

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE: TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2012
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING
SUBJECT: SCHOOL MODERNISATION INTERIM REPORT

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide an interim report on the progress of the consultations for the three area schools reviews.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council commissioned a refreshed consultation process for the three designated area schools reviews (Buckley, Mynydd Isa and Mold; Holywell; Queensferry, Shotton and Connah's Quay), to run from February to April 2012, at its meeting on 16 December 2011.

2.02 The first stage and informal consultation process was to be a combination of (1) public meetings for parents and students both for individual schools and for schools consortia (2) private meetings for teachers and school based employees (3) private meetings for governing bodies (4) special in-school sessions for students and pupils (5) an open invitation for contributions through the media of the published documents, the Council website and the local media.

2.03 The area review consultation documents were shared with all elected members for comment prior to publication. The information for all three area reviews, and full background information, is available on the Council website.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The series of nine public and various private meetings has been concluded. The special sessions within schools for students and pupils are taking place. The deadline for comments (letter, e.mail and returned pre-published response forms) is 27 April.

3.02 The public and private meetings have been well attended and well conducted. The improved process has not attracted the criticism of the earlier consultations held in mid-2011 and the objective of restoring trust and confidence in the consultation process has been met. The meetings have all been recorded and the database of preferences for

the options set out in the consultation, and the qualitative comments which underpins the preferences of individuals, is being built up. All preferences and feedback received by 27th April will be included in the database ready for consideration by the new Council from May/June.

It would be premature to comment decisively on the options for each area review before the first stage consultation process draws to an end. It should be repeated that additional evidenced options over and above those published can be proposed for consideration (including those raised at the public meetings for the Buckley, Mynydd Isa and Mold, Queensferry, Shotton and Connah's Quay areas). Reflections at an early stage would be:-

- Buckley, Mynydd Isa and Mold: there is strong local interest in exploring further the options for the retention and development of Elfed High including alternative community uses for surplus accommodation; strong local resistance to the co-location of Westwood Primary with Elfed High;
- Holywell: strong local interest in exploring further the co-location and new build options for Holywell High, Ysgol Perth y Terfyn and Ysgol y Fron;
- Queensferry, Shotton and Connah's Quay: strong local resistance to the option to amalgamate John Summers High and Connah's Quay High; strong local interest in exploring the options for a 6th Form 'Hub' at Connah's Quay High; strong local interest in exploring further the development of John Summers High as a 3-16 school.

3.03 No further public meetings are planned for the pre-election period and proposals to explore further those options which appear to be feasible and supportable will be prepared for the new Council once the first stage consultation period has ended.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the progress report be noted.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None directly at this stage.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None directly at this stage.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None directly at this stage.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None directly at this stage.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None directly at this stage.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 As set out in the report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 As set out in the report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

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

Contact Officer: Tom Davies
Telephone: 01352 704010
Email: Tom_Davies@flintshire.gov.uk