

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 7 December 2017

Report of the Head of Learning and Skills Service

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Fylde East; Fylde South; Fylde West; Preston Central East; Preston East; Preston South East; Wyre Rural Central; Lytham; St Annes North; and St Annes South

The Future of Carr Hill High School and Sixth Form Centre's Post 16 Provision (Appendix 'A' refers)

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Executive Summary

Carr Hill High School and Sixth Form Centre, Kirkham has approached the local authority in relation to the future of its post 16 provision. The school has asked the local authority to start the formal statutory process to consult on the proposal to discontinue its post 16 sixth form provision, by permanently lowering its age range from 11-18 years to 11-16 years, with effect from 31 August 2019. Under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance, Making 'Prescribed Alterations' to Maintained Schools, which was published in April 2016, the local authority must be the proposer for this type of significant change and carry out a statutory process, which includes publication, representation, decision, rights of appeal and implementation. In line with this, the authority is now required to decide whether to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to consult on the future of this provision.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to approve that the authority publishes a Statutory Notice to begin the representation period on the future of the post 16 provision currently delivered by Carr Hill High School and Sixth Form Centre, Kirkham.

Background and Advice

Following recent discussions with the local authority, the Headteacher of Carr Hill High School and Sixth Form Centre (the school) informed the County Council of its wish to consult on the future of their post 16 provision, due to concerns about its financial and educational viability. The school has low and reducing student numbers, and a narrowing curriculum offer in its sixth form, both of which are impacting on the financial viability of the school.

In order to fully consider this proposal, a number of factors are taken into account and these are set out in Appendix 'A'.

Consultation and Statutory Requirements

The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 state that the alteration of an upper or lower age range by one year or more, including the removal of a sixth form, is a statutory process. For a local authority maintained community school, the local authority is the proposer and also the decision maker. The statutory process follows four stages and these are set out in the table below, along with the suggested timeline for this proposal:

Stage	Description	Timescale
Stage 1	Publication of Statutory Notice and Proposal	18 December 2017
Stage 2	Representation (formal consultation)	18 December 2017 to 2 February 2018
Stage 3	Decision	March 2018
Stage 4	Implementation	31 August 2019

To ensure that the process remains within the statutory requirements, the local authority must ensure that the timescales outlined above are adhered to.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Under sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996, local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in their area, by influencing and shaping provision through local partnerships and by identifying gaps, enabling new provision and developing the market. The young people covered by this statutory duty are those aged 16-19 and those aged 19-24 who have either a learning difficulty assessment (LDA) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

As the number of 16-19 year olds attending the school is low and reducing, and there are several other post 16 providers in the local area, the local authority does

not believe that there will be an adverse impact on participation, should the school permanently lower its age range from 11-18 years old to 11-16 years old.

Financial

Should the outcome of the consultation be to remove the sixth form provision at the school, there would not be an adverse financial impact on the local authority in terms of post 16 funding, as this is provided by the ESFA, and the authority merely makes the payments on its behalf.

The overall financial position of the school would be improved by permanently lowering its age range from 11-18 years old to 11-16 years old. At present, the 11-16 part of the school is providing a significant financial subsidy to the sixth form as it is not financially viable on its own. The reducing student numbers in the sixth form going forward will only exacerbate this position.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		