

Sandbach Community Primary Feedback - 17 January 2013

The sharing of a proposed longer term strategy on Monday was much more helpful to the decision making process and I feel if this had been shared earlier with all schools at the same time the process would not have had such a negative impact on our local partnership between schools. I accept the apology given to us at the meeting by officers. The proposed longer term strategy includes many of the suggestions that the group of heads had previously suggested to officers so I can see there is some agreement between heads and the LA on the longer term view. The immediate decision now is which school to increase first by 15 pupils to meet basic need. The choice I would suggest is Offley or Wheelock. The reassurance that it would be a phased increase at Wheelock is helpful but as heads we are still sceptical as to whether the LA would be able to keep to this as the decision of appeals panels can go against the prejudice to the provision of efficient education at a school and to the efficient use of resources. The benefit of Offley being increased first is the lower cost implication and the ability to increase from Sept 13 with no immediate additional cost to the LA or a reduced cost if the two classrooms were built now. Offley could also provide some surplus places for higher year groups if this is required in the area at this time. But it would not be a full 15 in every year group as they are already rolling through a previous 60 PAN who entered school pre TLC. Wheelock's project has the funding available and earmarked and the plans ready to implement the project. However, it would not now deliver until Easter 2014. My question would be can Wheelock's organisation accommodate another 15 intake in Sept 13 before the completion of the proposed project at no additional cost?

Consideration would now need to be made as to whether the 1.6 million capital funding would still be available in the future. If it would be lost or clawed back then not going ahead with Wheelock at this time may put the project at risk if carried out at a later date. Consideration needs to be given to whether the possible change in funded transport would have a long term impact on parent preference so that the future predicted over subscription numbers would be incorrect and the need would be in another school, possibly Elworth CE. I think consideration needs to be given to the issue of parking outside Wheelock School should there be an increase in PAN at any time. I note that some Wheelock parents said no to the proposal on their first feedback form giving the reason that parking around the school is poor and can create a dangerous environment outside the school at peak times.