

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 7 December 2017

Report of the Corporate Director of Operations and Delivery

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Burnley Central East; Burnley
Central West; Burnley North
East; Burnley Rural; Burnley
South West; Padiham and
Burnley West;

Secondary Education in Burnley - Hameldon Community College

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Ajay Sethi, Tel: 07810 268430, Head of Learning and Skills (Start Well)

ajay.sethi@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Between 11 September and 20 October 2017, the authority consulted on a proposal on the future of Hameldon Community College, with implementation commencing from 31 August 2018. Under the statutory process, the authority is now required to consider the responses to the stage 1 consultation and decide whether to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal.

The purpose of this report is to provide the information necessary for that decision to be taken.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) consider the information in this report;
- (ii) note the consultation arrangements that were undertaken and the responses that were received in respect of the authority's proposal; and
- (iii) Approve that the authority publishes a Statutory Notice on its proposal to close Hameldon Community College, with implementation commencing from 31 August 2018.

Background and Advice

On 10 August 2017, Cabinet approved a stage 1 consultation on a proposal on the future of Hameldon Community College. The reasons for the proposal were

concerns about the quality of current educational standards, the school's financial deficit position and pupil numbers. The school has been below the Government's floor standards for educational attainment in three out of the past five years, and they are well below the new Progress 8 floor standard based on their 2016 performance. The school was judged as Requires Improvement at its latest Ofsted inspection in July 2015. Ofsted has placed the school in a category of concern three times since 2007, and the school has never been judged as Good overall. The school has not found it possible to sustain the improvements made with additional support from the local authority. During the consultation phase, the school was re-inspected and the outcome will be made public in late November/early December. As at October 2017, the pupil numbers stood at 215, compared to a capacity for 750 pupils. The financial position of the school has been in steady decline over the last four years and, as at 31 March 2017, the school's cumulative deficit balance was £2.2m, which is forecast to increase to a cumulative deficit of £2.5m by 31 March 2018.

Closing a Maintained Mainstream School: Guidance and Process

There is a defined statutory process in the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 which must be followed before making a decision on the closure of a maintained school. This is supplemented by further guidance on the process published by the Department for Education (DfE). The five statutory stages for a proposal and the suggested timescales are set out below:

Action	Start
Cabinet approval to consult	10 August 2017
Stage 1: Consultation on a proposal on the future of Hameldon Community College	11 September to 20 October 2017
Stage 1: Report to Cabinet on consultation and seek decision on whether to publish Statutory Notice	7 December 2017
Stage 2: Publish Statutory Notice	January 2018
Stage 3: Representation Period	January/February 2018
Stage 4: Decision	12 April 2018
Stage 5: Implementation	From 31 August 2018

The DfE's statutory guidance, 'Opening and Closing Maintained Schools' (April 2016), states that proposers, in this case the local authority, must consult organisations, groups and individuals they feel to be appropriate.

In line with the statutory guidance, a consultation document was produced which was available on Lancashire County Council's website and was widely circulated to interested parties, such as parents, staff and governors at the school, Burnley Borough Council, parish councils, neighbouring local authorities, other local schools and stakeholders.

A public consultation has been held during the Stage 1 consultation process. This report is requesting the publication of a Statutory Notice (Stage 2), which will lead to a further statutory consultation (Stage 3), in order to determine the proposal.

Consultation

For the consultation, paper questionnaires were made available at the school and online questionnaires could be accessed from www.lancashire.gov.uk. Paper questionnaires were also given to parents and pupils at the school.

One of the questions in the consultation document asked respondents to say whether they agreed or disagreed with the option of closing the school. The responses received from both non-pupils and pupils were as follows:

	Number of responses	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree or disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure /don't know
Non-Pupils	124	7%	4%	5%	7%	75%	2%
Pupils	108	2%	0%	6%	4%	83%	5%

Consultation Event

During the consultation period, a consultation event was held at the school between 3pm and 8pm on 11 October 2017 for parents, staff, governors and any other interested parties to ask questions and make comments on the proposal. The issues raised at the event were similar to those raised within the written responses to the proposal.

Lancashire County Council Response

Having reviewed the responses received through the consultation and at the consultation event, the local authority's response to the key issues can be found at Appendix 'A'.

Implications:

This item has both risk management and financial implications, as detailed in Appendix 'A'.

Equality and Diversity

A full Equality Analysis will be completed and reported at the determination stage of the proposal.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
The following documents are available to view here		
Consultation on the Future of Hameldon Community College	2017	Ajay Sethi/ 07810 268430
Summary Report	November 2017	Ajay Sethi/ 07810 268430
Summary of Consultation Event	11 October 2017	Ajay Sethi/ 07810 268430
Report to Cabinet	10 August 2017	Ajay Sethi/ 07810 268430

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A