ongoing planning issues be given further consideration before any final decision is made.

Hermitage Primary School

Although there was no proposal to make changes at Hermitage, 2 letters were received supporting the retention of the current planned admission number.

Black Firs Primary School

A total of 3 letters/e-mails were received including a letter from the Governing Body of the school which is reproduced in the Annexe. This proposes a net capacity of 270 and a revised PAN of 38.

3 parents of children attending Black Firs were present at the drop-in session on 2 July and expressed concerns about the proposed reductions in the school's PAN. Points made are summarised in the documentation.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERATED GROUPINGS OF SCHOOLS

A total of 3 feedback forms/letters/e-mails were received. These either sought clarification about the nature of what might take place or have pointed to practical difficulties involved in federated working.