

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of meeting: 4th November 2008
Report of: John Weeks – Director of Children’s Services Designate
Title: Transforming Learning Communities (TLC) – Macclesfield Locality Review

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report provides the Cabinet with the outcome of the public consultations undertaken by the County Council in relation to primary school provision in Macclesfield, and the discussions with schools in the Bollington area about possible school federations.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet endorse the recommendations of the County Council’s School Planning Select Panel to:
1. approve the issue of statutory public notices proposing the closure of St Barnabas CE Primary School and St Edward’s Catholic Primary School, Macclesfield, in July 2009;
 - 2 subject to 1 above, to issue on behalf of the Dioceses of Chester and Shrewsbury a proposal to establish a new joint Church School on the current St Edward’s Catholic Primary School site, with effect from September 2009;
 - 3 authorise discussions with the Governing Body of Ash Grove Primary School to enter into an agreement supported by an action plan with explicit measurable targets, to seek to develop and improve the school over a 3 year period, with the recommendation to Cheshire East Council that the position of Ash Grove Primary School be reviewed in October 2011;
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 - a. note the positive developments in relation to a possible hard federation between Bollington St John’s CE Primary School and Pott Shrigley CE Primary School, and request that they continue developing detailed proposals for further consideration; and
 - b. note also the commitment of all schools in the area to work together and encourage them to continue their current dialogue.

3.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs

- 3.1 There are no transitional cost implications for the Authority related to this report.

4.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond

- 4.1 Potential savings arising from the possible closure of schools are set out in the Appendix to the report.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Subject to the proposed timetable for possible school closures being followed as intended, the formal process associated with the possible school closures and establishment of a new school will be undertaken by Cheshire County Council.

6.0 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 There are no significant immediate risks associated with these issues. In the medium term there are risks associated with securing the necessary capital funding and management of the building project for the proposed new joint church school. In the medium to longer term the number of surplus school places will need to be monitored and appropriate action taken to manage the level of provision.

7.0 Background and Options

- 7.1 Reports on the Macclesfield TLC Review have been presented to the County Council and are available for inspection through the Council's website. A summary of the background information is contained within the report to the County Council's School Planning Select Panel, which is attached as an Appendix to this report.

8.0 Overview of Day One, Year One and Term One Issues

- 8.1 The decisions taken at this time will be implemented after 31st March 2008. Procedures will need to be determined to undertake the necessary actions to secure their successful implementation.

The number of surplus school places in the Authority is being reduced but it is forecast that the level overall will be in excess of the expectations of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Procedures will need to be introduced to monitor the provision of school places and to ensure that processes are in place to address the issues.

9.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 9.1 The County Council has invited the Cabinet to offer its advice as the implementation of any decisions taken by the County Council will become the responsibility of Cheshire East Council.

For further information:

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Background Documents:

Documents are available for inspection at: www.cheshire.gov.uk