

## **SCHOOL ORGANISATION IN SHROPSHIRE – REPORT ON CONSULTATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF NEXT STEPS**

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### **1. Summary**

This report sets out the outcomes from the recent extensive consultation with schools and identifies the proposed next steps in the review of school organisation in Shropshire. Underpinning this report is the fundamental need to deliver excellent education in Shropshire. The report identifies:

- the exceptional cross party working that has taken place to deliver the common aim of providing a sustainable solution to delivering excellent education in Shropshire;
- the extensive consultation carried out across the whole of Shropshire to agree a new vision for education together and develop a policy and criteria to drive the vision forward;
- responses to the recent consultation with headteachers and governors;
- opportunities for closer working between schools which will improve the quality of education for young people and achieve more efficient use of resources;
- potential changes to school organisation which have been identified by schools which will improve the quality of education and deliver financial savings and/or;
- potential changes to school organisation which have been identified by officers which will improve the quality of education and deliver financial savings;
- how the new school organisation policy proposals relate to planned changes to the Shropshire Schools local funding formula. This has also been subject to county wide consultation with schools with proposals for implementing a new funding formula contained in a separate Cabinet report.

### **2. Recommendations**

That Members, in accordance with Council policy to maintain and to continue to improve excellent education in Shropshire for all pupils whilst maintaining a sustainable network of schools:

- A. Approve further consultation on each of the potential school organisation changes set out in section 6 and summarised in Appendix E;

- B. Authorise the Director of People's Services to support schools proposing new partnership and organisation models from within existing resources.

That Members note:

- C. The comments arising from the consultation;  
D. The timetable for further consultation set out in Appendix G.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 On 20 February 2008, Cabinet agreed to establish an Independent Policy Commission (IPC) to review the issues relating to the organisation of Primary schools in Shropshire. The IPC began work in June 2008 with Neil Kinghan as Chair. The terms of reference of the Commission were to examine the financial, educational, social, community and environmental issues related to the organisation of primary schools in Shropshire and to prepare a report, which was also to be published, for a cross party political working group of Elected Members whose purpose was to ensure continued Member involvement throughout the process. The IPC later recommended that the Cross Party Reference Group continued to be involved through the implementation of its recommendations.
- 3.2 The membership of the Independent Policy Commission was:
- Neil Kinghan – Former Director General at the Department for Communities and Local Government (Chair of the Policy Commission);
  - Louise Stoll – Visiting Professor at the Institute for Education, University of London;
  - Margaret Clark – Rural Adviser to Business and the Community, Former Director at the Commission for Rural Communities;
  - Tony Travers – Director of a Research Centre at London School of Economics and Adviser to House of Commons Select Committee for Schools, Children and Families on local government finance.
- 3.3 The membership of the cross party reference group was:
- Cllr Malcolm Pate, Leader of Shropshire County Council;
  - Cllr Ann Hartley, Children and Young People's Services Portfolio Holder;
  - Cllr Barbara Craig, Schools Support Champion;
  - Cllr. Roger Evans, Children and Young People Services Chair of Scrutiny Panel [Liberal Democrat Spokesperson Children and Young People];
  - Cllr Dr Jean Jones, Children and Young People Services Vice - Chair of Scrutiny Panel [Labour spokesperson Children and Young People].
- This constitutes 3 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 Labour.
- 3.4 The IPC undertook a number of activities to publicise their work, including writing to all primary schools, distributing leaflets for parents through schools and libraries, writing in local newspapers and magazines and appearing on BBC local radio. The IPC accepted written submissions between 23 June and 12 September 2008 and received 375 responses. From 26 November 2008 to 26 January 2009, the IPC

held six oral hearings across the County. The IPC also visited 12 schools in Shropshire and others in Devon. Those who gave evidence to the IPC included:

- three of the four county Members of Parliament;
- many County, District and later unitary Councillors along with town and parish councillors;
- head teachers;
- governors;
- diocesan representatives;
- trade unions; and
- many parents.

In addition to the final report, the IPC published two interim reports which were considered by the cross party reference group.

- 3.5 The IPC final report was received on 15 July 2009. The recommendations were considered by the cross-party member reference group (now renamed the Cross Party Task and Finish Group); at Council on 28 July 2009 when Neil Kinghan, the Chair of the IPC, made a presentation; by headteachers and Chairs of Governors at meetings held on 8, 9 and 10 September 2009 and formally by the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee on 16 September 2009. The report listed the challenges faced by the Council at that time in maintaining a high quality and sustainable network of schools. Cabinet agreed the recommendations of the report, along with additional recommendations from the Children's and Young Peoples Services Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23 September 2009.
- 3.6 The recommendations of the IPC are set out in Appendix A. The principal recommendation was that Shropshire Council should develop a new vision for Shropshire schools and that this should be carried out in partnership with the schools and their wider communities. Local Authority officers worked closely with Shropshire headteachers to develop a new vision for 21<sup>st</sup> century education in the county. It was accepted by schools, the Local Authority and partners that we can continue to achieve better outcomes for our children and young people more effectively through collaboration than would necessarily be achieved individually.
- 3.7 The IPC accepted that there is no ready solution to meeting the widely reported funding gap from outside the schools' budget. The IPC recommended that Shropshire Council and the Schools Forum should redistribute the Shropshire schools budget and address, through a review of the local funding formula, the disparity in pupil funding levels between schools of different sizes.
- 3.8 The Cross Party Task and Finish Group (a group of councillors representing all formal political parties), now consisting of:
- The Leader of the Council, Councillor Keith Barrow
  - Chief Executive, Kim Ryley,
  - Director of People's Services, David Taylor

- Children and Young Peoples Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Aggie Caesar-Homden (previously Councillor Cecilia Motley)
- Councillor Roger Evans, Liberal Democrat Group Member, as nominated by the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Nigel Hartin
- Councillor Dr Jean Jones, Labour Group representative, as nominated by the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor Alan Mosley
- Councillor Tim Barker, Conservative Group Member, as nominated by the Conservative Group Leader, Councillor Keith Barrow
- Councillor Gwilym Butler, Conservative Group Member, as nominated by the Conservative Group Leader, Councillor Keith Barrow

has continued to work hard together to implement the recommendations of the IPC. The membership of the Cross Party Task and Finish Group is also set out in appendix B. The Cross Party Task and Finish Group has been instrumental in keeping Members of all political parties involved and informed throughout every stage of the consultation process.

- 3.9 On 19 May 2010, Cabinet considered a report based on the work of the Cross Party Task and Finish group and approved a 16 week consultation period to allow anyone to comment on a proposed new Schools Vision and Organisation Policy. It was considered vitally important that anyone who wanted to have their say or contribute should have the opportunity to do so. Schools encompass a much wider community than their immediate catchment areas; this includes towns and villages across Shropshire and it was important to involve as many people as possible to create the new vision and assessment criteria for future education in Shropshire.
- 3.10 Widespread promotion was carried out in order to reach out across Shropshire to promote the consultation to as wide an audience as possible. This included television, radio and the local print media, asking people to get involved and help shape the future of education in Shropshire. Promotion was also carried out via a poster campaign distributed to all schools, post offices, libraries, doctors and leisure centres.
- 3.11 Consultation included a series of 3 area meetings, held in June 2010, for headteachers, governors and elected Members of Shropshire Council and Town and Parish Councils. Further consultation sessions were also organised for parent governors and members of the public to attend.
- 3.12 An important element of the consultation was to ensure that young people were involved in shaping the vision for the future. A focus group involving representative members of the Shropshire Youth Parliament and Speak Out groups was held and contributed invaluable to the process.
- 3.13 Further opportunities were also promoted to encourage people to register their thoughts and comments via a dedicated webpage, email address and a telephone contact number at the Council's customer contact centre. The website included an online survey that asked for views on the proposed vision as a whole and the

principles and criteria that underpin the new school organisation policy. The Council continues to receive views and enquiries via these channels and will seek to further promote and provide information via the website and the Shropshire Learning Gateway.

- 3.14 The proposed vision and policy was also discussed at the Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.15 The new vision for Shropshire Learners, along with new school organisation criteria and policy, was finalised and considered by Cabinet (10 November 2010) and Council (11 November 2010) having taken into account the feedback from this extensive period of consultation.
- 3.16 Following the approval of the new policy by Council, which included the criteria approved by the Cross Party Task And Finish Group, a set of area based information and data was assembled to illustrate the detail of the criteria once it was applied. This was distributed to Shropshire schools. Following this a further consultation exercise was undertaken that was targeted at Headteachers, Chairs of Governing Bodies, and Elected Members and was intended to identify local strengths and challenges and to help develop potential solutions to the issues raised by the data. This inclusive approach gave schools the opportunity to understand their individual situations and find their own solutions, with the support of their local members and Shropshire Council.
- 3.17 The data was released in advance of area meetings and schools were asked to identify any issues or inaccuracies. It was noted that some of the data items were proxy indicators for the criteria in the policy, but in general the data release was well received and there were very few inaccuracies or requests for amendments. The process of updating and refining data will continue through the implementation and consultation process.

#### **4 Report on Consultation**

- 4.1 The Cross Party Task and Finish Group has continued to meet throughout the consultation process and it has been the responsibility of these Councillors to share the information with their Groups, to keep them informed and to provide feedback to the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services. In addition to these regular meetings, The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services and the Director for People have held formal monthly meetings with Councillor Roger Evans, Councillor Dr Jean Jones and Councillor Vince Hunt (Champion for Children and Young People). Regular individual Group briefings have been facilitated by senior officers to inform on issues such as the Education White Paper and the Schools Funding Formula review consultation.
- 4.2 The distribution of the new policy and criteria, along with the data for schools in their local area was intended to allow headteachers and chairs of governors to consider and propose solutions to the issues identified. Headteachers and chairs

of governors are ideally placed to contribute to the development of solutions because of their knowledge of their schools, their pupils and families and their local communities. Headteachers are also, in many cases, already involved in informal collaboration with other schools and can bring forward suitable proposals to extend collaborative working and establish formal collaborations.

- 4.3 The distributed data was intended to be factual and to illustrate each of the criteria in the policy. Data sets included Ofsted judgements, data on pupil numbers and school places, including unfilled places, data on pupil achievement and school performance, data on the efficiency of school buildings and data on pupils' access to schools. Data sets related to the 2009/10 academic year, as this was the latest year for which a full set of data was available. It is intended to update as many of the data sets as possible once figures from the 2011 Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) become available, in late February 2011.
- 4.4 As part of the consultation, a series of meetings was held with school headteachers, governors and local Members, each of which was attended by at least one senior officer supported by other officers and education advisers. The meetings were based on geographical areas largely following secondary school catchments, except that Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth were each considered as a single catchment. There were 16 initial area meetings in total. It was intended that the meetings be held as early in the consultation period as possible, but inclement weather conditions in early December delayed some. Two areas (one because of weather delays) decided to put off their initial meetings into the new year.
- 4.5 At each meeting, there was a brief introduction to the situation challenging education in Shropshire, the data, issues raised by the data, the process of consultation and any school organisation proposals which might arise. Following the introduction, each group was asked to consider the main strengths and challenges in their area, and then to consider how to address one of the identified challenges. A number of proposals for greater collaboration and changes to school organisation arose from the meetings, or were identified by schools in discussions either before or after the formal meetings.
- 4.6 A short summary of the points raised at each meeting are included with this report as Appendix D. The meetings were discussion rather than decision based, and the notes represent points which were frequently made, not necessarily the consensus of the meeting. Attendance was high, given the weather conditions at the time and the prevalence of flu and other winter illnesses. Of those not attending, many gave apologies. In total, the numbers attending were:

Headteachers	Chairs of Governors	Members	Others	Total
129	114	54	119	416

- 4.7 Following the initial meeting, an opportunity was given to hold additional meetings, which could either be amongst schools only or could be supported by Local

Authority officers and/or advisers. Not every area wished to hold a formal follow-up meeting, but where these were facilitated by the Council, summaries of these meetings are also included in the Appendix D.

- 4.8 It should be noted that discussion will continue with schools beyond the publication of this report, and this may result in further proposals being brought forward at a later date.

## **5 Background, Overview and Context of Proposals**

- 5.1 The proposals outlined in section 6 are firmly based on the agreed Vision for Shropshire Learners and are intended to deliver positive progress towards education excellence in Shropshire. The Vision is set out in full in Appendix C. Most importantly any new proposals should reflect the mutually agreed school organisation principles and criteria which are underpinned by the data published and were reviewed as part of the school organisation consultation process. These principles and criteria are also set out in Appendix C.

### **Financial Background to the Proposals**

- 5.2 Shropshire schools are principally funded by dedicated schools grant (DSG) which is allocated by the Department for Education to the Local Authority. The volume of grant is calculated accordingly to a guaranteed level of per pupil funding, currently £4,012.86 per pupil, and the number of children registered in Shropshire pre-school providers and maintained schools each January. Shropshire Council remains the fifth lowest funded Authority in terms of per pupil DSG grant received from Government. A review of the national DSG allocation formula had been planned for financial year 2011/12. This has, however, been deferred for another year and the outcomes of the review are unknown.
- 5.3 Grant funding for schools is determined by the number of pupils educated in the county. In January 2010, 36,888 pupils were registered in Shropshire primary and secondary schools. This equates to 2,560 fewer pupils (-6.5%) compared to numbers registered in 2005. Primary and secondary pupil numbers forecast to reduce to 34,860 (-17.3%) by 2014. Larger shortfalls are predicted in the secondary sector when 2,400 fewer pupils are forecast compared with those registered in secondary schools in 2005. The aggregate loss of grant funding over the last five years due to the falling number of Shropshire pupils amounts to £10m.
- 5.4 The Council also has a £1m funding shortfall between the amount allocated each year by Government and the amount required, through the local funding formula, to sustain the current network of Shropshire maintained schools. Closing this gap means that funds are withheld from every pupil in every school. The Independent Policy Commission reported in July 2009 that they were persuaded by evidence that, due to the disparities in per pupil funding levels between the highest and lowest funded schools, a wholesale review of the Shropshire schools funding formula was required. Furthermore the IPC reported their view that the financial

position of larger Primary schools, who educate two thirds of Shropshire school children, was becoming unsustainable.

- 5.5 Members of Schools Forum, a legally constituted and independent schools consultative body, have voted unanimously to support a wholesale review of the Shropshire schools' funding formula, to be considered and implemented for the financial year 2011/12. This view is strongly supported by headteachers and governors following feedback from area consultation meetings and formula funding seminars organised by Council officers. As part of the consultation process, all headteachers and Chairs of Governors were invited to a meeting on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011 where local authority officers explained the new principles, rationale and detail associated with the proposed new funding formula. Over 300 people attended. Recommendations for a new Shropshire schools funding formula are subject to a separate Cabinet report.
- 5.6 The new Shropshire schools funding formula includes a small schools operational subsidy that ensures funding, through a more pupil-led formula, covers the core operational costs in Shropshire's very small schools with numbers on roll of 60 or fewer. Shropshire had 22 schools with 60 pupils or less in January 2010. This subsidy reflects the Council's new school organisation policy which acknowledges that a diversity and mix of schools, of all sizes, is required to educate pupils living in sparse and disperse communities in Shropshire.
- 5.7 School financial regulations also allow costs associated with new collaboration partnerships, including federation, to be specifically funded through the local funding formula. Similarly, unallocated funds held by schools can also be used to support and promote closer working amongst schools and other providers.
- 5.9 The Department for Education has challenged all schools in England to achieve, in aggregate terms, £1 billion worth of efficiency savings over the next three financial years. Capital grants allocated directly to schools will be reduced by 81% next financial year and the 0.1% real term increase in DSG will be insufficient to cover the full cost of teachers' pay inflation and price increases.
- 5.10 The overall performance of Shropshire schools and the progression, achievement and educational needs of all learners is a prime consideration when considering proposals for school organisation. Although the overall attainment and achievement levels across all Key Stages of education are good, there is some evidence that improvement is stalling. Shropshire has too many schools judged to be satisfactory (rather than good or better) and outcomes for pupils are not improving at the rate seen in previous years, or when compared with other similar local authorities. Action is necessary to maintain and further improve the outcomes for pupils.



## Overview of the Proposals

- 5.11 There is a compelling case, therefore, for schools to work collaboratively to make efficiencies in the use and procurement of resources and employment and deployment of staff. Efficiencies can be achieved through new ways of working and by sharing skills and expertise beyond the boundaries of individual schools. The Council will support schools making new cost effective, educationally sound proposals. Proposals may include new structural models of collaboration, federation and all through Primary and Secondary provision delivered on a single school site.
- 5.12 The Council firmly believes that schools should pursue more formal partnerships, in particular federation, and shared management across sites, to make more efficient use of resources of finance, staff and expertise to deliver better learning outcomes and drive forwards the standards of education.
- 5.13 Federation involves a shared governance structure which provides a basis for extensive school to school partnership. It requires two or more schools to come together with a single Governing Body. Federated schools remain separate schools, maintaining their own individual budget allocations which they may pool under the direction of the single Governing Body. Federated school report education results separately and are inspected independently. The decision whether to federate or not is made by the governing bodies of the schools involved.
- 5.14 Appendix I sets out the differences between collaboration and federation models of governance and management. Where schools do not actively pursue appropriate federation, the Council will consider bringing forward school organisation proposals which have the same effect.
- 5.15 There are existing examples of collaboration and partnership within Shropshire. These include the Shrewsbury Partnership for Education and Training (SPET); the two Integrated Learning Communities (in Oswestry and Ludlow); the infant, junior and secondary school collaboration in the Sundorne area of Shrewsbury; the three clusters of smaller primary schools currently supported by a National College grant to maximize pupil progress through collaboration (in the north east, south east and south west of the county); and the larger Lacon family of schools working together in South East Shropshire.
- 5.16 Over time, the Council will seek to ensure that all primary age children will be able to complete the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 under unified management where the benefits of doing so realise the fundamental educational benefits.
- 5.17 The Council will also aim to maintain ready access to both the primary and secondary phases of education, where necessary by creating all through (4 to 16 or 19) schools to maintain viable sizes of institution to deliver both primary and secondary education.

- 5.18 The Council also intends to review 16-19 provision in Shropshire to improve provision and outcomes. This review will be in the context of Government announcements to reduce and equalise funding within the sixth form sector. A review of post 16 education and training has begun in South Shropshire the outcomes of which will be reported to Cabinet in April 2011.
- 5.19 However, as set out in the recommendations of the IPC, there is an urgent need to develop a pattern of provision that makes the most effective use of resources to deliver the best standards of education possible. Immediate action must be taken to tackle the growing issue of satisfactory school performance, falling school rolls, difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, and reducing school finances. This can be accomplished through a combination of:
- a. formal collaborations and particularly federations which are designed to reduce costs, including through shared leadership across more than one school. In this way the current costs of maintaining two or more schools can be reduced through considering the viability and efficient use of two (or more) sites and through rationalising the leadership costs;
  - b. a reduction in the overall number of schools through both amalgamations and closures.
- 5.20 Any school or partnership of schools that elects for, or becomes the subject of, an organisational review following an assessment of local needs, may be considered in accordance with the Department for Education's Decision Makers' Guidance (Local Authorities and Schools Adjudicator) for: Closing a Maintained Mainstream School should this be an appropriate course of action.
- 5.21 Consideration must be given to the effects on groups that tend to under-perform, children from deprived backgrounds, children with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and children in care, with the aim of narrowing attainment gaps. It is therefore recommended that any proposal to close one or more Shropshire school should consider the impact on the needs of the most vulnerable children educated in Shropshire schools.
- 5.22 In considering proposals to close a school which currently includes early years provision, the Local Authority will consider whether the alternative provision will integrate pre-school education with childcare services and/or with other services for young children and their families; and will have particular regard to the views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The Authority will also consider whether the alternative early years provision will maintain or enhance the standard of educational provision and flexibility of access for parents. Alternative provision could be with providers in the private, voluntary or independent sector.
- 5.23 Consideration must be given to meeting the expectation that there is sufficient local provision to meet the broad entitlement for all young people in Shropshire from 14 to 19 to have the right learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, foundation

learning, general qualifications and diplomas. It is proposed that any plan to close one or more Shropshire secondary schools should take account of the effectiveness of alternative structures in meeting the needs of the area to provide the broad 14-19 entitlement and to satisfy the requirements of raising the participation age beyond the age of 16.

- 5.24 Schools are a focal point for family and community activity. In considering proposals for the closure of such schools, the effect on families and the community should be considered. Where the school is providing access to extended services including leisure facilities and family support services, some provision should be made for the pupils and their families to access similar services through their new schools or by other means. The number of pupils being prevented from travelling sustainably in terms of health and safety and any impact on the carbon footprint will also be considered.
- 5.25 In deciding proposals to close a school with a religious character, the Local Authority will seek advice and support from the relevant diocesan authority to consider the effect that this will have on the balance of denominational provision in the area. The Authority should not normally approve the closure of a school with a religious character where the proposal would result in a reduction in the proportion of denominational places in the Authority.
- 5.26 The initial proposals for change identified in section 6 are judged to be of the highest priority and consistent with Shropshire's education vision, principles and criteria for school organisation (see area by area analysis in appendix E). There is, however, a compelling case to continue to review new models of school organisation, in particular, federations that limit the need for further school closures in Shropshire. Other school organisation proposals are actively encouraged and will be considered as appropriate and in response to:
- i. local area development plans, and their impact on local pupil numbers;
  - ii. the availability of capital funding, to support significant work on premises, including new schools;
  - iii. the outcome of any change to the national distribution of revenue grants to schools; and
  - iv. any Shropshire schools electing to become academies or free schools.

All proposals are linked back to the common set of school organisation principles set out in the vision, policy and criteria. The box below is taken from the Vision for Shropshire Learners.

We have one aim: to maintain and continue to improve excellent education in Shropshire.

Children and young people in Shropshire will have the opportunities to achieve their best and develop a love of learning.

Shropshire's early years providers, schools, colleges and others who contribute to education will share responsibility for the success of all children and young people. We will all work together with parents and carers and the wider community so we can ensure we achieve better outcomes for our children and young people through collaboration than we would individually. We aim to prepare them for the next stage of their lives, in terms of learning and their social and emotional development.

## **6 Proposals for School Organisation Changes**

- 6.1 Set out below are a group of independent proposals, factually based and drawn from the School Organisation Criteria. They are set out here in summary form in two tables. The first table sets out federations strongly recommended by the Council, some of which have been suggested by the schools themselves. This is not an exclusive list; other schools may opt to federate too. The second table sets out proposals for statutory changes to school organisation. These proposals are briefly described here and are detailed in Appendix E as formal proposals for further consultation. These proposals will, as stated in the Vision, aim to maintain and continue to improve excellent education in Shropshire, within the constraints of available resources.
- 6.2 All governing bodies are strongly recommended to pursue collaboration, including Federation, to make the best use of scarce resources and to improve the quality of provision for all learners. This could include cross-phase collaborations between primary and secondary phase schools where appropriate. There are a number of situations where the case for Federation is compelling. These are listed in table 1. The schools set out in the recommendations for federation are believed to offer the best opportunity for closer working and more effective use of resources. Other schools, including secondary schools, could be included as believed appropriate in local circumstances. The Council will monitor and support schools who are working towards federation. Where progress is not maintained the Council will consider more formal routes to achieve the necessary outcomes.

**Table 1**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Federations Strongly Recommended To Governing Bodies</b>
5	Whitchurch Infant and Junior schools
6	Norton-in-Hales and Woore primary schools
7	Baschurch, Weston Lullingfields and Myddle primary schools
8	Woodfield Infants and St. George's Junior schools
9	Market Drayton Infant and Junior school
10, 12	Newcastle, St Georges, Clunbury and St Mary's (Bucknell) primary schools
12	Ludlow Infant and Junior Schools
13	Kinlet, Stottesdon and Farlow primary schools

Conversations are continuing with many schools about collaboration and Federation, and consideration will be given to further recommendations in due course.

6.3 Table 2 below sets out in summary form each of the formal proposals which have been identified for immediate consultation in the current round of school organisation discussions. The proposals are referenced by local review area which is based on secondary catchment areas. For further information refer to the pages in Appendix E. Each proposal is independent of the others in the table. Any subsequent consultation and decision making process would be a separate process. Changes would be implemented from September 2012 unless otherwise indicated. Schools identified as being proposed for closure received an overall Ofsted judgement of Satisfactory at their last inspection unless otherwise indicated. Schools identified to receive pupils have at least as high an Ofsted rating as the school proposed for closure, unless otherwise indicated.

6.4 The proposals set out below in Table 2 must be read in conjunction with appendix E to provide the background and detail necessary.

**Table 2**

Ref. No.	Area	Potential Statutory Proposals: Brief Summary of Proposal
1	2	Create an all-through (3-16) school by combining Ifton Heath and Rhyn Park schools on the Rhyn Park school site. This safeguards the future of Rhyn Park School and secondary education, along with the associated community facilities, in the St Martins area and surrounding settlements and provides a vibrant new learning environment for pupils of Ifton Heath. For further information see page 43.
2	4	Create a single school in Shawbury by combining Shawbury Primary and St Mary's schools on the current site of Shawbury Primary. The combined school would be created by the expansion of St Mary's School and would have a Church of England religious character. For further information see page 49.
3	6	Extend the age range of Buntingsdale Infant School to a full primary school. Buntingsdale School almost exclusively serves the Tern Hill base. At present, pupils transfer to Market Drayton Junior. However, this means another change of school in the lives of service family pupils who generally undergo more such transitions than pupils from civilian families. Improving the educational offer for children from service families is a Department for Education priority. For further information see page 55.
4	8	Rationalise secondary school provision in Shrewsbury by closing Wakeman School <u>from September 2013</u> . Pupils in the school at the time of closure would be offered a place at Meole Brace School, although some parents might opt to express a preference for unfilled places at other schools. For further information see page 61.
5	16	Reduce overall capacity by closing Barrow Primary School. Barrow Primary School is a very small school with almost no pupils living in its historic catchment area. There are ample school places nearby in Broseley. Pupils in the school at the time of closure would be offered a place in Broseley Primary School, but would be free to express a preference for a place at John Wilkinson School in the town. For further information see page 87.
6	13	Reduce overall capacity by closing Hopton Wafers School. Pupils would be offered a place a Cleobury Mortimer School. Hopton Wafers is a very small school with a high number of surplus places and limited opportunities for development. 76% of the pupils in the school come from outside of the school's catchment area. This proposal should be considered alongside the recommendation to federate schools in the area. For further information see page 79.

Ref. No.	Area	Potential Statutory Proposals: Brief Summary of Proposal
7	12	Reduce overall capacity by closing Onny Primary School. Onny Primary School takes 73% of its pupils from outside its catchment area (there are only 13 in-area pupils in the school). It has a high level of surplus places. The school has previously explored federation but has not been able to put federation arrangements in place. Pupils in Onny at the time of closure would be guaranteed a place at Stokesay School. As a significant number of pupils in the school come from Craven Arms, there are other opportunities to express parental preference by seeking places at Clunbury or Wistanstow, and those from Ludlow could exercise preference for the town schools or Bishop Hooper. For further information see page 75.
8	1	Reduce overall capacity by closing Maesbury School. Pupils who live in the Maesbury catchment area (19 pupils or 50%) would be offered a place at Kinnerley School, which is judged by Ofsted to be Good. Pupils from other catchments (mainly in Oswestry) would be offered a place at their catchment school. Oswestry Meadows and Woodside are judged to be Good, and the new Holy Trinity School has yet to be inspected. For further information see page 39.
9	9	Reduce overall capacity by closing Stiperstones School. Stiperstones has a significant number of surplus places and problems with its site which includes a the playing field which is not owned by the Council or trustees. Pupils in the school would be offered a place at Minsterley School, which is judged by Ofsted to be a Good school. For further information see page 65.
10	10	Reduce overall capacity by closing Lydbury North School. Lydbury North has a significant number of surplus places, and 27% of its pupils come from out of its catchment area. Pupils in the school would be offered places in Bishops Castle Primary School. Some pupils, for reasons of geography, might also look to Norbury School. For further information see page 69.

## 7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The proposed changes are based on educational principles and the agreed criteria in the school organisation policy. The revenue savings that are achieved from school organisation changes will go straight back into the ring-fenced schools budget for expenditure on schools only. Any capital receipts from Council assets would also be recycled back into schools to invest in better education provision in Shropshire. The situation with assets owned by the dioceses or trust is more complicated, but it is hoped that a significant level of sale proceeds will be recycled to invest in Shropshire schools too. Savings from school organisation changes will not be used to reduce Council savings in other areas of expenditure.

- 7.2 In examining the financial implications of proposals, the Council will take into account:
- savings from fixed costs of closing schools;
  - savings in or additional support costs at schools receiving pupils following closures;
  - costs of any additional transport which may be required;
  - the potential for any capital receipts from assets released by changes;
  - any additional capital expenditure required to implement proposals.
- 7.3 The estimated financial figures for the draft proposals set out in section 6 above are attached as Appendix F and summarised in Table A below. Estimates of capital receipts are not being released on a school by school basis for reasons of commercial confidentiality. Although each of the proposals set out in Section 6 will be considered separately, the summary figures should each of the proposals be implemented would be as set out in the table below. At this stage, these figures are to be treated as estimates. The figures relating to revenue are based on the current funding allocation formula. The figures for capital expenditure are subject to feasibility study, the potential receipts are subject to likelihood of grant of planning permission and figures for additional transport costs are based on a worst case scenario where all the pupils have to be transported on newly commissioned routes at the most expensive contract price currently paid by the Council.

**Table 3: Outline estimate of financial implications arising from school organisation proposals**

Fixed Costs	Additional support	Additional Transport	Total	Capital Expenditure	Potential Receipts*
£-1.09m	£-0.11m	£0.17m	£-1.02m	£2.60m	£-3.73m

\*£0.75m of this sum is anticipated to accrue to Dioceses or trustees. However, much of this part of the receipt will be invested again in educational facilities. If proposals are implemented in line with the timetable in appendix G, savings would accrue from September 2012, but not be realised in full until the financial year 2014/15.

- 7.4 The table above only shows the estimated minimum capital expenditure required to implement the proposals. However, schools affected by school organisation proposals might well become priority areas for additional investment in future years.
- 7.5 Savings from federations or efficiencies gained through collaboration will be retained by the schools involved. Although the level of savings achieved from federation arrangements take some time to realise it does provide a strong opportunity and incentive for schools to tackle this together rather than in isolation.



## **8 Proposals for Further Consultation**

- 8.1 If approved by Cabinet for further investigation, the proposals contained in this report would be subject to at least one further round of consultation. The six week process would begin on Monday 28 February and end on Friday 8 April 2011. This consultation would involve the staff, trade union representatives, governors, pupils and parents of the schools directly involved and those in the surrounding area, pre-school providers that use the school site, local Shropshire Councillors and elected members of town and parish councils, local Members of Parliament, Dioceses and our neighbouring Local Authorities. Methods used to ensure the maximum level of participation in the consultation will include written communication, meetings at individual schools, print and broadcast media, email and telephone. Schools will be encouraged to gather pupil views through school councils and their other normal feedback mechanisms. In some cases, the School Organisation Regulations require that certain consultees are contacted in written form, by letter or email. These include neighbouring local authorities and schools.
- 8.2 The consultation process will also include gathering data on the environmental and community impact information proposals. This information is required for the Statement of Case to be presented to Cabinet at the end of the next stage of consultation on Wednesday 4 May 2011. Responses will be accepted by letter, telephone via the Customer Service Centre, via the website or by email to: [educationforshropshire@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:educationforshropshire@shropshire.gov.uk).
- 8.3 A detailed timetable for further consultation is set out at Appendix G. Any proposals taken forward following this report will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet on 4 May 2011. On the basis of this report Cabinet may decide to publish statutory notices on Monday 16 May 2011. These notices would be subject to a six week period of further representation and comment before final determination, and in some cases could be the subject of further consideration by the Schools Adjudicator after that.
- 8.4 Any decision taken following formal consultation and representation as outlined above, and explained in greater detail in Appendix G, would be taken by Cabinet on Wednesday 20 July 2011.

## **9 Additional Information**

- 9.1 As most schools in Shropshire are defined as “Rural Schools” by the Education (Designation of Rural Schools) Order 2009, it is important to note that the school organisation regulations say “In considering statutory proposals to close a rural school, the Decision Maker should have regard to the need to preserve access to a local school for rural communities. There is therefore a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and the proposals clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.”

- 9.2 Appendix H sets out further information on school organisation regulation. In particular, it sets out the relevant sections of the school organisation guidance to decision makers, indicating what aspects of proposals decision makers should take into account in reaching their decision. Should some or all of the current proposals be approved for further consultation, the report to Cabinet after the consultation period would address each of these areas directly.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

Independent Policy Commission Report July 2009

Notes of the Cross Party Reference Group (later Task and Finish Group)

Reports to Cabinet on School Vision and Organisation Policy, 19 May 2010 and 10 November 2010.

Report to the Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny Committee 20 October 2010

Report to Council, 11 November 2011

Data Packs distributed to schools and Members, November 2011

Notes from Area Review Meetings, December 2010 and January 2011

Report to Cabinet, 15 February 2011, School Funding Formula

**Human Rights Act Appraisal**

No conflicts with the Human Rights Act have been identified.

**Risk Assessment**

Risks Assessment of various proposals will be carried out for individual schemes as appropriate during the next round of consultation.

**Environmental Appraisal**

Environmental appraisals will be carried out for individual schemes as appropriate during the next round of consultation.

**Community / Consultations Appraisal**

Extensive consultation has already taken place on the policy which underlies this review. Community consultations will be carried out for individual schemes as appropriate during the next round of consultation.

**Cabinet Member**

Aggie Caesar-Homden, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

**Local Member**

All Local Members

**Appendices**

- A. Recommendations of the Independent Policy Commission
- B. Membership and List of Meetings of the Cross Party Task and Finish Group
- C. Vision and Criteria as Approved by Council (Appendices to 11 November Report)
- D. Consultation Attendance and Outcomes
- E. Area Analyses and Proposals
- F. Summary of Financial Implications
- G. Timetable for Future Consultation
- H. Additional Information of School Organisation
- I. Additional Information on Collaboration Between Schools

## **Appendix A – Recommendations of the Independent Policy Commission on Primary School Organisation in Shropshire**

The Independent Policy Commission on Primary School Organisation in Shropshire, chaired by Neil Kinghan, reported in July 2009. The full report is available at: [http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/policycommission.nsf/viewAttachments/LMOS-7ZTDTD/\\$file/Independent-Policy-Commission-Report.pdf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/policycommission.nsf/viewAttachments/LMOS-7ZTDTD/$file/Independent-Policy-Commission-Report.pdf) . The recommendations of the commission were listed on pages 26 and 27 and are reproduced below.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Educational issues**

- Shropshire Council, for educational and equity reasons, should set an objective of ensuring that the resources available to large schools are sufficient for them to maintain class sizes that will normally be no greater than 30.
- Shropshire Council should review the support arrangements for head teachers and teachers in small schools, including the support offered by clusters of schools, and the possible development of federations.
- Shropshire Council should review the role of mixed age classes covering more than two years and the potential for closer collaboration between individual schools, to reduce the range of years in classes.
- Shropshire Council should review the case for further amalgamations of primary schools, where there is support for this to happen among parents, governors, head teachers and teachers.
- Shropshire Council should take a leadership role in actively promoting the development of federations and other collaborative approaches to school organisation.
- Shropshire Council should review its admissions policies, with a view to balancing stability with flexibility, and should begin a review of the catchment areas of its schools, to ensure that they reflect contemporary social and physical geography.
- Any future proposals for school reorganisation to be considered by Shropshire Council should include an explicit assessment of the views of the parents of all the children affected by the proposals, to be set alongside other factors.

#### **Social, community and environmental issues**

- The Commission for Rural Communities should commission in depth social research on the tangible benefits to rural communities of village schools and the impact which school closures in rural areas in recent years have had on the villages affected.
- The question of the links between a school and the wider community and its actual local use of a school are properly factors for Shropshire Council and other councils in rural areas to take into account in considering the future of small village schools.

- All primary schools in Shropshire should develop programmes for active community use of their facilities; all schools should aim to develop the potential of the extended schools concept and should develop strong links with the wider community, and that Shropshire Council should actively promote these objectives.
- Shropshire Council should explore the possibility of using rural schools to deliver other services and should pilot this concept in one or two areas.
- In all areas where any reorganisation of schools is considered, Shropshire Council should work with the schools and parents concerned to assess the transport implications and help to develop school travel plans.
- Shropshire Council should carry out an environmental impact assessment when considering any future reorganisation, in consultation with schools and parents.
- The Church of England should see itself as an active partner to Shropshire Council in examining the issues and finding solutions for the future of school organisation in the county, and should be treated accordingly by the Council.

### **Financial issues**

- The Department for Children, Schools and Families should, when reviewing its national funding arrangements for schools, ensure that any new formula or allocation mechanism should fully recognise the needs of councils with small schools in rural areas.
- The Commission accepts that there is no ready solution to meeting the funding gap from outside the schools' budget. The Commission therefore recommends that Shropshire Council and the Schools Forum should redistribute the county schools budget:
  - to reduce overall funding for schools so as to ensure any fall in Dedicated Schools Grant can be accommodated; and
  - to ensure the overall impact of changes to the schools formula would protect the level of per pupil funding in the largest primary schools.
- Shropshire Council should examine the relationship between all its secondary and primary schools including the scope for reorganising individual secondary schools.
- Those debating primary school organisation in Shropshire should accept that the Council's methodology and use of data provide a good and sound basis for forecasting pupil numbers and estimating the need for primary school places.

### **Vision**

- Shropshire Council should develop a new vision for Shropshire schools in partnership with each other and their wider community.

## **Appendix B – Membership, Terms of Reference and Meetings of the Cross Party Task and Finish Group**

Shropshire Council set up a Cross Party Task and Finish Group to consider a new vision for school education in Shropshire as recommended by the Independent Policy Commission, and a new school organisation policy and criteria. The current membership list and list of meetings (up to the writing of this report) of the Task and Finish Group are set out below.

### **Membership**

The current membership of the Cross Party Task and Finish Group is:

- The Leader of the Council, Councillor Keith Barrow
- Chief Executive, Kim Ryley,
- Director of People's Services, David Taylor
- Children and Young Peoples Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Aggie Caesar-Homden (previously Councillor Cecilia Motley)
- Councillor Roger Evans, Liberal Democrat Group Member, as nominated by the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Nigel Hartin
- Councillor Dr Jean Jones, Labour Group representative, as nominated by the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor Alan Mosley
- Councillor Tim Barker, Conservative Group Member, as nominated by the Conservative Group Leader, Councillor Keith Barrow
- Councillor Gwilym Butler, Conservative Group Member, as nominated by the Conservative Group Leader, Councillor Keith Barrow

### **Meeting dates**

The Cross Party Task and Finish Group has met on the following occasions since summer 2010:

13 September 2010  
1 November 2010  
10 December 2010  
28 January 2011  
3 February 2011

## **Appendix C – A Vision for Shropshire Learners and Principles and Criteria for School Organisation**

### **A vision for Shropshire learners**

We have one aim: to maintain and continue to improve excellent education in Shropshire.

Children and young people in Shropshire will have the opportunities to achieve their best and develop a love of learning.

Shropshire's early years providers, schools, colleges and others who contribute to education will share responsibility for the success of all children and young people. We will all work together with parents and carers and the wider community so we can ensure we achieve better outcomes for our children and young people through collaboration than we would individually. We aim to prepare them for the next stage of their lives, in terms of learning and their social and emotional development.

The vision reflects the overarching statement of values and behaviours which has been developed for Shropshire Council, which are to:

- Focus on meeting the needs of our customers
- Value each other and achieve more by working and learning together
- Use the resources we have responsibly
- Recognise the value difference can make and treat everyone with respect
- Build trust by expressing ourselves openly and honestly

Any strategy for change developed from this vision must:

- be adaptable, and able to develop over time
- recognise the need for diversity, acknowledging that one solution is unlikely to meet the range of contexts, needs and aspirations within a county as varied as Shropshire; and
- above all, put the learners' entitlements at the heart of the decision-making

### **To meet the needs of our learners we will:**

- reflect the **benefits of learning, living and working in Shropshire**, with all of its particular characteristics, and build on the existing strengths of our education provision
- ensure that wherever they live everyone feels they belong to the **larger learning community** of Shropshire, and that they have the opportunity and the aspiration to develop and achieve to their potential;
- ensure that all children and young people in Shropshire: are **healthy**; stay **safe**; **enjoy and achieve**; make a **positive contribution**; and achieve **economic well-being**;
- ensure that **learning is enjoyable** because teaching is exciting and challenging, and that learners are happy and sustain their engagement in learning throughout their lives;
- ensure that through a **broad curriculum and extra-curricular activities** they gain knowledge, skills and experience and develop creativity, thinking skills and social and emotional skills. Our aims are that they become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens;
- provide a journey through education, **from pre-school to adult education**, which is coherent; and
- develop **individual learners' talents and interests** and ensure that their **needs are met**. We will challenge the more able, meet the needs of those with particular talents and identify and tackle additional learning needs early. Our aim is to narrow the gap between those who achieve well and those who underachieve.

### **To value each other and achieve more by working and learning together we will:**

- ensure effective partnerships between the Council and all key partners
- promote the importance of **families and carers** working together with providers in their communities to help their children;
- **actively involve learners** in the design and development of education provision, including school buildings;
- **increase the use of information technology** to support all learners, for example through the use of the Shropshire Learning Gateway and video conferencing;
- **encourage providers to innovate** and develop models of excellence through extending links within and beyond the LA, developing local, national and international links and working with higher education centres;
- support the continued development of **higher education** in Shropshire; and
- encourage **all providers to work in partnership**, with different approaches being explored and developed.
- 

### **To use the resources we have responsibly we will:**

- develop schools and other education buildings as **centres within their localities**, with assets that can benefit children, young people and the wider community;
- provide **flexible, high quality learning environments** so that teaching and learning can be as effective as possible;
- provide **advice and support** to develop further teaching, learning and achievement;



- ensure that funding for all providers is **sustainable, fair and transparent** to all, including additional sources of income (e.g. project or grant funding); and
- establish a **sustainable and coherent network of provision** to meet learners' differing needs at all stages.

**To recognise the value difference can make and treat everyone with respect we will:**

- encourage all providers to develop their **own visions and characteristics**;
- **celebrate diversity** both within and beyond Shropshire;
- support providers to **look outside their own communities**, and Shropshire's particular context, so that learners come to understand their place in the wider world; and
- invest in the **development of all professionals**, continuing to develop the full workforce.

**To build trust by expressing ourselves openly and honestly we will:**

- build on our shared values, beliefs and aspirations;
- ensure that decision-making is as **inclusive, open and transparent** as possible.

These will include:

- all learners and their families and carers;
- professionals working within the early years, schools, colleges, Children's Centres and extended schools;
- diocesan partners;
- other agencies that support learning across the county; and
- representatives of the wider community of Shropshire

Through, for example:

- ensuring all schools are aware of the range of current partnerships, and enhance these where necessary;
- developing further formal partnerships between, for example, small primary schools, larger and smaller primary schools, primary and secondary schools, between secondary schools, between schools and colleges, in order to build and sustain a viable network of provision across the county;
- further developing models of sharing staff who work across a number of schools or providers, for example specialist teachers, teaching assistants, one-to-one tutors, learning mentors and school administrators;
- linking up schools across the county to work on specific areas of development - e.g. developing curriculum innovation or the role of the school business manager; and
- considering alternative models of leadership (including governance) to secure sufficient and effective future leaders across the county.

## Principles for reviewing school provision

The following principles will underpin any review of school provision.

- A review of school provision in a local area\* will use a common dataset to identify challenges and issues in contributing to the *Vision for Shropshire Learners*. This dataset will have a common format and include comparative, area and school level information.
- Consideration will be given to the extent to which the area as a whole has suitable provision to meet the *Vision for Shropshire Learners*, including opportunity for access to extended services, opportunities for personal development, access to specialist and vocational education and training, and support for children and young people with particular needs e.g. looked after children or children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Within the review of a local area, consideration will be given to the effectiveness of individual schools in contributing to the *Vision for Shropshire Learners* against the criteria set out below.
- Reviews will explore opportunities for collaborative models of teaching and learning, governance, business management and school leadership which improve outcomes and lead to the more effective use of resources. This will include an assessment of opportunities for cross phase and cross border collaborations.
- Each review will take into consideration how current and future school provision within a local area meets the wider needs of the community as set out in the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework.
- Each review will take into account the environmental impact of any proposed changes to the current organisation of schools and/or changes to service provision within a local area.

## Primary school criteria

The indicators below will contribute to a rounded judgement about an individual school's effectiveness in contributing to the *Vision for Shropshire Learners*. They are not a set of triggers and no weighting is attached to any particular item.

### Quality of education

- a) The outcomes of Ofsted's inspections of the school. (NB The Local Authority is required to give consideration to options to close a school, and/or introduce new governance and management arrangements if it enters an Ofsted category of concern.)
- b). The performance of a school as measured by key indicators of academic success over a three year period, taking account of the school's socio-economic context. Particular attention will be given to:

- The percentage of pupils who achieve Level 4+ in English and mathematics.
- The contextual value added scores for pupil performance provided by the Department for Education.
- The percentage of pupils who make two levels progress in English and mathematics between Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The performance of groups of pupils (e.g. those entitled to Free School Meals or those with Special Educational needs) where this is significantly different to the performance of other pupils in the school.

(NB These indicators will be considered in relation to national, local authority and area comparisons.)

c). Difficulties in recruiting and retaining a headteacher and/or other high quality staff that is having a significant impact on the school's effectiveness.

### **Effective use of resources**

d). The school's surplus capacity. Particular attention will be given to schools where surplus capacity exceeds 30 places and/or 25% of agreed net capacity over a three year period.

e). The condition of the school building and whether or not it meets the Local Authority's minimum carbon efficiency standard.

f). The maintenance of the building and whether it is possible to maintain it without a disproportionately large capital investment.

*The extent to which the school serves, and is supported by, the pupils from the local community.*

### **Access to education**

g). Pupil travel times. In most circumstances school organization should mean that a pupil's travel time should not exceed 45 minutes and there should be a primary school within six miles of the their home.

h). The capacity of local primary schools to meet current and future demand for school places taking into account available capital investment.

## Secondary school criteria

The indicators below will contribute to a rounded judgement about an individual school's effectiveness in contributing to the *Vision for Shropshire Learners*. They are not a set of triggers and no weighting is attached to any particular item.

### Quality of education

a) The outcomes of Ofsted's inspections of the school. (NB The Local Authority is required to give consideration to options to close a school, and/or introduce new governance and management arrangements if it enters an Ofsted category of concern.)

b). The performance of a school as measured by key indicators of academic success over a three year period, taking account of the school's socio-economic context. Particular attention will be given to:

- The percentage of pupils who achieve 5+ GCSEs at A\*-C, including English and mathematics.
- The contextual value added scores for pupils' performance provided by the Department for Education.
- The percentage of pupils who make three levels progress in English and mathematics between Key Stages 2 and 4.
- The performance of groups of pupils (e.g. those entitled to Free School Meals or those with Special Educational needs) where this is significantly different to the performance of other pupils in the school.

(NB These indicators will be considered in relation to national, local authority and area comparisons.)

c). Difficulties in recruiting and retaining a headteacher and/or other high quality staff that is having a significant impact on the school's effectiveness.

### Effective use of resources

d). The school's surplus capacity. Particular attention will be given to schools where surplus capacity exceeds 35% of agreed net capacity over a three year period.

e). School size. Particular attention will be given to any school with numbers on roll less than 600.

f) The condition of the school building and whether or not it meets the Local Authority's minimum carbon efficiency standard.

g). The maintenance of the building and whether it is possible to maintain it without a disproportionately large capital investment.

*The extent to which the school serves, and is supported by, the pupils from the local community.*

### **Access to education**

h). Pupil travel times. In most circumstances school organization should mean that a pupil's travel time should not exceed 60 minutes and there should be a secondary school within 17.5 miles of their home.

h). The capacity of other secondary schools to meet current and future demand for school places taking into account available capital investment and the demand for Post-16 education and training.

## Appendix D Consultation Meetings – Attendance and Key Points

\* For the purposes of the table above where members are also chairs of governors they are counted only as members.

\*\* Others includes additional staff, governors and Town and Parish Councillors in attendance at meetings

	Area	Head-teachers	Chair of Gov.*	Members	Others**	Total	
1	Oswestry	8	7	5	5	25	<p>The strength of existing collaboration in this area was highlighted as was the commitment and high aspirations of staff, parents and learners.</p> <p>Discussions focussed around how to maintain high quality provision in light of budget cuts. Potential solutions to this challenge included: the further collaboration between schools, increased use of buildings for community facilities and the closure of a site. The group requested further information on NOR and surplus places and this was provided in preparation for a follow up meeting that was held by the group on 11 January. At this second meeting the group discussed the additional data provided since the last meeting, particularly the 5 year average percentage of surplus places, which is the lowest in Shropshire.</p>
2	St Martins	6	3	3	7	19	<p>A strong sense of community was demonstrated by way of reference to the Education Improvement Partnership and the present close-working relationships between schools.</p> <p>Feedback from the tasks showed that attendees felt that increased community provision e.g. collocation of health and education services was a potential area for development.</p>

	Area	Head-teachers	Chair of Gov.*	Members	Others**	Total	
3	Ellesmere	5	5	2	6	18	The high quality of education was highlighted as a major strength of the area and the challenge to maintain standards in the future was noted. Potential solutions to this challenge were: further collaboration, appointment of staff to an Ellesmere cluster and developing opportunities to work with voluntary organisations.
4	Wem	6	7	1	5	19	The strength of the shared ethos between schools in this area was noted, as was the depth of current collaborative work. Feedback from the tasks gave the following suggestions for ways in which the area could move forward: the potential amalgamation of the two Shawbury Schools, shared staffing arrangements and an increased use of established transport routes. The two Shawbury schools have held further discussions about possible amalgamation.
5	Whitchurch	4	6	3	8	21	This positive meeting focussed on how to increase collaborative work within the area. Ideas considered included: the joint marketing of schools to reduce cross border leakage, the use of joint administration/business management, the amalgamation of schools and the potential for a single site school in Whitchurch itself. At the request of Sir John Talbot's a well attended follow up meeting was held on 12 January where the further potential for collaboration was explored
6	Market Drayton	13	11	5	8	37	The diversity of provision in the Market Drayton area was highlighted as one of the major strengths in the area. Surplus capacity, admissions numbers and the process for appeals were seen as challenging as was the number of families who

	Area	Head-teachers	Chair of Gov.*	Members	Others**	Total	
							chose to travel to out of town schools. The need to improve capacity in town schools was noted with the suggestion of 3 primaries instead of 1 primary, 1 infant and 1 junior being made. Another potential solution presented was teachers being employed by in a Market Drayton cluster.
7	Baschurch	8	9	2	6	25	The good academic performance of schools in the area was noted and the diversity of provision was seen as positive. The following solutions to the challenges of the area challenge of surplus places were suggested: increased marketing of schools, a school closure or amalgamation and more low cost housing.
8	Shrewsbury	20	14	10	15	59	This large and well attended meeting addressed the complexities surrounding provision in Shrewsbury. The issue of surplus capacity in the town was seen by most as an area challenge. Potential solutions suggested were: the closure of one or more secondary schools, the equalising of admission numbers, an increase in collaborative working, work on leadership structures e.g. satellite groups/federation and the potential of umbrella provision (primary on secondary sites).
9	Pontesbury	8	8	4	6	26	A strong sense of community support was apparent at this meeting is area was well supported by its local community came through in the feedback as did the need to sustain key services in peripheral area. Surplus places were seen as an area challenge and the group discussed ways in which to address this issue. Potential solutions given were: catchment area evaluation, closure of primary schools and creation of a multi-school 'Learning Village' at Mary Webb.



	Area	Head-teachers	Chair of Gov.*	Members	Others**	Total	
10	Bishop's Castle	9	7	2	7	25	Attendees from this area felt that their schools were extremely valuable to their local communities. They noted that collaboration was already taking place in this area. The connection between the rurality of the area and the low aspirations of some students was seen as an area challenge. Suggestions for development included more celebration of high achievement and attracting more pupils to be educated within the area. In terms of dealing with the problem of surplus places a range of potential solutions were discussed: the amalgamation of 2 small schools, the closure of large schools e.g. a secondary, where large surpluses exist and possibility of building a new primary school to meet the needs of several local schools.
11	Church Stretton	7	6	4	5	22	The rurality of provision in this area was highlighted as both strength and challenge. The issue of surplus places was noted as a challenge and a variety of ways in which to address this were suggested including: researching free schools/ academies, having an all-through school in Church Stretton and employing staff to a cluster of schools. Attendees felt it was crucial to keep provision at the heart of communities.
12	Ludlow	7	5	4	4	20	At this meeting the diversity of the education was seen as positive. The issue of surplus places was noted as challenging – potential solutions to this issue given at the meeting included: establishing a federation, amalgamating schools and ensuring more students attended their local school. Comments came from representatives from Onny that demonstrated the school's willingness to federate but lack of success in finding a school prepared to collaborate. There was also wider discussion on travel costs in the area and post 16 provision.

	Area	Head-teachers	Chair of Gov.*	Members	Others**	Total	
13	Cleobury Mortimer	8	6	3	11	28	After some discussion the attendees of this meeting decided not to split into groups to complete tasks as this might be counter productive. Instead they held a question and answer session. The group held a facilitated follow up meeting on 11 January. In this meeting the group worked through the tasks that had been provided for the early meeting. Included in a long list of strengths were: the effective and proactive governing bodies and the recognition of the need/advantages of collaborative working. The group discussed a range of area challenges including the number and distribution of primary aged children, the levels of literacy and numeracy and the administrative demands. The given solution to these challenges was to continue collaborative working leading to federation as appropriate.
14	Bridgnorth	8	8	4	9	29	The difficulties of the geography of the area were noted at this meeting with particular reference to travel times and the barriers against collaboration. The area challenges noted were: how to do more with less was discussed at the meeting as was the question of how to improve aspirations of pupils and parents within the area. Suggested ways to move forward included the removal of a school, an adjustment of cohort size and change use of building for community.
15	Idsall	6	3	2	8	19	Issues surrounding the future of RAF Cosford featured heavily at this meeting. One group highlighted that due to the influx of learners from Telford schools in this area may be over capacity in the future. The possibility of providing one large primary school in the area was discussed, with recognition that this would probably not be possible in the current financial climate

	<b>Area</b>	<b>Head-teachers</b>	<b>Chair of Gov.*</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Others**</b>	<b>Total</b>	
16	Much Wenlock	7	7	3	8	25	Attendees at this meeting were keen to share the current strength of their collaborative work. Most groups recognised that surplus capacity was an issue in the area. Potential solutions to surplus capacity given by the members of the group included further collaboration and the merging of schools within the Broseley area. Attendees were keen to keep parental choice as wide as possible.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Appendix E – Area Analyses and Proposals**

This appendix sets out the conclusions from an area by area review of school organisation, taking into account the strengths, challenges and organisation suggestions brought forward in the area review consultation meetings. This section **must** be read in the context of the rest of the cabinet report.

For each area, based on the catchment area of a secondary school (or in the case of Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth a number of secondary schools serving one area), a general review of school organisation was undertaken in line with the principles and criteria set out above and in the light of the Vision for Shropshire Learners. In some cases, the discussion led to general recommendations on collaboration and a commitment to monitor school organisation on an ongoing basis, perhaps with a view to further proposals at a later date. In others, immediate proposals were identified through the application of the Principles and Criteria which would lead to improvements in line with the Vision for Shropshire Learners. Where this is the case, a separate sheet for each proposal is included below setting out more detail on the proposal. As with the rest of this appendix, it is essential that the analysis of each area and in particular any individual proposal, are considered in the context of education in Shropshire as set out in this report.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 1 – Oswestry (Marches Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the average % achieving L4+ in English and Maths and the % of pupils progressing by 2 levels in English and in Maths between KS1 and KS2 are close to the Shropshire averages. Four of the primary schools are judged Good or better by Ofsted. Four are judged Satisfactory. One school is in the lowest quartile for absolute pupil attainment, although it is not flagged in the RAISE Online database as having low contextual value added. One school is flagged as having SEN pupils making significantly better progress than in other schools.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are low. However, there is a clear divide between the schools in or attached to Oswestry and those in the rural areas. One school stands out as having numbers of unfilled places which reaches the DfE trigger level (over 30% and at least 30 places unfilled).

Oswestry has been listed as a growth area in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework. However, the development is proposed almost exclusively in the urban area west of the A5 and A483. One major development is also proposed and this would require the development of a new school to serve the newly developed area.

##### **Building Issues**

There are no major building issues in the area. One school has the majority of its accommodation in demountables, but much of this has recently been refurbished. In general, the rural schools are well established in the villages central to the area which they serve. However, one school is separated from its main population centre.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. Two schools have less than 60% of their pupils from the catchment area. One of these is a large, urban school which draws from all across the town. The other is a relatively small rural school close to, but separated from, the urban area.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school. One urban school has a lower than expected number of pupils walking to school.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned existing collaborations as a strength and that forthcoming financial constraints could make it difficult to maintain the generally high quality education. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. One school stands out from the others in the area in terms of pupil achievement and use of resources. Proposals have been made in respect of this school (see Proposal Reference No 8).

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Outstanding by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are above Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

11% of secondary places in the area are unfilled. 13% of pupils come from outside the area. As new development takes place in Oswestry, the existing and forecast surplus places will fill and fewer out of area places will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

The secondary school has undergone several phases of development which means that, despite the best efforts of the school, suiting of subjects is less than optimal. There is one area of demountable accommodation which has a poor underlying structure. It is recommended that, following publication of the James Review, officers pursue with the DfE the possibility of major investment in the school.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

47.7% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

## **Discussion**

There are no issues.

**The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context**

The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Reduce overall capacity by closing Maesbury School. Pupils who live in the Maesbury catchment area would be offered a place at Kinnerley School, which is judged by Ofsted to be Good. Pupils from other catchments (mainly in Oswestry) would be offered a place at their catchment school. Oswestry Meadows and Woodside are judged to be Good, and the new Holy Trinity School has yet to be inspected. **(Reference no. 8)**

It is proposed to close Maesbury School from 31 August 2012 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at either Kinnerley School or, if they came originally from outside the catchment, in their catchment area school. The current catchment area of Maesbury School would be split between Kinnerley School, and Bryn Offa School.

This proposal will not require any immediate accommodation changes.

### **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Maesbury School has 38 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 56 places. Kinnerley School has 90 pupils in a building with 112 places. 19 pupils at Maesbury School currently come from outside the catchment area. These 19 pupils will be offered places in their home catchment area school but their parents will be free to seek a place elsewhere should they wish.

Projected pupil numbers indicate that the total number of pupils in the main receiving school (Kinnerley School) will be 92 in 2012/13, which is the highest total currently foreseeable. The projections include housing development which already has planning permission.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury, Oswestry and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that the prospect of significant additional development in the area around Maesbury and Kinnerley schools is negligible. There is potential for a large development in the south east of Oswestry. However, the scale of the development and its location suggests that the best way to serve the needs of the new community would be to develop a school within the new community at the time of its development.

### **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

### **Quality of Education**

Maesbury School was last inspected by Ofsted on 23/9/09. At that time, the school was judged to be Satisfactory. Pupil level achievement data show the school to be performing significantly below Shropshire averages. Kinnerley School was inspected on 22/11/10 and was judged to be Good.

### **Use of Resources**

#### **Efficient use Buildings**

Maesbury School has 18 unfilled places out of 56 (32%). Condition data is currently being updated.

#### **Revenue Effects**

Closing the school would save £66,197 in fixed costs. If all the pupils transfer to their designated schools, there would be a further saving of £13,331. In the worst case, additional transport could cost up to £38,000, but the actual cost could be much lower depending on the ability to utilise existing vehicles and routes and the effect of parental choice on admissions and travel patterns. The net change in revenue resources which would occur from a closure is therefore at least £41,528.

#### **Capital Requirements**

There would be no need for capital investment. There would be likely to be a one-off capital receipt arising from the sale of the Council's interest in the school site.

### **Access**

50% of pupils at Maesbury School come from outside the designated catchment area. 44.7% of pupils currently walk to Maesbury School. If the proposal was implemented, these pupils would be most likely to travel to an alternative school by school bus, while a number of those from outside the catchment area will be within walking distance of their catchment school. Maesbury School is 4.1 miles (6.6km) away from the site of Kinnerley School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach the school within the 45 minute journey time.

### **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes Maesbury School is Joyce Barrow. Other Council Members whose Divisions have residents potentially affected by the proposed change are: Arthur Walpole, Keith Barrow, Martin Bennett, William Benyon and Vince Hunt.



The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 2 – North West Shropshire (Rhyn Park Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, average attainment measures are below Shropshire averages, although one significantly exceeds the Shropshire average % of pupils achieving L4 in English and Maths. One of the schools is judged Good by Ofsted, the remainder are judged Satisfactory. Three schools are flagged in the RAISE Online database as having low contextual value added in one or more years.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary phase are moderate. There are no firm proposals for major development in the area.

##### **Building Issues**

There are no major building issues in the area. One school uses a detached playing area. Another school has the majority of its accommodation in demountables. It is recognised that if significant capital were available there are some issues which the Council would want to address.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. One school has less than 50% of its pupils from the catchment area.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. One rural school with substantial numbers of pupils from out of area has only 13% of pupils walking to school. One school is relatively close, in rural terms, to the secondary school for the area.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meeting, representatives of the local schools mentioned existing collaborations as a strength, and discussed colocation of services as a possible development area. In view of this, it is recommended that schools actively look to increased collaboration, including cross phase, to make the best use of scarce resources and improve the quality of provision. One colocation is proposed (see below and Proposal Reference No 1).

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Good by Ofsted at the last inspection. Absolute pupil attainment is below average, but other measures of achievement are close to or above Shropshire averages. The school has been flagged as being consistently above average in terms of contextual value added.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

The school is small and already has significant numbers of surplus places, which are forecast to increase. In time, the number of pupils will threaten the viability of a secondary phase in the area. However, as noted above, the school provides a good quality of education and the alternative schools are both full and at some distance away.

#### **Building Issues**

The secondary school has a sports centre attached, including swimming pool, which is heavily used by the community. The main school buildings are of fair to good quality.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

26.6% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the rural nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

As noted above, falling pupil numbers will affect the ability of the school to continue to offer secondary education in the area, forcing pupils to travel significant distances to find places. It is therefore proposed to extend the age range of the secondary school to include primary pupils, reducing fixed costs per pupil. (See proposal reference No 1).

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Create an all-through (3-16) school by combining Ifton Heath and Rhyn Park schools, safeguarding the future of Rhyn Park School and secondary education, along with the associated community facilities, in the St Martins area and surrounding settlements and providing a vibrant new learning environment for pupils of Ifton Heath. **(Reference no 1)**

It is proposed to close Ifton Heath School from 31 August 2012 and expand the age range of Rhyn Park School to 3 to 16 years of age from 1 September 2012. Pupils attending Ifton Heath School at the time of the change would be offered a place at the expanded school. The current catchment area of Ifton Heath School would become the primary school catchment area for the expanded school. This proposal has been developed through consultation with the schools following an initial approach from Rhyn Park School.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Ifton Heath School has 191 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 210 places. Rhyn Park School has 365 pupils in a building with 541 places.

Projected pupil numbers indicate that the total number of pupils in the Ifton Heath School will be 184 by 2012. The projections include housing development which already has planning permission.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that the prospect of additional development in the area around Ifton Heath and Rhyn Park schools will be limited to smaller developments and infill.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Rhyn Park School has been judged by Ofsted to be a good school. Ifton Heath has been judged to be satisfactory. Combining the schools will allow pupils from the Ifton Heath catchment to progress through both the primary and secondary phases without transitions, which are proven to affect progress.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Use of Resources**

### **Efficient use Buildings**

Rhyn Park School has 176 unfilled places out of 541 (33%). This number of pupils means that the school is of marginal viability as a secondary school. However, its geographical placement and good Ofsted judgement means that it is appropriate to try to maintain the school, and the community make considerable use of the attached sports facilities, including swimming pool. Combining the secondary and local primary school to provide an all through education for at least some pupils will make more efficient use of the available buildings and maintain the community facilities. The area of the school designated exclusively for the primary school would have to be refurbished, and the existing Children's Centre Area Base would be relocated. A detailed feasibility study would be carried out at a later stage, but it is likely that the nursery would be relocated into new accommodation. Capital costs are estimated at £1-1.25m, a proportion of which could be offset against a receipt from the sale of the Ifton Heath School site.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing Ifton Heath school would save £111,055 per annum in fixed costs.

### **Capital Requirements**

The area of the school designated exclusively for the primary school would have to be refurbished, and the existing Children's Centre Area Base would be relocated. A detailed feasibility study would be carried out at a later stage, but it is likely that the nursery would be relocated into new accommodation. Capital costs are estimated at £1-1.25m, a proportion of which could be offset against a receipt from the sale of the Ifton Heath School site.

## **Access**

Only 13.1% of pupils at Ifton Heath School come from outside the designated catchment area, which is less than the Shropshire average. 46.6% of pupils currently walk to the school. If the proposal was implemented, these pupils would be most likely to continue walking. Rhyn Park School is only 1 mile away from the site of Ifton Heath School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach the school within the 45 minute journey time. All pupils from St Martins would still be within the 2 mile walking distance.

## **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes both Ifton Heath and Rhyn Park schools is Steve Davenport.

Other Council Members whose Division has residents potentially affected by the proposed change are Trevor Davies and David Lloyd.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 3 – Ellesmere (The Lakelands Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

All four primary schools in the area are judged Good or better by Ofsted. The average measures of pupil achievement for the area are in the order of, but slightly below Shropshire averages in most cases.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

The average level of unfilled places is slightly above the Shropshire average, particularly in one school (although this school is forecast to remain close to the size of a full, two class school over coming years).

##### **Building Issues**

Welshampton School is cramped and has accessibility issues. It has a detached playing field. Regardless of this it has been judged Outstanding by Ofsted. It is recognised that if significant capital were available there are some issues which the Council would want to address. Criftins has a community Sports Hall and Ellesmere Primary hosts the area's swimming pool, although there have been recent difficulties in operational management.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. One school has less than 60% of its pupils from the catchment area. This is a small but popular school which draws some pupils from the rural catchments of nearby schools based in larger settlements.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned existing collaborations as a strength and that forthcoming financial constraints could make it difficult to maintain the generally high quality education. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers, including cross phase, to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Outstanding by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are above Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

Very few secondary places in the area are unfilled, and the school is usually oversubscribed. 27% of pupils come from outside the area. If pupil numbers rise in future, or new development takes place in the area, fewer out of area pupils will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

The secondary school has undergone several phases of development which means that, despite the best efforts of the school, siting of subjects is less than optimal. There is a sports centre on the site.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area, although the percentage of out of area pupils is higher than average.

#### **Travel to School**

23.2% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 4 – Wem (Thomas Adams Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the average measures of quality of education are slightly above the Shropshire averages. Five of the schools are judged Good or better by Ofsted. Two are judged Satisfactory.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are moderate, and below the Shropshire average. However, one school has 32.9% unfilled places.

##### **Building Issues**

Clive School has no vehicle access from an adopted road. St Peter's site is approaching capacity and further expansion would be difficult. It is recognised that if significant capital were available there are some issues which the Council would want to address.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Two rural schools draw less than 60% of their pupils from the catchment area.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned existing collaborations as a strength. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. It was suggested that the two schools in Shawbury should explore amalgamation, and since the meeting further discussions have taken place. Proposals have been made in respect of these schools (see Proposal Reference No 2).

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Outstanding by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are close to or above Shropshire averages, with the exception of the percentage of pupils progressing by 3 Levels in Maths between KS2 and KS4, which is somewhat below.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

Very few secondary places in the area are unfilled and the school is usually oversubscribed. 25% of pupils come from outside the area. If new development takes place in Wem, the existing and forecast surplus places will fill and fewer out of area places will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

The sixth form buildings have had less investment than other areas of the school. Following publication of the James Review, this should be investigated. The school has a small boarding unit.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area, but has a higher than average percentage of pupils from out of area.

#### **Travel to School**

27.9% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.



The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Create a single school in Shawbury by combining Shawbury Primary and St Mary's schools on the current site of Shawbury Primary. The combined school would be based on the current St Mary's School and so would have a Church of England religious character. **(Reference No 2)**

It is proposed to close Shawbury Primary School from 31 August 2012 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at Shawbury St Mary's School. At the same time, St Mary's School would be relocated from its current site to the site currently occupied by Shawbury Primary School. The current catchment area of the two schools would be combined.

This proposal will require the construction of a four class extension at the current Shawbury Primary School site. Note that a four class extension would still have been required if the St Mary's site had been used.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Shawbury Primary School has 101 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 147 places. St Mary's School has 142 pupils in a building with 147 places. Only 22 pupils out of 243 currently come from outside the combined catchment area.

Projected pupil numbers indicate that the total number of pupils in the combined school will be 223 by 2012, which is the highest total currently foreseeable. The projections include housing development which already has planning permission.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that the prospect of additional development in the area around Shawbury is limited.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Shawbury Primary School was judged to be satisfactory at its last Ofsted inspection. Pupil level achievement data show the school to be performing slightly less well than its neighbour, which was judged to be Good by Ofsted at their last visit.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Use of Resources**

### **Efficient use Buildings**

The two schools are broadly similar. They are both rather small (147 pupil capacity in each). The Shawbury Primary School site is better favoured with better access and parking, and the opportunity to incorporate an area of council-owned land behind the school to extend sports facilities.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing Shawbury Primary School would save £85,632 per annum in fixed costs. There should be no change in transport arrangements.

### **Capital Requirements**

Amalgamation onto either site would require expansion of the buildings already there by four classrooms, and improvements to access and parking. There would therefore be a need to invest approximately £700,000 (subject to feasibility study) as a one off sum to accomplish the necessary changes to the accommodation to enable the proposals to proceed. (This would be likely to be higher if the St Mary's site is used because of additional site abnormal costs and more extensive works to access and parking.) Part of this sum could be offset against a capital receipt from the sale of the former site of St. Mary's School.

## **Access**

9% of pupils at the two schools come from outside the designated catchment area note that this is less than either school individually, as there is some cross over within the village. 45% of pupils currently walk to one or other schools. If the proposal was implemented, these pupils would be most likely to continue to use the same home to school transport arrangements. Shawbury Primary School is 0.78 miles (1.25km) away from the current site of St Mary's School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach the school within the 45 minute journey time.

## **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes both Shawbury schools is Simon Jones.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 5 – Whitchurch (Sir John Talbots Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the average levels of progression are close to Shropshire averages. Two schools are below average levels of progression and the average level of absolute achievement is significantly below average. Three of the schools are judged Good or better by Ofsted. Two are judged Satisfactory.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are close to the Shropshire average. However, two schools have more than 20% of their places unfilled.

Whitchurch has been listed as a likely growth area in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework. However, the development is proposed almost exclusively in the urban area north of the A41. This is an issue as the town infant and junior schools are both close to full and their sites are restricted. This also limits the options for development of solutions to both surplus places and low achievement. Any further major residential development will require the development of a new primary school site.

##### **Building Issues**

As noted above, the sites of Whitchurch Infant and Junior Schools are almost completely full and restricted with regard to further development. Lower Heath Primary School is remote from any major habitation. Prees School, which is the other school with any significant number of unfilled places, is, like Lower Heath, some distance from Prees Higher Heath where there is no school but where there has been recent residential development.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

The Whitchurch schools are almost entirely filled with pupils from within their catchment area. Lower Heath and Tilstock schools each have more than 60% of their pupils from outside their catchment areas

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school. The fact that the Whitchurch schools are located close together and towards the east of the town means that a lower proportion of pupils walk to school than in most town schools.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned existing collaborations as a strength and considered options for increased collaboration and joint marketing. Although amalgamation, all through schools and the creation of a primary school in Whitchurch were all explored positively, the current capital constraints make this unlikely in the short to medium term. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers, including cross phase, to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. The town infant and junior schools should also actively explore Federation, either between themselves or involving other schools.

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

Secondary education in the area follows the pattern of primary education in being below average in terms of measures of education quality.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

18% of secondary places in the area are unfilled and forecast to increase to DfE trigger levels in the medium term. 13% of pupils come from outside the area. This provides capacity for some further residential development by refurbishing the existing school rather than new build.

#### **Building Issues**

The school has a sports centre on site.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

49.6% of pupils walk to school. This is high, given the nature of the catchment area and the location of the school within the town.

## **Discussion**

The above average number of unfilled places and the issues with primary places suggests that there might be an option to consider all-through education. However, capital constraints mean that this is unlikely unless the James Review leads to capital investment in the area.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 6 – Market Drayton (Grove School Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the average measure of quality of education is close to the Shropshire averages. There is considerable variability when considered school by school, with one school significantly above and two schools significantly below. Four schools are judged Good or better. Eight schools are judged Satisfactory.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are in line with Shropshire averages. However, again, there is significant variation between schools with two schools reaching the level of the DfE trigger.

Market Drayton has been listed as a likely growth area in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework. However, the development is proposed almost exclusively in the urban area. There are some unfilled places in the town, but other recent development has filled almost all the places at Market Drayton Infant and Junior schools, and further development would mean further development on these sites.

##### **Building Issues**

As noted above, the town infant and junior schools are full, and this would be an issue if there were development north or at the west end of the town. Norton-in-Hales school, judged by Ofsted to be Satisfactory, is in unsuitable accommodation including demountable classrooms and a very restricted site with a detached playing field. It is recognised that if significant capital were available there are some issues which the Council would want to address.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Six schools (out of 12) draw less than 60% of their pupils from their catchment areas. In the main, this is because a number of pupils leave the town to seek education in village schools. The area is unique in having two infant schools serving a single junior school.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned the diversity of provision as a strength but noted that surplus capacity was an issue. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. Further consideration should be given to the co-location of some schools on one site.

Buntingsdale Infant School mainly serves the base at Tern Hill. Service children are a priority group for government support. As it is only an infant school this means that often children from the same family have to go to two schools, or that individual pupils undergo an additional transition in what might already be a disturbed pattern of education. Proposals have been made in respect of this school (see Proposal Reference 3).

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area performs below Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

17% of secondary places in the area are unfilled and this is forecast to increase. As new development takes place in Market Drayton, the existing and forecast surplus places will fill and fewer out of area places will be admitted. However, only limited development can be accommodated with additional construction.

#### **Building Issues**

The secondary school requires some capital refurbishment.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

49.3% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

## **Discussion**

There are no issues.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Extend the age range of Buntingsdale to a full primary school. Buntingsdale School almost exclusively serves the Tern Hill base. At present, pupils transfer to Market Drayton Junior. However, this means another change of school in the lives of service family pupils, who generally undergo more such transitions than pupils from civilian families. Improving the educational offer for children from service families is a DfE priority.  
**(Reference no. 3)**

It is proposed to extend the age range of Buntingsdale Infant School to cover the whole primary age range (4-10 years of age).

This proposal will require some refurbishment work to make one classroom and out of classroom facilities suitable for older pupils.

### **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Buntingsdale School has 35 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 87 places. At present, pupils move on to Market Drayton Junior School at the time of KS1/KS2 transfer.

As Buntingsdale Infants mainly serves the Tern Hill base, pupils are likely to move on (or have already moved) between schools at least once during their primary school years. Parents are sometimes reluctant to have their children go through an unforced move and sometimes parents want younger children to go to the same school as an older sibling. Extending the age range of Buntingsdale means that the children of service families can stay in one school during their time in Shropshire.

It is not intended to bring back children from other schools or to prevent children from the Tern Hill base being educated at other schools in the area. Indeed, if the current pupil numbers in the Infant school simply stay on throughout their career this will fill the school, with the only effect on other schools being a reduction in pressure on Market Drayton Junior School.

### **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

#### **Quality of Education**

Buntingsdale Infant School was last inspected by Ofsted on 28/4/10. At that time, the school was judged to be Satisfactory. There are considerable advantages to all through primary education, particularly for children who might be involved in other moves in the primary phase.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Use of Resources**

### **Efficient use Buildings**

Buntingsdale Infant School has 52 unfilled places out of 87 (60%). Condition data is currently being updated. If pupil numbers per year are sustained in an all through school, the school will have no unfilled places.

### **Revenue Effects**

If the school were to fill to its capacity this would save £51,061 in salary support costs. There is not expected to be a saving in transport costs, as some pupils would still have to be transported off base.

### **Capital Requirements**

There would be a need to invest approximately £150,000 as a one off sum to accomplish the necessary changes to the accommodation at Buntingsdale School to enable the older children to be accommodated.

## **Access**

8.6% of pupils at Buntingsdale Infant School come from outside the designated catchment area. 77.1% of pupils currently walk to school. If the proposal was implemented, more pupils would walk rather than be transported.

## **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes Buntingsdale Infant School is Andrew Davies.

The other Council Member whose Division has residents potentially affected by the proposed change is Karen Calder.



The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 7 – Baschurch/Bomere Heath (Corbet School Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the performance is close to or slightly above Shropshire averages. Seven of the schools in the area are judged Good by Ofsted. Two are judged Satisfactory.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are slightly below the Shropshire average. One school has more than 30% of places unfilled, while three are full.

The principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Forum mean that it is unlikely that there will be significant development across most of the area. A significant development at Ruyton XI Towns, which is already included in pupil number projections, will require a one-class extension at that school. There could be development in the Shrewsbury area close to the Bicton catchment.

#### **Building Issues**

Weston Lullingfields has admitted more pupils than the DfE sufficiency formula would allow from their accommodation schedule. Bicton School was the last all-new primary school completed in Shropshire, before which it was St John the Baptist, Ruyton XI Towns.

#### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. One school, however, draws only 25% of their pupils from the catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school. One village school has a lower than expected number of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools suggested amalgamation of schools and increased marketing to address surplus places. However, no proposals for amalgamation have been brought forward by schools. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers, including cross

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phase, to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision, possibly involving the larger and higher performing schools as partners. Further consideration should also be given to the co-location of some schools on one site.

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Outstanding by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are above Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

The secondary school is full, and only 9% of pupils come from outside the area.

#### **Building Issues**

It is likely that the school will have to have additional accommodation to cope with increased numbers in the medium term. The school has a relatively high proportion of demountable classrooms. It is suggested that officer pursue with the DfE options for investment in the school after the publication of the James review. The school site is contiguous with the Baschurch Primary School site

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

16.2% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the widespread nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

The school should give active consideration to Federation with or (when capital resources allow) creating an all-through school with Baschurch Primary and other local schools as appropriate

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 8 – Shrewsbury (Shared Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, measures of quality are close to the Shropshire averages. However, five out of sixteen schools score significantly below average on one or more measures.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are slightly below Shropshire averages. However, the pockets of unfilled places are relatively widely separated for an urban area where pupils can reasonably expect to be within easy walking distance of a school.

Shrewsbury has been listed as a growth area in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework. If this development comes in the form of large housing estates, as seems likely, there might be a case to develop new school(s) even while significant surplus places exist in the town.

##### **Building Issues**

A number of town schools are in need of refurbishment.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Although there is considerable movement between catchment areas within the town, almost all schools predominately serve the overall Shrewsbury area.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, urban schools have a higher proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meeting, representatives of the local schools mentioned that surplus places was a challenge and suggested that alternative models of leadership might reduce the impact. There is one pair of infant and junior schools which was not included in the previous round of amalgamations. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those with high levels of surplus places, and the infant and junior pair, should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. This should include considering cross

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

phase Federation in some instances, and if capital were to allow to consider the possibility of all through schools where appropriate.

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

There are six secondary schools which share a joint Shrewsbury catchment area. The average measures of education quality are close to Shropshire averages, but there is significant variation amongst individual schools. Two schools in the area score significantly below average in four measures of education quality, including contextualised value added.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

17% of secondary places in the area are unfilled and this is due to increase. Shrewsbury has been identified as a growth area in the principles of the forthcoming Local Development Framework. As new development takes place in Shrewsbury, the existing and forecast surplus places will absorb the development. One school is projected to have more than 53% surplus places before 2014.

#### **Building Issues**

Sundorne and Wakeman Schools are on restricted sites. Wakeman has a detached playing field. Priory School would be difficult to expand on its current site.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools draw widely from across the town.

#### **Travel to School**

82.4% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the urban nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

Two schools have poor indicators of pupil achievement and a number of unfilled places. However, one of them is expected to maintain its current pupil numbers and is close to one of the potential areas of growth. The other is forecast to have rapidly increasing surplus place numbers (although it is possible that some of the increase is due to rumours of potential closure). At the area meeting, it was suggested by most groups that one (unspecified) school should be closed.

It is suggested that the Wakeman School, which has rapidly decreasing pupil numbers, be closed (see proposal reference No 4), and the Grange School gives serious consideration to Federation or the creation of an all through school.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Rationalise secondary school provision in Shrewsbury by closing Wakeman School from September 2013. Pupils in the school at the time of closure would be offered a place at Meole Brace School, although some parents might opt to express a preference for unfilled places at other schools. **(Reference No 4)**

It is proposed to close The Wakeman School from 31 August 2013 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at Meole Brace School. All secondary schools in Shrewsbury already share a single catchment area.

This proposal will not require any immediate accommodation changes.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

The Wakeman School has 406 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 675 places. Pupil numbers are reducing rapidly year on year as larger year groups leave at the top of the school and replaced by much smaller intake groups in Year 7. Meole Brace School has 997 pupils in a building with 1215 places. However, projections show that by September 2013 the total pupil numbers will be 1235. This figure is marginally above the nominal capacity of Meole Brace school based on its current admission number, but within the calculated capacity of its accommodation. In addition, it is likely that some pupils will opt for other schools. These figures include the effect of development which already has planning permission.

Shrewsbury has been identified in the principles of the Local Development Framework as being an area of further residential development. There are two areas of development proposed currently. There are sufficient secondary school places in Shrewsbury as a whole to accommodate these developments are currently planned. However, the effect is likely to be that a larger proportion pupils from North Shrewsbury transferring from year 6 to year 7 will be admitted to the Grange or Sundorne Schools rather than Meole Brace School.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Wakeman School was last inspected by Ofsted on 19/9/2007. At that time, the school was judged to be Satisfactory. Meole Brace School was inspected on 19/11/2008 and was found to be Good. Pupil level achievement data show the Wakeman School to be below both the national and Shropshire averages.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Use of Resources**

### **Efficient use Buildings**

Wakeman School has 269 unfilled places out of 675 (40%) and this is forecast to rise sharply. The local area is forecast to have 18.3% of places unfilled over the next five years. The school has the following issues regarding the suitability of its accommodation: it is close to the river and the basement (no longer used for teaching) floods at intervals; its sports fields are separated from the school by some distance; there is very limited parking with almost all staff required to park off-site; and it has no space on site to create any more accommodation. Its Condition data is currently being updated.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing the school would save £437,664 in fixed costs. There would be no additional transport costs. The net change in revenue resources which would occur from a closure is therefore a saving of £437,664.

### **Capital Requirements**

There would be no immediate need for capital investment in additional accommodation if Wakeman School were to close. There would be likely to be a one-off capital receipt arising from the sale of the Council's interest in the school site.

## **Access**

54% of pupils currently walk to Wakeman School and 7% cycle. If the proposal was implemented, there is no reason why these pupils could not continue to walk or cycle to an alternative school. The Meole Brace and Wakeman Schools are separated by 2.6km (1.6mi). All transferring pupils will have a place with the statutory walking distance (3mi) of their home.

## **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes Wakeman School is Jo Jones. However, all other Shrewsbury Members are likely to have residents who are interested parties or affected in some way as a result of this proposal.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 9 – Pontesbury (Mary Webb Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the averages for quality measures are mainly slightly above Shropshire averages. Five out of eight schools are judged Good by Ofsted.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are high. St Thomas and St Anne's, which currently has significant numbers of unfilled places, is projected to increase numbers by almost 40%. Stiperstones has more than 46% of its places unfilled, and this is projected to remain about this level.

Subject to future consultation, it is possible that forthcoming Local Development Framework might allow for some growth around Pontesbury. However, there will still be some schools with significant surplus space outside this area.

##### **Building Issues**

The playing field for Stiperstones School is leased from a third party, and the lease has ended and is being held over.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

All the schools predominately serve their catchment areas.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meeting, representatives of local schools mentioned a strong community feeling, but were concerned at surplus places and discussed the potential of changes to catchment areas, site closures and co-location of schools as potential solutions. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation, including cross phase, in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. One school stands out from the others in the area in terms of its very low pupil numbers and high surplus places (see Proposal Reference No 9).

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Good by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are in line with Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

13% of secondary places in the area are unfilled and this is due to increase. Few pupils come from outside the area. The school is actively considering reducing surplus places by hosting an outreach facility.

#### **Building Issues**

The school is relatively energy inefficient due to its oil fired boilers and glazing. It is suggested that consideration is given to alternative fuels.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

13.3% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the largely rural nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.



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The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Reduce overall capacity by closing Stiperstones School. Stiperstones is judged to be a Good school, however, it has a significant number of surplus places and problems with its site and buildings. Pupils in the school would be offered a place at Minsterley School, which is also judged a Good school. **(Reference no. 9)**

It is proposed to close Stiperstones School from 31 August 2012 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at Minsterley School. The current catchment area of Stiperstones School would be split between Minsterley School, and Norbury School. This proposal will require the building of a further classroom space at Minsterley School.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Stiperstones School has 31 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 56 places. Minsterley School has 129 pupils in a building with 161 places. 7 pupils at Stiperstones School currently come from outside the catchment area.

Projected pupil numbers indicate that the total number of pupils in the receiving school (Minsterley School) will be 132 by 2012/13, which is the highest total currently foreseeable. The projections include housing development which already has planning permission.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that the prospect of additional development in the area around Stiperstones School is negligible and around Minsterley School is limited.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Stiperstones School was last inspected by Ofsted on 12/3/08. At that time, the school was judged to be Good. Pupil level achievement data show the school to be performing slightly above Shropshire averages. Minsterley School was inspected on 15/7/08 and judged to be Good. Other measures of quality for the schools are similar.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Use of Resources**

### **Efficient use Buildings**

Stiperstones School has 25 unfilled places out of 56 (44.6%) and this is forecast to increase slightly. The school has the following issues regarding the suitability of its accommodation: the school playing field is not owned by the Council and the lease has run out. The main school building has accessibility issues. Condition data is currently being updated. The school uses 1110.2kg/CO2 per pupil indicating an inefficient structure and inefficient use of the buildings due to the low pupil numbers.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing the school would save £75,956 in fixed costs. If all the pupils transfer to the designated school, there would be a further saving of £25,291. In the worst case, additional transport could cost up to £35,000, but the actual cost could be much lower depending on the ability to utilise existing vehicles and routes and the effect of parental choice on admissions and travel patterns. The net change in revenue resources which would occur from a closure is therefore at least £66,247.

### **Capital Requirements**

There would be a need to invest approximately £150,000 as a one off sum to accomplish the necessary changes to the accommodation at Minsterley School to enable the proposals to proceed. There would be no capital receipt arising directly to the Council, although it is possible that the Trustees of the site would invest the proceeds of any sale in education in Shropshire.

## **Access**

22.6% of pupils at Stiperstones School come from outside the designated catchment area. 29% of pupils currently walk to Stiperstones School. If the proposal was implemented, these pupils would be most likely to travel by school bus. Minsterley School is 3.3 miles (5.3km) away from the site of Minsterley School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach the school within the 45 minute journey time.

## **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes Stiperstones School is Heather Kidd.

Other Council Members whose Divisions have residents potentially affected by the proposed change are: Tudor Bebb and Peter Phillips.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 10 – Bishops Castle (BCCC Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, measures of quality of education are slightly below Shropshire averages, but not significantly so. Three of the schools are judged Good by Ofsted, with five judged Satisfactory.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are high. One school has more than 45% of places unfilled.

There is unlikely to be significant development in the rural areas of the catchment, although some small development in Bishops Castle is possible, subject to consultation and planning considerations.

#### **Building Issues**

Lydbury North School has a difficult building, with limited accessibility, and a restricted site with a detached playing field. Clunbury School would be difficult to extend further without a major redevelopment, but is adequate for its current numbers. Chirbury School has a restricted site with limited accessibility and ability to expand, but most teaching happens in good quality accommodation.

#### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools mainly serve their catchment areas. Two schools draw approximately 60% of their pupils from their catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

It would be difficult to provide transport at reasonable cost to allow pupils from Chirbury and Newcastle schools to reach alternative schools within the 45minute target. This would be possible in other schools, although there are some homes in the Norbury catchment which are more than six miles from the nearest school and particular care with routing and possibly special arrangements would be required. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meeting, representatives of the local schools were aware of the level of surplus places and discussed potential solutions including amalgamations and a potential area school if the capital resources position improves. Collaboration was seen as a strength of the area. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively

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look to Federation, including cross phase, in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. A particular area which could consider Federation is the Clun Valley, with the possibility of including St Mary's School in Bucknell (which is otherwise in a geographically isolated position). One school has very low pupil numbers combined with significant surplus places. Proposals have been made in respect of this school (see Proposal Reference No 10).

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged to require a notice to improve by Ofsted at the last inspection and is now making satisfactory progress against its improvement plan. Other measures of achievement are in line with Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

Few secondary places in the area are unfilled, although this will increase slightly in the future. 19% of pupils come from outside the area, mainly from outside the county.

#### **Building Issues**

The secondary school has undergone several phases of development which means that, despite the best efforts of the school, suiting of subjects is less than optimal. Sixth Form accommodation has had less investment in recent years than other areas, and it is recommended that this be pursued with the relevant Department or Agency following the publication of the James Review and the dismantling of the YPLA.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

16.9% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the rural nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

As a relatively small secondary school, the school might consider Federation with one or more of its catchment primary schools, or the possibility of an all-through school if numbers drop in the future.

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The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Reduce overall capacity by closing Lydbury North School. Lydbury North has a significant number of surplus places, and 27% of its pupils come from out of its catchment area. Pupils in the school would be offered places in Bishops Castle Primary School. Some pupils, for reasons of geography, might also look to Norbury School. **(Reference no. 10)**

It is proposed to close Lydbury North Primary School from 31 August 2012 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at Bishops Castle Primary School. The current catchment area of Lydbury North School would be split between Bishops Castle School, Norbury School and Clunbury School.

This proposal will not require any immediate accommodation changes.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Lydbury North School has 29 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 56 places. Bishops Castle School has 133 pupils in a building with 175 places. 8 pupils at Lydbury North School currently come from outside the catchment area.

Projected pupil numbers indicate that the total number of pupils in the receiving school (Bishops Castle School) will be 140 in 2011/12, which is the highest total currently foreseeable. The projections include housing development which already has planning permission.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that the prospect of additional development in the area around Lydbury North School is negligible and around Bishops Castle school is limited.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Lydbury North School was last inspected by Ofsted on 6/10/10. At that time, the school was judged to be Satisfactory. Pupil level achievement data show the school to be performing slightly below area averages. Bishops Castle Primary was inspected on 17/11/08 and was judged to be Satisfactory. Other measures of quality are broadly similar to Lydbury North Primary School.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Use of Resources**

### **Efficient use Buildings**

Lydbury North School has 27 unfilled places out of 56 (48%). The school has the following issues regarding the suitability of its accommodation: The main building is only partially accessible to users of wheelchairs. The school is on a restricted site with limited play area and a detached playing field. Condition data is currently being updated. The school uses 666.9kg/CO<sub>2</sub> per pupil indicating the buildings are used inefficiently because of the low pupil numbers.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing the school would save £78,654 in fixed costs. If all the pupils transfer to the designated school, there would be a further saving of £5,286. In the worst case, additional transport could cost up to £38,000, but the actual cost could be much lower depending on the ability to utilise existing vehicles and routes and the effect of parental choice on admissions and travel patterns. The net change in revenue resources which would occur from a closure is therefore at least £45,940.

### **Capital Requirements**

There would be a need to invest approximately £150,000 as a one off sum to replace rather earlier than currently planned an existing demountable classroom at Bishops Castle Primary School which is in a poor state of repair. There would be likely to be a one-off capital receipt of arising from the sale of the Council's interest in the school site. A further capital receipt would accrue to the Diocese, and it is possible that this sum would be reinvested in education in Shropshire.

## **Access**

27.6% of pupils at Lydbury North School come from outside the designated catchment area. 34.5% of pupils currently walk to Lydbury North School. If the proposal was implemented, these pupils would be most likely to be transported by bus. Bishops Castle School is 3.6 miles (5.8km) away from the site of Lydbury North School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach the school within the 45 minute journey time.

### **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes Lydbury North School and Bishops Castle Primary School is Peter Phillips.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Area 11 – Church Stretton (Church Stretton Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, measures of quality of education are above average. All schools were considered Good by Ofsted at their last visits.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are slightly below Shropshire average. One school has, however, has 44% of its places unfilled.

Church Stretton will potentially be an area of future development.

##### **Building Issues**

Wistanstow School is on a congested site and further expansion is not possible. Dorrington School has a number of suitability problems and would be difficult to develop at reasonable cost on its current site. Longnor School would be difficult to expand further on its current site for topographical reasons.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. One school takes less than 53% of its pupils from the catchment area and one just over 60%.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, most rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned alternative models of leadership as a potential solution to challenges. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation, including cross phase, in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. The suitability difficulties with the sites and buildings at Dorrington, Longnor and Wistanstow require resolution, but the lack of available capital means that these might have to be considered in the longer term.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Good by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are above Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

5.7% of secondary places in the area are unfilled. 34.1% of pupils come from outside the area, mainly from Bayston Hill. If new development takes place in Church Stretton, the existing and forecast surplus places will fill and fewer out of area places will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

The school has a small number of demountable classrooms including a science lab. There is a new dual use sports centre.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school mainly serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

24.9% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.



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## **Area 12 – Ludlow (Ludlow Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, measures of quality are slightly below the Shropshire averages, although there is considerable variation with one school significantly above. Two schools are in the lowest quartile for absolute pupil attainment. One of these was served with a notice to improve at its last Ofsted visit, but is making satisfactory progress against its action plan.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are slightly above the Shropshire average and forecast to increase. However, there is a clear divide between the schools in Ludlow and those in the rural areas. Two schools meet the Department for Education trigger level (over 30% and at least 30 places unfilled) and one of these has over half its places unfilled.

Craven Arms and Ludlow have been listed as potential growth areas in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework, but there is unlikely to be any significant development in the rural areas.

##### **Building Issues**

Stokesay Primary School operates from two sites, close by but separated by a public road. St Laurence Ludlow is on a restricted site, as is Bitterley School.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. One school only takes 26.5% of its pupils from its catchment area

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school, although St Mary's Bucknell has a surprisingly high proportion of walking pupils.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools recognised the overall surplus places position as challenging and that federation might be a solution. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) and the infant/junior pair not include in the previous

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amalgamations should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. One school stands out from the others in the area in terms of pupil achievement and use of resources. Proposals have been made in respect of this school (see Proposal Reference No 7).

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Good by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are above Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

4.5% of secondary places in the area are unfilled. 6.5% of pupils come from outside the area. As new development takes place in Ludlow, there might be a need to expand current provision.

#### **Building Issues**

The secondary school has undergone several phases of development which means that, despite the best efforts of the school, suiting of subjects is less than optimal.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

39.4% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Reduce overall capacity by closing Onny Primary School. Onny Primary School takes 73% of its pupils from outside its catchment area. It has a high level of surplus places. The school has previously explored federation but has not been able to put federation arrangements in place. Pupils in Onny at the time of closure would be guaranteed a place at Stokesay School. As a significant number of pupils in the school come from Craven Arms, there are other opportunities to express parental preference by seeking places at Clunbury or Wistanstow, and those from Ludlow could look to the town schools or Bishop Hooper. **(Reference no. 7)**

It is proposed to close Onny Primary School from 31 August 2012 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at Stokesay Primary School. The current catchment area of Onny School would be split between Stokesay School, and the Ludlow area primary catchment.

This proposal will not require any immediate accommodation changes.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Onny Primary School has 49 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 105 places. Stokesay School has 155 pupils in a building with 210 places. 36 pupils at Onny Primary School currently come from outside the catchment area.

Projected pupil numbers indicate that the total number of pupils in the receiving school (Stokesay School) will fall for the foreseeable period. The projections include housing development which already has planning permission.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that there some prospect of additional development in the area around Stokesay School but almost none around Onny School.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Onny School was last inspected by Ofsted on 21/1/10. At that time, the school was judged to be Satisfactory. Pupil level achievement data show the school to be performing significantly below Shropshire averages. Stokesay School was inspected on

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29/9/10 and was served with a Notice to Improve in respect of its pupil progress, despite being far from the lowest performing school in the County. The school also had Good aspects in its report. The Council's education advisers judge that the school is making satisfactory progress against its action plan and will be Satisfactory or better by the time this proposal would be implemented in approved.

## **Use of Resources**

### **Efficient use Buildings**

Onny School has 56 unfilled places out of 105 (53%). Condition data is currently being updated. The school uses 946.7kg/CO2 per pupil indicating inefficient use of buildings because of the number of unfilled places.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing the school would save £70,244 in fixed costs. If all the pupils transfer to the designated school, there would be an additional cost of £3,532. In the worst case, additional transport could cost up to £29,000, but the actual cost could be much lower depending on the ability to utilise existing vehicles and routes and the effect of parental choice on admissions and travel patterns. The net change in revenue resources which would occur from a closure is therefore £36,712.

### **Capital Requirements**

There would be no need for capital investment. There would be no capital receipt arising directly to the Council, as the land for the school is leased.

## **Access**

73.5% of pupils at Onny Primary School come from outside the designated catchment area. 6.1% of pupils currently walk to Onny School. If the proposal was implemented, these pupils would be most likely to continue to use their current mode of transport, or might transfer to shared buses, reducing the overall carbon footprint of home to school travel. A number of pupils at Onny School already live in Craven Arms and will be within walking distance of the alternative school. Stokesay School is 2.7 miles (4.4km) away from the site of Onny School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach the school within the 45 minute journey time.

## **Local Member**

The Council Members for the Division which includes Onny and Stokesay schools are David Evans and James Gibson.

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## **Area 13 – Cleobury Mortimer (Lacon Childe Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the measures of education quality are somewhat below Shropshire averages. Two schools are in the lowest quartile for attainment at Level 4 in English and Maths, and have been flagged as poorly performing in respect of contextual value added.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are slightly above the Shropshire average. Three schools have very small numbers of pupils, two of them relatively close to each other.

Cleobury Mortimer has been listed as a growth area in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework. There is little prospect of significant development in the rural areas of the catchment.

##### **Building Issues**

Clee Hill School's site is restricted and further development would be difficult. Circulation areas are small. Hopton Wafers School has a restricted site with no on-site playing field. Stottesdon School has a restricted site. Kinlet School building has limitations on accessibility and access from the road is poor. Farlow School site is restricted.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. Two schools draw less than 30% of their pupils from the catchment area.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available, although this might require special arrangements for a small number of homes in the Kinlet catchment. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned existing collaborations as a strength and that these might be a potential solution to surplus place problems. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation, including cross phase, in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce

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resources and improving the quality of provision. In the longer term, consideration should be given to the future of the group of schools including Stottesdon, Kinlet and Farlow and whether a better solution in terms of sites and access can be found when capital resources allow. One school stands out from the others in the area in terms of pupil achievement, high surplus places and numbers of pupils from outside its area. Proposals have been made in respect of this school (see Proposal Reference 6).

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Outstanding by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are in line with Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

Few secondary places in the area are unfilled, although numbers are forecast to drop. A small of pupils come from outside the area. If new development takes place in Cleobury Mortimer, the forecast surplus places will fill and fewer out of area pupils will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

There is one area of demountable accommodation which is currently in fair condition. It is recommended that, following publication of the James Review, officers pursue with the DfE the possibility of major investment in the school. Carbon emissions are high, but this might be due to the dual use sports centre on the site leading to longer hours of opening.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

36.5% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.

The pages of this appendix must not be read in isolation from the rest of the report which provides necessary context

The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Reduce overall capacity by closing Hopton Wafers School. Pupils would be offered a place at Cleobury Mortimer School. Hopton Wafers is a very small school with a high number of surplus places and limited opportunities for development. 76% of the pupils in the school come from out of the school's catchment area. **(Reference No 6)**

It is proposed to close Hopton Wafers School from 31 August 2012 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at Cleobury Mortimer Primary School. The current catchment area of Hopton Wafers School would be split between Cleobury Mortimer School and Clee Hill School.

This proposal will not require any immediate accommodation changes.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Hopton Wafers Primary School has 30 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 70 places. Cleobury Mortimer Primary School has 213 pupils in a building with 259 places. 76.7% of pupils at Hopton Wafers School currently come from outside the catchment area.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that the prospect of additional development in the area around Hopton Wafers School is negligible.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Hopton Wafers School was last inspected by Ofsted on 4/2/2009. At that time, the school was judged to be Satisfactory. Cleobury Mortimer Primary School was inspected on 26/9/2007 and judged to be Satisfactory. Pupil level achievement data show Cleobury Mortimer Primary School to be in line with area averages.

### **Use of Resources**

#### **Efficient use Buildings**

Hopton Wafers Primary School has 40 unfilled places out of 70 (57 %). Condition data is currently being updated. The school uses 623.9kg/CO2 per pupil (the Shropshire

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average is 411) indicating that the buildings are being used inefficiently because of the low pupil numbers and are of less energy efficient construction.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing the school would save £78,146 in fixed costs. If all the pupils transfer to the designated school, there would be an additional cost of £2,923. In the worst case, additional transport could cost up to £29,000, but the actual cost could be much lower depending on the ability to utilise existing vehicles and routes and the effect of parental choice on admissions and travel patterns. The net change in revenue resources which would occur from a closure is therefore a minimum £46,223 per annum.

### **Capital Requirements**

There would be no need for capital investment to create additional capacity. There would be no capital receipt arising to the Council, as the land is not owned by the Council or the Diocese.

### **Access**

76.7% of pupils at Hopton Wafers Primary School come from outside the designated catchment area. No pupils currently walk to Hopton Wafers School. If the proposal was implemented, some of these pupils would be within easy walking distance of Cleobury Mortimer School. Cleobury Mortimer School is 4.5km (2.8 miles) away from the site of Hopton Wafers School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach a school within the 45 minute journey time.

### **Local Member**

The Council Members for the Division which includes Hopton Wafers and Cleobury Mortimer schools are Madge Sheinton and Gwilym Butler.



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## **Area 14 – Bridgnorth (Oldbury Wells and The Endowed School Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the Measures of quality are in line with Shropshire averages. Two schools are significantly below average, one of these in Bridgnorth town.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are slightly above the Shropshire average, mainly as a result of three larger schools being significantly above average in their number of surplus places.

Bridgnorth has been listed as a growth area in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework and there is some prospect of development in the other larger settlements (Highley and Alveley). However, there is little prospect of development in rural areas.

##### **Building Issues**

There are no major building issues in the area. St John's School in Bridgnorth still has some areas in need of refurbishment, as does St Leonards.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools predominately serve their catchment areas. Two schools draw less than 60% of their pupils from the catchment area.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned travel times as a constraint on collaboration. However, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. Highley School, despite a substantial number of surplus places, serves a distinct community, as does St Mary's Bluecoat, which is the only school in Bridgnorth Low Town.

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## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

There are two secondary schools in the area, each with its own catchment area. Both were judged Satisfactory by Ofsted at their last inspection. Other measures of achievement are somewhat below Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

10.3% of secondary places in the area are unfilled. 46.6% of pupils come from outside each school's catchment, although there are fewer pupils who don't live in the catchment of one or other school. As new development takes place in Bridgnorth and satellites, the existing and forecast surplus places will fill and fewer out of area pupils will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

Bridgnorth Endowed School has need of substantial refurbishment. There is an area of demountable accommodation which has a poor underlying structure. It is recommended that, following publication of the James Review, officers pursue with the DfE the possibility of major investment in the school. Oldbury Wells School operates on a split site with a public road separating them and also requires some refurbishment. There is no dedicated sports hall, although it is hoped to rectify this in the short term. The school is grade II listed which complicates developments.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The schools mainly serve their combined catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

30% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mixed nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

It is noted that the two schools operate a strong collaborative arrangement with regard to sixth forms. There are no issues.

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## **Area 15 – Shifnal and Albrighton (Idsall Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, the measures of quality are above Shropshire averages. Four out of six schools were judged Good at their last Ofsted inspection.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are moderate, being close to Shropshire averages. This is mainly due to two schools which, although being larger than the Shropshire average school, are significantly below the capacity of their sites. There is still uncertainty over the future of the Cosford base, which is a major factor in pupil numbers in the area.

#### **Building Issues**

There are no major building issues in the area. Sherrifhales has no school hall, but the school, Council and community are building a joint provision. Beckbury School has issues with accessibility of some facilities.

#### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools mainly serve their catchment areas, although there is a degree of swapping of catchments in both Albrighton and Shifnal. Sherrifhales draws a significant number of pupils from Telford. 50% of Beckbury pupils come from outside the catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools noted the number of pupils coming from Telford and the uncertainty over Cosford. Single schools in both Shifnal and Albrighton were considered, it was decided not to progress at the moment because capital was not available for the scale of required works. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148), and the pairs of schools in Shifnal and Albrighton should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision.

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## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Good by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are above Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

The school is full and usually oversubscribed, although developments in Telford might mean that this changes in future. 28.9% of pupils come from outside the area. If new development takes place in the area, fewer out of area pupils will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

The school has a dual use sports centre on site.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school mainly serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

27.6% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the widespread nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.

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## **Area 16 – Much Wenlock and Broseley (William Brookes School Catchment Area)**

### **Primary Phase**

#### **Quality of Education**

In the primary phase, for the area as a whole, measures of quality are above the Shropshire averages. Six out of eight schools were judged Good by Ofsted at their last inspection.

#### **Effective Use of resources**

##### **Surplus Places**

Overall levels of unfilled places in the primary sector are high. There are two schools which reached the DfE trigger level (over 30% and at least 30 places unfilled).

Broseley has been listed as a potential growth area in the agreed principles underlying the forthcoming Local Development Framework. However, development in the rural areas is unlikely.

##### **Building Issues**

There are no major building issues in the area. Buildwas School has some suitability issues. Barrow and Church Preen Schools are separated from local settlements.

#### **Access to Education**

##### **Serving the local Community**

Most schools mainly serve their catchment areas. Five schools have less than 60% of their pupils from the catchment area, although in Broseley this is partly as a result of catchment area swapping. One school has fewer than 15% of pupils drawn from its catchment.

##### **Travel to School**

There is no area of the catchment which could not be served by at least one school in the area within the 45 minute travel target in addition to its current school, subject to sufficient additional accommodation being available. As expected, rural schools have a lower proportion of pupils walking to school.

#### **Discussion**

At the area meetings, representatives of the local schools mentioned existing collaborations as a strength. In view of this, it is recommended that schools, especially those below the average number of pupils in Shropshire schools (148) should actively look to Federation in pairs or larger numbers to make the best use of scarce resources and improving the quality of provision. There is the potential for a single school in Broseley if pupil numbers and capital resources allow in the future. One school stands out from the others in the area in terms of high unfilled places, low total pupil numbers

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and a high proportion of pupils from outside its area. Proposals have been made in respect of this school (see Proposal Reference 5).

## **Secondary Phase**

### **Quality of Education**

The only secondary school in the area was judged Good by Ofsted at the last inspection, and other measures of achievement are above Shropshire averages.

### **Effective Use of resources**

#### **Surplus Places**

1.2% of secondary places in the area are unfilled. 24.5% of pupils come from outside the area, mainly from Telford. If new development takes place in the area, fewer out of area pupils will be admitted.

#### **Building Issues**

The school has recently been completely rebuilt.

### **Access to Education**

#### **Serving the local Community**

The school predominately serves its catchment area.

#### **Travel to School**

10.1% of pupils walk to school, which reflects the mainly rural and dispersed nature of the catchment area.

### **Discussion**

There are no issues.

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The pages containing this proposal are part of a much larger report on school organisation available on Shropshire Council's Website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/educationforshropshire)

It is recommended that this proposal should not be read in isolation, but in the context of the main report.

**Proposal:** Reduce overall primary capacity by closing Barrow Primary School. Barrow Primary School is a very small school with almost no pupils living in its historic catchment area. There are ample places nearby in Broseley. Pupils in the school at the time of closure would be offered a place in Broseley Primary School. **(Reference No 5)**

It is proposed to close Barrow School from 31 August 2012 and offer pupils attending at the time a place at Broseley Primary School. The current catchment area of Barrow Primary School would split between Broseley Primary School, John Wilkinson School and Much Wenlock Primary School.

This proposal will not require any immediate accommodation changes.

## **Current Pupil Numbers and Future Development**

Barrow Primary School has 27 pupils on roll (Jan 2010 PLASC) in a building with 70 places. Broseley Primary School has 187 pupils in a building with 252 places. 85% of pupils at Barrow School currently come from outside the catchment area.

Draft site allocations to form part of the Local Development Framework to be adopted from 2013 are expected to be published for consultation in the near future. The principles included in the LDF, which have already been agreed, indicate that the additional development will be approved around Shrewsbury and other major settlements. Discussion with planning officers suggests that the prospect of additional development in the area around Barrow School is negligible.

## **Criteria**

The proposal set out above links to the approved criteria for school organisation as follows:

### **Quality of Education**

Barrow School was last inspected by Ofsted on 4/2/2009. At that time, the school was judged to be Satisfactory. Broseley Primary School was inspected on 19/9/2007 and judged to be Good. Pupil level achievement data show Barrow school to be comparable with Broseley Primary.

### **Use of Resources**

#### **Efficient use Buildings**

Barrow Primary School has 43 unfilled places out of 70 (61%). Condition data is currently being updated. The school uses 730kg/CO<sub>2</sub> per pupil (the Shropshire average

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is 411) indicating that the buildings are being used inefficiently because of the low pupil numbers and are of less energy efficient construction.

### **Revenue Effects**

Closing the school would save £83,840 in fixed costs. If all the pupils transfer to the designated school, there would be a saving of £5,198. There are not expected to be any additional costs associated with transport. The net change in revenue resources which would occur from a closure is therefore £89,038.

### **Capital Requirements**

There would be no need for capital investment to create additional capacity. There would be no capital receipt arising to the Council, as the land is not owned by the Council or the Diocese.

### **Access**

85.2% of pupils at Barrow Primary School come from outside the designated catchment area. No pupils currently walk to Barrow School. If the proposal was implemented, some of these pupils would be within easy walking distance of Broseley School. Broseley School is 3.56km (2.21 miles) away from the site of Barrow School, and all the pupils from within the catchment area would be able to reach a school within the 45 minute journey time.

### **Local Member**

The Council Member for the Division which includes Barrow School is Milner Whiteman. The other Council Member whose Division has residents potentially affected by the proposed change is Dr Jean Jones.



## **Appendix F – Summary of Financial Implications of Proposals**

This appendix sets out in a table overleaf the financial implications for each of the 10 proposals. Note that revenue implications are annual figures, that is, any identified savings will repeat each year. Capital implications are one-off expenditures. Where capital receipts are expected if the proposal goes ahead, because of the sale of the council's interest in the land and/or buildings of a site which would become redundant if the proposal goes ahead, this is indicated but the figure is not included below for reasons of commercial sensitivity. Although a total is given, each proposal is independent and will be considered separately by Cabinet, not as a package. All savings will be fed directly back into the ring-fenced school budget to support expenditure on schools.

Revenue figures are calculated using the 20010/11 allocation formula.

“Worst Case” transport costs are based on the assumption that all pupils have to be transported in additional vehicles on new routes and that the Council has to pay premium routes in the line with the maximum paid now but significantly above the average cost at the moment. It is expected that the actual total would be much lower than the indicated £170,000 due to parental choice, recycling of routes and buses, the utilisation of empty seats in current transport and procurement savings.

Proposal	Revenue Effects				Capital Implications	
	Saving in Fixed costs	Savings in Costs in Receiving Schools	Worst Case Transport Costs	Net Revenue Effect	* Receipt Expected	Budget Capital cost
Close Maesbury School	66,197	13,331	-38,000	41,528	Yes	-
Create All-Through Rhyn Park	111,055	13,539	-	124,594	Yes	1,400,000
Single School in Shawbury	85,632	-	-	85,632	Yes	750,000
Expand Buntingsdale Ages	-	51,061	-	51,061	Not applicable	150,000
Close Wakeman School	437,664	-	-	437,664	Yes	-
Close Stiperstones School	75,956	25,291	-35,000	66,247	No	150,000
Close Lydbury North School	78,654	5,286	-38,000	45,940	Yes	150,000
Close Onny School	70,244	-3,532	-30,000	36,712	No	-
Close Hopton Wafers School	78,146	-2,923	-29,000	46,223	No	-
Close Barrow School	83,840	5,198	-	89,038	No	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,087,388</b>	<b>107,251</b>	<b>-170,000</b>	<b>1,024,639</b>		<b>2,600,000</b>

\* All capital receipts will be retained and invested back into education.

## **Appendix G – Timetable for Future Consultation**

This appendix sets out the timetable for future consultation on the proposals contained in appendix D, should cabinet approve this report. The timetable for the statutory stage is included for completeness and should not be considered as any way suggesting that consultation outcomes have been constrained or decisions already taken. The next stage of consultation, following the consultations on policy and issues already undertaken, is to consult on specific proposals, which is a mandatory stage (M2).

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Stage Name</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<i>M2</i>	<i>Consultation on Proposals</i>	<i>The Council consults on proposed solutions to the school organisation issues raised in M1 and agrees what, if any, statutory proposals are required. The 2010 Government Guidelines refer to this as Stage 1 of the Statutory Process.</i>
M2a	Consultation on Proposals (28/2/11 to 8/4/11)	A public consultation is held on each proposal accepted by Cabinet in stage M1f. The consultation will last for six term-time weeks (in line with Government guidelines) and will include the distribution of information on the proposal and a public meeting in the school(s) affected.
M2b	Briefing (19/4/11 to 26/4/11)	If the Director's recommendation in the report to Cabinet (see below) is to close or amalgamate any school(s), a confidential briefing will be held for the local Member(s), and then for the Head and Chair of the school affected prior to publication of the report.
M2c	Report to Cabinet on Review (published 27/4/11, meeting 4/5/11)	A report on the consultation on each proposal will be made to Cabinet. All written responses (including those made at stage M1d) will be made available to Cabinet Members in advance of the meeting, and a summary of the issues raised will be included in the report, along with a recommendation from the Director of People's Services on whether the proposal should progress to the next stage. At this stage, the Cabinet can decide not to proceed with the process, or significantly amend the proposals, which would require a further consultation period.
M2d	Potential Scrutiny Review (meeting 5/5/11 to 13/5/11, with 11/5/11 preferred)	This is the most appropriate stage for the Council's scrutiny arrangements to scrutinise the process and decision making thus far. The scrutiny process could refer the decision back to Cabinet or to full Council, but cannot amend the proposals.
<i>S1</i>	<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	<i>The Council publishes formal proposals to change the organisation of schools in an area. The Government Guidance refers to this as Stage 2 of the Statutory Process</i>

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<b>Stage</b>	<b>Stage Name</b>	<b>Actions</b>
S1a	Publication (16/05/11)	The Council publishes each of the proposed changes. Publication involves a notice in a local newspaper, a notice displayed locally to the site of any school(s) or proposed school(s) affected by the proposals, information to consultees, and notice being given to the Secretary of State, along with a statement of the Council's case for making the changes. The Government Guidance refers to this as Stage 2 of the Statutory Process.
S1b	Representations (16/05/11 to 24/6/11)	The Council receives representations on the proposals. It should be noted that the Council could only make very limited changes to the proposals at this stage, so representations are largely in the form of statement in favour of or opposing the proposals. The period of representations lasts for six calendar weeks, and all representations must be in writing. The Government Guidance refers to this as Stage 3 of the Statutory Process.
S1c	Briefing (4/7/11 to 12/7/11)	If the Director's recommendation in the report to Cabinet (see below) is to close or amalgamate any school(s), a confidential briefing will be held for the local Member(s), and then for the Head and Chair of the school affected prior to publication of the report.
S1d	Report to Cabinet (published 13/7/11 meeting 20/7/11)	A report on each proposal must be made to Cabinet no later than two months after the end of the period of representations, or the proposals are automatically referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for determination. The All written responses (including those made at stage M1d and M2a) will be made available to Cabinet Members in advance of the meeting, and a summary of the issues raised will be included in the report, along with a recommendation from the Director of Children and Young People's Services on whether the proposal should be agreed. The Government Guidance refers to this as Stage 4 of the Statutory Process.
S2	Implementation (Sept 2011 – July 2012 (primary) or July 2013 (secondary))	Once the Council or the Schools Adjudicator has agreed a statutory proposal, the Council are required by law to implement it, or to publish a further round of statutory proposals to revoke the original proposals. The Government Guidance refers to this as Stage 5 of the Statutory Process. Further guidance on implementation would be issued in due course.

## **Appendix H – Additional Information on School Organisation Procedures**

The government has set out guidance on the process of making changes to school organisation. This is available at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolorg/>

This appendix sets out the relevant sections of the guidance to decision makers on school closures, for ease of reference. Note that the next round of consultation is intended in part to obtain the information to allow decision makers to reach their decision. There is no expectation that all the required information should be available at this stage of the process.

### **CLOSING A MAINTAINED MAINSTREAM SCHOOL - A GUIDE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND GOVERNING BODIES**

#### **Statutory Guidance – Factors to be Considered by Decision Makers**

4.15 Paragraphs 8(6) and 17 of Schedule 2 to the EIA 2006 provides that both the LA and schools adjudicator **must** have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State when they take a decision on closure proposals. Paragraphs 4.16 to 4.63 below contain the statutory guidance.

4.16 The following factors **should not** be taken to be exhaustive. Their importance will vary, depending on the type and circumstances of the proposals. All proposals **should** be considered on their individual merits.

#### **EFFECT ON STANDARDS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

##### **A System Shaped by Parents (Paragraphs 4.17-4.18)**

4.17 The Government's aim, as set out in the Five Year Strategy for Education and Learners and the Schools White Paper Higher Standards, Better Schools For All, is to create a schools system shaped by parents which delivers excellence and equity. In particular, the Government wishes to see a dynamic system in which:

- weak schools that need to be closed are closed quickly and replaced by new ones where necessary; and
- the best schools are able to expand and spread their ethos and success.

##### **Standards (Paragraphs 4.19-4.21)**

4.20 Decision Makers **should** be satisfied that proposals for a school closure will contribute to raising local standards of provision, and will lead to improved attainment for children and young people. They **should** pay particular attention to the effects on groups that tend to under-perform including children from certain ethnic groups, children from deprived backgrounds and children in care, with the aim of narrowing attainment gaps.

4.21 Where a school is to be closed so that it may be amalgamated with a more successful and/or popular school, the Decision Maker **should** again normally approve these proposals, subject to evidence being provided by the LA and other interested parties, that the

development will have a positive impact on standards.

### **Diversity** (Paragraphs 4.28-4.30)

4.28 Decision Makers **should** be satisfied that when proposals lead to children (who attend provision recognised by the LA as being reserved for pupils with special educational needs) being displaced, any alternative provision will meet the statutory SEN improvement test (see paragraphs 4.58 to 4.62).

4.30 Decision Makers **should** consider how proposals will impact on local diversity. They **should** consider the range of schools in the relevant area of the LA and how the closure of the school will ultimately impact on the aspirations of parents, help raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.

### **Balance of Denominational Provision** (Paragraphs 4.31-4.32)

4.31 In deciding proposals to close a school with a religious character, the Decision Maker **should** consider the effect that this will have on the balance of denominational provision in the area.

4.32 The Decision Maker **should not** normally approve the closure of a school with a religious character where the proposal would result in a reduction in the proportion of denominational places in the area. This guidance does not however apply in cases where the school concerned is severely under-subscribed, standards have been consistently low or where an infant and junior school (at least one of which has a religious character) are to be replaced by a new all-through primary school with the same religious character on the site of one or both of the predecessor schools.

### **Every Child Matters** (Paragraph 4.33)

4.33 The Decision Maker **should** consider how proposals will help every child and young person achieve their potential in accordance with “Every Child Matters” principles which are: to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution to the community and society; and achieve economic well-being. This **should** include considering how displaced pupils will continue to have access to extended services, opportunities for personal development, access to academic and applied learning training, measures to address barriers to participation and support for children and young people with particular needs, e.g. looked after children or children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

## **NEED FOR PLACES**

### **Provision for Displaced Pupils** (Paragraph 4.34)

4.34 Where proposals will remove provision, the Decision Maker **should** be satisfied that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils in the area, taking into account the overall supply and likely future demand for places. The Decision Maker **should** consider the quality and popularity with parents of the schools in which spare capacity exists and evidence of parents’ aspirations for those schools.

### **Surplus Places** (Paragraphs 4.35-4.36)

4.36 The Decision Maker **should** normally approve proposals to close schools in order to remove surplus places where the school proposed for closure has a quarter or more places unfilled, and at least 30 surplus places, and where standards are low compared to standards across the LA. The Decision Maker **should** consider all other proposals to close schools in order to remove surplus places carefully. Where the rationale for the closure of a school is based on the removal of surplus places, standards at the school(s) in question **should** be taken into account, as well as geographical and social factors, such as population sparsity in rural areas, and the effect on any community use of the premises.

### **IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY AND TRAVEL**

#### **Impact on Community** (Paragraphs 4.37-4.38)

4.37 Some schools may already be a focal point for family and community activity, providing extended services for a range of users, and its closure may have wider social ramifications. In considering proposals for the closure of such schools, the effect on families and the community **should** be considered. Where the school was providing access to extended services, some provision **should** be made for the pupils and their families to access similar services through their new schools or other means.

4.38 The information presented by those bringing forward proposals to close such schools, particularly when they are in receipt of funding as part of regeneration activity, **should** therefore include evidence that options for maintaining access to extended services in the area have been addressed. The views of other relevant agencies and partnerships with responsibility for community and family services **should** be taken into account, alongside those of the local police, Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies having responsibility for the New Deal for Communities.

#### **Community Cohesion and Race Equality** (Paragraph 4.39)

4.39 When considering proposals to close a school the Decision Maker **should** consider the impact of the proposals on community cohesion. This will need to be considered on a case by case basis, taking account of the community served by the school and the views of different sections within the community. In considering the impact of the proposals on community cohesion the Decision Maker will need to take account of the nature of the alternative provision to be made for pupils displaced by the closure and the effects of any other changes to the provision of schools in the area.

#### **Travel and Accessibility for All** (Paragraphs 4.40-4.41)

4.40 In considering proposals for the reorganisation of schools, Decision Makers **should** satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly taken into account. Facilities are to be accessible by those concerned, by being located close to those who will use them, and the proposed changes **should not** adversely impact on disadvantaged groups.

4.41 In deciding statutory proposals, the Decision Maker **should** bear in mind that proposals **should not** have the effect of unreasonably extending journey times or increasing transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable routes e.g. for walking, cycling etc. The EIA 2006 provides extended

free transport rights for low income groups – see Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance ref 00373 – 2007BKT-EN at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications). Proposals **should** also be considered on the basis of how they will support and contribute to the LA's duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to school.

### **Rural Schools and Sites** (Paragraphs 4.42-4.44)

4.42 In considering statutory proposals to close a rural school, the Decision Maker **should** have regard to the need to preserve access to a local school for rural communities. There is therefore a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure **should** be strong and the proposals clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area. The presumption will not apply in cases where a rural infant and junior school on the same site are being closed to establish a new primary school. In order to assist the Decision Maker, those proposing closure **should** provide evidence to the Decision Maker to show that they have carefully considered:

- a. Alternatives to closure including the potential for federation with another local school to increase the school's viability; the scope for an extended school or children's centre to provide local community services and facilities e.g. child care facilities, family and adult learning, healthcare, community internet access etc;
- b. The transport implications as mentioned in paragraphs 4.40 to 4.41; and
- c. The overall and long term impact on local people and the community of closure of the village school and of the loss of the building as a community facility.

4.43 When deciding proposals for the closure of a rural primary school, the Decision Maker **should** refer to the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) 2007 to confirm that the school is a rural school. The list of rural primary schools can be viewed on line at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolorg/useful-links.cfm](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolorg/useful-links.cfm).

4.44 In the case of secondary schools, it is the responsibility of the Decision Maker to decide whether a school is to be regarded as rural for the purpose of considering proposals for closure under this guidance and in particular the presumption against closure. The Department's register of schools – Edubase (<http://www.edubase.gov.uk>) - includes a rural/urban indicator for each school in England based on an assessment by the Office for National Statistics. The Decision Maker **should** have regard to this indicator. Where a school is not recorded as rural on Edubase, the Decision Maker may nonetheless wish to consider evidence provided by interested parties that a particular school **should** be regarded as rural.

NOTE: On Edubase, any school classed as urban will have a rural/urban indicator of either 'Urban>10K – less sparse' or 'Urban>10K – sparse' – all other descriptions refer to rural schools.

## **SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Equal Opportunity Issues** (Paragraph 4.46)

4.46 The Decision Maker **should** consider whether there are any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that arise from the changes being proposed, for example that where there is a proposed change to single sex provision in an area, there is equal access to single



sex provision for the other sex to meet parental demand. Similarly there needs to be a commitment to provide access to a range of opportunities which reflect the ethnic and cultural mix of the area, while ensuring that such opportunities are open to all.

## **SPECIFIC AGE PROVISION ISSUES**

### **Early Years Provision (Paragraphs 4.47-4.48)**

4.47 In considering proposals to close a school which currently includes early years provision, the Decision Maker **should** consider whether the alternative provision will integrate pre-school education with childcare services and/or with other services for young children and their families; and **should** have particular regard to the views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

4.48 The Decision Maker **should** also consider whether the alternative early years provision will maintain or enhance the standard of educational provision and flexibility of access for parents. Alternative provision could be with providers in the private, voluntary or independent sector.

### **14-19 Curriculum and Collaboration (Paragraph 4.50)**

4.50 The Government has ambitious plans to increase post-16 participation rates and improve the skills of learners. The foundation for making progress is a transformed, coherent 14-19 phase offering a rich mix of learning opportunities from which young people can choose tailored programmes and gain qualifications appropriate to their aptitudes, needs and aspirations. This will be achieved by better collaboration between local providers, including schools, colleges, training providers and employers. Decision Makers **should** therefore consider what measures are being proposed to ensure that opportunities available to students in this age group are not reduced by the school closure, although the absence of such measures **should not** prevent the closure of a poorly-performing school.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) PROVISION**

### **Initial Considerations (Paragraphs 4.56-4.57)**

4.56 SEN provision, in the context of School Organisation legislation and this guidance, is provision recognised by the LA as specifically reserved for pupils with special educational needs.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

### **Views of interested parties (Paragraph 4.63)**

4.63 The Decision Maker **should** consider the views of all those affected by the proposals or who have an interest in them including: pupils; families of pupils; staff; other schools and colleges; local residents; diocesan bodies and other providers; LAs; the LSC (where proposals affect 14-19 provision) and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership if one exists, or any local partnership or group that exists in place of an EYDCP (where proposals affect early years and/or childcare provision). This includes statutory objections and comments

submitted during the representation period. The Decision Maker **should not** simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view when considering representations made on proposals. Instead the Decision Maker **should** give the greatest weight to representations from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by the proposals.

## Appendix I – Additional Information on Collaboration Between Schools

This appendix sets out information on the similarities and differences between collaboration and Federation of schools.

**This table illustrates scenarios for two school governing bodies (GB), however there is no limit placed on the number of schools able to collaborate and federate.**

	<b>Collaboration</b>	<b>Federation</b>
	Formal GB                      GB Committee with delegated powers.	Formal GB
Governing Body?	Each school has its own governing body The collaboration has joint governance /strategic committee with delegated powers.	Single governing body shared by all schools.
Statutory?	Yes. Collaboration Regulations, invoked under Section 26 of the Education Act 2002 and School Governance (Collaboration) (England) Regulations 2003.	Yes. Federations are established using Federation Regulations invoked under Section 24 of the Education Act 2002 and School Governance (Federations) England Regulations 2007.
Common Goals?	Yes. Through Service Level Agreement (SLA) and protocol; joint committee can make joint decisions in delegated areas, but not all.	Yes. Having a single governing body allows for efficient, streamlined decision making in all areas.
Common Budget?	No, but if Joint Committee has budgetary powers delegated to it, they can make prompt budgetary decisions for the group of schools.	No – but from April 2011 a single budget share is possible. Having a single governing body allows for prompt budgetary decisions on behalf of the group of schools.

Shared Staff?	Yes. Common management positions and appointments, but need to have protocol/contract to underpin commitment to shared posts.	Yes. Common management positions and appointments are agreed in a simple, effective manner. Sometimes choose to have single headteacher across a group of schools.
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### What are the potential benefits and efficiencies?

Schools work to:

- a) raise their standards and improve outcomes for young people, for example, by shared staff training, encouraging their staff to support each other and developing integrated curriculum and pastoral policies;
- b) offer pupils a wider range of opportunities and experiences, for example, by holding joint activities or sharing facilities or teachers that might be difficult to sustain;
- c) develop a range of extended services and activities for pupils and the wider community;
- d) improve their leadership and management, for example, through shared headship or school business manager;
- e) maximise the sharing of resources, taking advantage of economies of scale and greater value for money, to improve sustainability;
- f) open up opportunities to share management, governing body responsibilities and curriculum expertise.