

Community Consultation Meeting

Hope **13 October 2016** **16.00**

Present:

Heather Kidd, Shropshire Councillor

Janet Weeks, Governor

Giles Tulk, Governor

Sally Johnson, Chair of Governors

Jane Gill, Executive Headteacher

Sarah Brown, Parent

Pat Morris, Parent

Chris Mathews, Commissioner for Education Improvement and Efficiency

Phil Wilson, Head of Service Delivery

Helen Woodbridge, Notes

Phil Wilson gave a presentation on the proposals which have been driven by governors. He confirmed that the Phillip Sell from the diocese had been invited to this meeting. The consultation had been launched on 22 September and will run for 6 weeks. Documentation is available from the Shropshire Council website or hard copy from the school. The plan is for the process to be complete by September 2017 or January 2018. There will be a final decision by Cabinet in March 2017. Views are being gathered from all stakeholders.

Giles Tulk confirmed that it had been a unanimous decision of the federation governing body to ask the Local Authority to consult. The view of the governing body is that the reorganisation of the schools onto one site, resulting in the closure of two of the three schools, would be in the best educational interests of the children now and in the future, leading to more exciting opportunities for them.

Jane Gill felt that it would be positive for the children but also for staff. Children would be able to have wider friendship opportunities in a bigger group. Also, class age ranges would be narrower which enables more focus. There is already a real 'buzz' in the school.

Parents felt that so far things are going well although time is needed in order to get to know other children and their parents.

Giles Tulk had noticed the positive difference made when 85 voices sing together.

A staff meeting has already been held and the main concern for staff is job security. It was confirmed that HR advisers are providing support.

Heather Kidd asked if account had been taken of the Parish Plan (which encouraged the building of a few 2 and 3 bedroom houses). It was confirmed that the diocese have met with the Parish Council and Phil Wilson agreed to ensure that this is considered further.

Phil Wilson confirmed that some capital funding to support Early Years is available through the LA.

Giles Tulk spoke of the need to maximise revenue by working with the diocese.

Phil Wilson advised that a Section 77 notice would be required to dispose of the playing field (the proceeds from which must be used for education).

Appendix 3a

Giles Tulk stressed the importance of taking the local development plan into account.

Heather Kidd advised not to push for anything that the council would be against.

A parent advised that she had been angry at first but that her child is happy. The parent loves Hope School but understands that it is the children who are important. She can see the educational improvement in just 6 weeks. There has been no mention from her child of going back to Hope.

Jane Gill advised that the older children are realising that they are not as good as they had thought they were.

Parents raised some transport issues.

They would like confirmation of the provision of transport in writing (Powys).

They would like to siblings to go to Worthen – but Churchstoke is closer to home (White Grit). What is the situation re admissions/transport?

Parents asked about the pre school.

Jane Gill advised that there is a community play group at Worthen who want to join the school but currently there is no room. There is a plan for all to be on the same site with new nurse provision. Heather Kidd advised that maintaining early years provision at Hope is not cost effective as it is only used by 4 children.

Parents asked about the catchment for secondary schools.

White Grit children would be in CCBC catchment area but most Worthen children would attend Mary Webb. They asked if transport would be paid for Mary Webb.

Chris Mathews suggested that this was unlikely but would be investigated.

Giles Tulk was pleased that a rural school is being maintained.