

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 9 October 2008

PRESENTED BY: Strategic Director – Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Statutory Consultation for St Chad's Catholic High School

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide the response to the statutory consultation on the closure of St Chad's Catholic High school and the establishment of a new joint faith Catholic and Church of England Voluntary Aided High School. An outline of the decision-making process is also included.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 Having had regard to the statutory guidance and in pursuance of the powers set out in Section 10 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 and the related Regulations and the permission that was granted by the Secretary of State IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following related proposals be approved:-

(a) With effect from 31 August 2009 St Chad's High be discontinued.

(b) With effect from 1 September 2009 the new St Chad's Catholic/Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School be established on the current St Chad's Catholic High.

(c) With effect from 1 September 2009 the St Chad's Catholic/Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School published admission number be 190 per year group. In addition, the school will continue to provide a sixth form for 100. The expansion of this admission number of the closing Catholic High School is to give effect to the joint faith dimension of the new school. The Published Admission number will increase to 240 per year group on completion of the BSF investment at St Chad's.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Formal consultation with stakeholders commenced in June 2007 as part of the secondary re-organisation process. A further round of consultation was then undertaken in November 2007. Permission was then sought from the Secretary of State to publish the proposal without holding a competition. On 9th June 2008, the Secretary of State exercised the powers conferred on him by Section 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and decided to grant consent to the publication of a proposal for a new 11-19 joint Catholic/Church

of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School.

- 3.2 The statutory proposal was published by the governing body on 3rd July 2008. The statutory proposal was a joint agreement with the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Church of England Diocese of Chester. The notice outlined the intention to close St Chad's High in order that a joint faith Catholic and Church of England (11-19) school could be established on the current site. It was proposed that St Chad's Catholic High School close on 31st August 2009 and the new joint faith school commence on 1st September 2009. All the pupils from St Chad's would transfer to the new joint faith school from 1st September 2009. The published admission number would increase to 190 from 1st September 2009 and from 1st September 2013 it would increase to 240 with 100 sixth form places.
- 3.3 Letters were sent to all parents and governors detailing the date, time and venue of the consultation meeting. In addition, the public meeting was widely advertised through the local press, and posters were displayed at St Chad's Catholic High; all Children's Centres, Community Centres, Direct Links and the library, within the Runcorn area. A copy of the consultation arrangements is attached at Appendix B.
- 3.4 A staff meeting and a public consultation meeting were held in St Chad's Catholic school on 9th July 2008.

The majority of St Chad's Staff attended the school meeting and 15 members of the public attended the public consultation meeting.

The presentation used for the consultation was placed on both the school and local authority website and copies could be provided on request.

- 3.5 Those people wishing to respond to the consultation were advised to put their views in writing to Operational Director, Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources. No responses were received within the representation period of 3rd July 2008 to 14th August 2008.

4.0 DECISION

- 4.1 The Decision maker (Executive Board) must decide the proposal within two months of the end of the representation period otherwise the decision must be referred to the Adjudicator for a decision. If referred to the Adjudicator the proposal and any representations must be forwarded to the school adjudicator within one week of the end of the two month representation period along with any representations received and not withdrawn. Appendix C details the issues the Decision maker needs to consider.

4.2 The Decision maker can decide to:

- Reject the proposals;
- Approve the proposals;
- Approve the proposals with a modification (e.g. the school closure date)
- Approve the proposals subject to them meeting a specific condition.

Conditional approval can only be granted in a limited number of circumstances related specifically to Academy provision or changes in admission arrangements relating to another school. A date by which the conditions should be met must be set.

4.3 The reason for the decision must be given whether it is approved or rejected, it should also include the factors and criteria for the decision. A copy of the decision must be sent to:

- Each objector;
- The Secretary of State;
- LSC;
- Local C of E Diocese
- The Bishop of the RC Diocese; and
- The Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 A capital programme of £1.2 million was completed at St Chad's in July 2007. The school is now preparing for a major £7.4 million building programme which will commence in July 2008 and be completed by December 2009.

5.2 As there is currently no Church of England High school provision within the borough any parents wishing to seek this provision must send their children out of the borough. The authority, therefore are losing the funding for these pupils and in addition in many cases has to cover the costs of transport. The joint faith school provides the opportunity for Halton to retain pupils within the borough and reduce transport costs.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 St.Chad's Catholic High School has been a popular, successful but not over-subscribed school for many years. The current Pupil Admission Number is 170. The admission application process for Halton started Autumn 2007 for September 2008 admissions and the school received 233 applications that identified St.Chad's as first preference – the corresponding figure at the same time in 2006 was 140. 348 identified St. Chad's as either their first, second or third preference. 170 places have been allocated and there have been a significant number of appeals. Applications for admission in 2007 from Church of England primary schools were 4 but had risen this year to 27 (First Preference), 8 (Second Preference) and 10 (Third Preference). This clearly shows the parental demand for a Joint-Faith School. Applications from St Chad's Catholic primary schools have remained constant showing that

parental demand is unchanged.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People

The joint-faith school provides increased choice and diversity for parents and will encourage more parents to choose secondary provision within the borough.

7.2 Employment Learning and Skills in Halton

Through access to an excellent secondary school for all pupils, standards will improve providing greater employment prospects for Halton's Children and Young People.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

St Chad's is part of the BSF Programme, in developing its secondary schools for the future the authority will demonstrate how it will enable schools to meet the school sport Public Service Agreement through its capital investment and achieve high nutritional standards and encourage healthy living and eating.

7.4 A Safer Halton

Schools for the future will be designed to ensure that children, staff and other community users feel safe and secure on schools sites.

7.5 Halton's Urban

Through the BSF Halton schools will become a major resource for communities they serve and will be designed to offer shared community facilities, linking to other wider regeneration projects as well as being the focus for the local delivery of children's services.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The authority will not be in a position to provide diversity of provision and respond to local demand. Parents will continue to send their children out of borough to access Church of England secondary provision, this could also have an impact on the future viability of St Chad's Catholic High School.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 The proposals for the re-organisation of Halton's secondary and secondary special provision seek to provide choice and diversity, promote inclusion and access.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

10.1 To provide more choice and diversity and retain pupils within the borough.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

11.1 N/A

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

12.1 A decision will be required by Executive Board prior to 14th October 2008.

13.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Documents	Place of Inspection	Contact
<u>First Consultation summary – Halton Building Schools for the Future – Inspiring Children</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Consultation Meeting Dates Phase 1</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Consultation Presentations – Phase 1</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Executive Board report – 1st November 2007</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Second Consultation Summary – Halton Building Schools for the Future – Inspiring Children</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Consultation Meeting dates (Phase 2)	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources

Consultation Presentations	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Pupil Numbers	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Notes of Public Meetings	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
All responses to First round of consultation	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Halton Building School for the Future Pamphlets Federation Pupil Numbers Co-located Schools Zoning	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
All responses to second round of consultation	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and Reception – Municipal Buildings	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Executive Board Reports – 12 th December 2007	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Cross Party Members Report	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources

Exemption from Competition Letter (9 th June 2008)	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Statutory Notice – St Chad’s	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf www.st-chads.co.uk	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Presentation St Chad’s – 9 th July 2008	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf www.st-chads.co.uk	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Executive Board Report – St Chad’s – 24 th July 2008	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources