

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting6th November 2008

1. Title of Item/Report

Reorganisation of Secondary Schools in Billingham

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the reorganisation of secondary schools in Billingham.

The report outlined that the projected decline in the number of students attending secondary schools in Billingham was such that it would become impossible to sustain three separate schools. The impact of falling rolls had affected Billingham Campus School most severely, putting its viability beyond 2014 in doubt. The Authority would be required to address this issue in the second part of the Building Schools for the Future Strategy for Change to be submitted to government in December 2008.

Initial consultation had taken place on a possible merger of Billingham Campus and Northfield schools in September 2009. The merged school would operate on two sites for at least five years. Around 2014 the decline in student numbers would enable all the students to be accommodated on one site. This was expected to coincide with the availability of BSF funding to remodel the Northfield buildings.

Split-site operation would allow all present Campus students to remain on their present site for the whole of their secondary school career. Action was planned to mitigate the impact of the merger on school staff.

The merger proposal was supported by the two school governing bodies. Issues raised during the consultation process were summarised in this report.

A draft Statutory Public Notice was attached to the report.

A consultation paper was distributed through all the primary and secondary schools in Billingham. A copy of the consultation paper was attached to the report. It was published on the Council website and made available in the two Billingham public libraries. Comments were invited by letter or email. Meetings took place at the two schools for parents,

students, staff and members of the community. Council officers also attended meetings of the governing bodies of Billingham Campus, Northfield and St Michael's schools, the Stockton-on-Tees Children's Trust Board, the Billingham Partnership and Billingham Town Council. The views expressed in consultation were summarised within the report.

In total 22 emails were received from parents or community members. These were reproduced in full and attached to the report. Notes were taken by staff of Campus and Northfield schools at meetings for parents. These were not included with the report but had been made available for members.

The Council as local education authority had a strategic planning and commissioning role. Issues arising from consultation that related to the local authority role were included within the report. The internal management of schools, including staffing, the curriculum and class organisation were the responsibility of school governing bodies. Those issues were also included in the report.

RESOLVED that a Statutory Public Notice be issued describing a proposal to:-

1. Discontinue Billingham Campus School with effect from 31st August 2009, and

2. Enlarge Northfield School from 1,120 to 1,800 places to encompass the site and buildings of Billingham Campus School with effect from 1st September 2009.

3. Reasons for the Decision

Sections 7 to 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 laid down a statutory procedure that must be followed when major changes to school organisation were under consideration. The Authority must first consult those persons most likely to be affected by the change. Having taken account of the views expressed in consultation, the next stage was to publish a Statutory Notice of the Authority's intention to proceed with the proposals.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Mrs McCoy declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of this item as he was a Member of Billingham Town Council.

Councillor Lupton declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of this item as he was a friend of a teacher at one of the schools involved.

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not Applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Friday, 14th November 2008

Proper Officer
10 November 2008