

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:**           **CABINET**

**DATE:**                   **TUESDAY, 23 APRIL 2013**

**REPORT BY:**           **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

**SUBJECT:**               **PENYFFORDD INFANT AND JUNIOR  
AMALGAMATION**

**1.00   PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01   To inform Members of the outcome of the consultation meetings and the responses to the consultation in relation to the proposed amalgamation of Penyffordd Abbot's Lane Infant School and Penyffordd Junior School from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2013.

**2.00   BACKGROUND**

2.01   In accordance with the Flintshire policy to amalgamate infant and junior Schools to provide all-through Primary schools, the consultation process was initiated by the announcement that one of the Headteachers would be retiring at the end of the 2012/2013 academic year.

2.02   The consultations at Penyffordd would mark the final pair of schools to be consulted with, with regard to amalgamation. All other Flintshire infant and junior schools are either amalgamated or in the process of amalgamation. It is County Council policy to bring together infant and junior schools as all-through primary schools, in order to:

- promote greater continuity and progression for pupils aged 4-11 in all aspects of teaching and learning;
- provide greater capacity for effective use of data and information.
- provide a single vision and a common ethos through one headteacher supported by one governing body;
- provide a larger team of staff increasing teacher expertise and enhancing curriculum opportunities;
- promote greater flexibility in the sharing of staff responsibilities and deployment of teaching and non-teaching staff;
- improve and enhance pastoral arrangements;

- promote opportunities for staff and pupils to work together across key stages;
- promote a consistent whole school approach to the management of pupils with special and additional learning needs;
- build up parental relationships with one school and one set of senior leaders and staff;
- promote opportunities to be creative and flexible in the use of accommodation and develop ideas for future primary provision;
- develop an increased range of additional activities and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils – sports, music, team games;
- develop as a community focused school with increased capacity to respond to local community needs
- using the single budget, providing opportunities for greater budgetary and organisational flexibility; and
- promoting more efficient use of resources.

Challenges to be overcome include:

- loss of tradition and the consequent fear associated with change;
- belief that the present schools are the best possible, including environment, ethos and focus; and
- established relationships between parents and staff, particularly the Headteacher.

2.03 Discussions were held initially with the Headteachers and Governor representatives, prior to approval of Cabinet to carry out the full consultations in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government.

2.04 Consultation meetings were held for Governors, Staff and Parents/Pupils on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

2.05 The meetings were well attended and feed back in the form of response forms and letters are placed in the Members Library.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Some responses from the meetings, especially parents, expressed a view that the schools were on separate sites and would be difficult to manage for one Headteacher. Although there is a successful example of an amalgamated school on a split site in Mynydd Isa, the view was expressed that the Penyffordd case was different due to the larger distance between the two existing schools. The general view of the meeting was that amalgamation would be more acceptable if a new school was eventually to be built to bring the existing infant and junior schools together.

3.02 The argument was put forward, and accepted by some, that having an amalgamated school on a split site would strengthen the case for future 21st Century School capital funding. Not acting to bring the schools together would potentially weaken the case for major capital investment.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That Members consider the report and the written responses to the consultations and approve the publication of the statutory notice to amalgamate the schools with effect from September 1<sup>st</sup>. 2013.

### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 None as a direct result of this report.

### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None as a result of this report. All schools work to address national and local anti poverty strategies.

### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None as a result of this report.

### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None as a direct result of this report. If amalgamation was to take place, the schools would operate within the equalities legislation as at the present time.

### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 The Headteacher appointment is undertaken by the Temporary Governing Body. Other members of teaching staff would be recommended for adoption by the 'new' school Governing body, with no need for individual applications for posts.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Statutory notice of one month for lodging formal objections (Appendix 1).

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Consultations as required by Welsh Government have been completed.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Draft Statutory Notice

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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