

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER, EDUCATION AND YOUTH**

SUBJECT: **RESPONSES TO CONSULTATIONS AT SALTNEY
FERRY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND ST. DAVID'S HIGH
SCHOOL SALTNEY**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To inform members of the Cabinet of the responses to the Consultations undertaken in June 2014 in Saltney Ferry Primary School and St. David's High School Saltney.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 The Flintshire School Modernisation Strategy suggests that any sixth form provision that has fewer than 120 students in years 12 and 13 should be reviewed, in terms of financial viability, and the ability to meet a curriculum offer in accordance with the Learning and Skills Measure.
- 2.02 Schools with smaller sixth forms have met the measure by using a consortium arrangement, whereby students travel to nearby schools to access some curriculum choices. This arrangement is recognised as inefficient in terms of transport and learning time, and outcomes for students from the participating schools have been lower than those of schools not dependant on the consortium arrangements.
- 2.03 In response to the Welsh Government request for Authorities to review post-16 provision, meetings were held with all of the Flintshire based providers of post-16 education, where it was agreed that concentration of provision at a centre in Connah's Quay would be the best way forward for learners in North Flintshire and Deeside.
- 2.04 Subsequent consultations have resulted in the publication of statutory notices relating to post-16 provision in Holywell, Connah's Quay and Queensferry, (John Summers) High Schools. These proposals for have been approved for implementation by the Minister.
- 2.05 In accordance with the agreed programme, consultations were conducted in Saltney on two options. The first related solely to the future of Sixth form provision at St. David's High School. The second combined the proposal in option one with the possible amalgamation

of the High School with the neighbouring Saltney Ferry Primary School.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The options consulted upon were:

1. To change the age-range of St. David's High School from 11-18 to 11-16 from September 2016
2. To amalgamate the primary provision at Saltney Ferry Primary School with the secondary provision at St. David's High School from September 2015 and to change the age-range of the High School to 3-16 from September 2016.

3.02 Four consultation meetings were conducted on the 19th and 22nd of May 2014. Two meetings were held at each school. One of these meetings at each was specifically for staff and Governors, and the second for parents and carers. A formal consultation document was circulated to the schools and distributed to parents, carers, staff and Governors. In addition, the local schools, Community representatives and the statutory consultees were all circulated with either hard copy or an electronic link to the consultation document, in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government School Organisation Guidance. The return of response forms and any other written responses was requested by the 4th of July 2014. (Appendix 1)

3.03 Students at the schools were also consulted at special consultations, conducted by the Flintshire Children and Young People's Engagement Team. A Young people's version of the consultation document was also produced for this phase of consultation.

3.04 The responses from the meetings were recorded and those from the returned forms have been collated and analysed for this report, and are included as appendices. (Appendix 2 and 3)

3.05 There were 59 responses recorded at the formal consultations and 320 responses recorded from children and young people at the schools. In addition there were 13 returned response forms and one letter. A petition of 59 names, specifically against the proposal to amalgamate the Primary and Secondary School has also been submitted.

3.06 The meeting responses from St. David's High School in relation to option one to establish an 11-16 age-range school are broadly in favour.

3.07 Staff and Governors appreciate that when the consortium arrangements for provision of the curriculum come to an end in July 2016, the school will no longer be able to meet the requirements of

the Learning and Skills measure in terms of subject choices. Out of the separate 10 hard-copy responses, 7 strongly or tended to agree with the option to establish an 11-16 age-range school, 2 disagreed and 1 did not indicate a preference.

- 3.08 In the case of responses to the proposal to amalgamate the two schools to form a 3-16 age range school, 5 either strongly agreed or tended to agree with 5 responses strongly disagreeing with this option.
- 3.09 Two letters were received from members of the community, one in support of the amalgamation and one against.

An analysis of the other responses received is as follows:

How strongly do you agree with the consultation for;

Option 1: to establish a 11-16 age-range school

a) Parents/Carers Staff and Governors

Strongly Agree	15	25.42%
Tend to Agree	14	23.73%
Neither Agree or Disagree	10	16.95%
Tend to Disagree	6	10.17%
Strongly Disagree	14	23.73%
Total	59	100.00%

b) Children and Young People

Strongly Agree	83	25.94%
Tend to Agree	89	27.81%
Neither Agree or Disagree	70	21.88%
Tend to Disagree	47	14.69%
Strongly Disagree	31	9.69%
Total	320	100.00%

Option 2 to amalgamate and establish a 3-16 age range school:

a) Parents/Carers Staff and Governors

Strongly Agree	5	8.5%
Tend to Agree	8	13.6%
Neither Agree or Disagree	8	13.6%
Tend to Disagree	4	6.8%
Strongly Disagree	34	57.6%
Total	59	100.0%

b) Children and Young People

Strongly Agree	22	6.88%
Tend to Agree	32	10.00%
Neither Agree or Disagree	66	20.63%
Tend to Disagree	66	20.63%
Strongly Disagree	131	40.94%
No response	3	0.94%
Total	320	100.00%

3.10 Consultation discussions and responses also identified the potential for deepening current working relationships between primary and secondary schools in the Saltney and Broughton areas. There is an opportunity to fulfil the recommendations of Robert Hill's 2013 report on "the Future of Education in Wales" in relation to cluster working. Closer working relationships and effective cluster working can promote:

- improved breadth of curriculum provision and improvements to learning;
- further improvement/ reduction in the impact of transitions between schools;
- practitioner exchange that combats professional isolation and shares the workload;
- schools with many strengths and a good record of collaboration can contribute to the learning of others;
- opportunities for school leadership beyond a single school;
- better work-life balance for school and curriculum leaders;
- opportunities to maximise resources and professional expertise;
- access to better facilities for pupils in schools with accommodation;
- opportunities for the creation of new roles that can be shared across schools e.g. bursar, ICT technician, and
- a partnership structure for delivering extended services at a local level.

3.11 Implementing Option1, whilst also developing closer partnership working arrangements between local schools would also provide the opportunity and appropriate circumstances for further consideration of the working arrangements between local primary schools.

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That the option to change the age-range of St. David's High School from 11-18 to 11-16 from September 2016 is approved and that

members approve the publication of the statutory notice to this effect.

- 4.02 That further work be undertaken with St. David's High School and local primary schools to promote closer collaborative working and development of potential plans for federation.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 Transport costs for students from the Saltney area to the new post-16 sixth form centre in Connah's Quay will be incurred, but this will be dampened by the cessation of the consortium travel arrangements.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 There is no direct impact as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 Due to the ending of the consortium arrangements, it is not expected that there will be a significant impact on the carbon footprint of the provision.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 There is no direct impact as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 With the proposed ending of post-16 provision at St. David's High School, there will be implications for the staffing compliment at the High School. This effect will be lessened by the ring-fencing to the affected schools and college of new posts created at the new Post-16 facility. Arrangements to provide assistance for Early Voluntary Retirement (EVR) and transitional Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments for certain staff are being made.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 No further consultations are required, but a period of 28 days for the lodging of objections to the published proposal will follow the date of publication.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 In accordance with the School Organisation Code.

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 The following responses can be viewed in the Members Library and

on the Council's website:

1. Parents, Carers and Governors
2. Students Children and Young People
3. Recorded questions and responses from consultation meetings at St. David's High School
4. Recorded questions and responses for consultation meetings at Saltney Ferry Primary School

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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