

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 24 September 2009
PRESENTED BY: Strategic Director – Children and Young People
SUBJECT: Secondary Re-organisation - Runcorn
WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the response to the statutory consultation to close The Grange Nursery, Infant and Junior School, change the age range of The Grange Comprehensive and enlarge the school from 1050 pupils to 1445 pupils. An outline of the decision-making process is also included.

In addition, to provide a summary of the response to the pre-statutory consultation to expand The Heath Specialist Technology College and provide an outline of the next stage in the procedure.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Proposals having been published in pursuance of the powers set out in sections 15(1) and 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and having had regard to the statutory guidance and to responses to consultation IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following related proposals be approved:-**

- (a) With effect from 31st August 2010 The Grange Nursery School, The Grange Infant School and The Grange Junior School be discontinued;**
- (b) With effect from 1st September 2010 the age range of The Grange Comprehensive School be changed from 11–16 to 3-16 years; and**
- (c) With effect from 1st September 2010 The Grange Comprehensive School be enlarged from 1050 pupils to 1445 pupils and become known as The Grange School; and**

(2) IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT statutory consultation be undertaken to expand The Heath Specialist Technology College from 1050 (210 per year group) in 2009 to 1200 in 2011 (240 per year group) to 1350 (270) in 2013.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 **The Grange Comprehensive, Junior, Infant and Nursery School**

At the Executive Board meeting on 9th April 2009 it was agreed that statutory consultation could be undertaken to discontinue The Grange Nursery; Infant and Junior; expand the age range of The Grange Comprehensive; and enlarge the school to establish an “All Through School”.

- 3.2 The statutory proposal was published on 25th June 2009. Letters were sent to all parents and provided for staff and governors. These letters contained a copy of the statutory proposals and included a feedback form and contact details. They also provided the date, time and venue of consultation meetings. In addition, a public meeting was advertised in the local press and posters were displayed at the four schools, plus other secondary schools, Children’s Centres, Community Centres, Direct Links and the libraries. The consultation details were also included on the circular, which is distributed to all schools and Children’s Services setting. A copy of the statutory notice is attached at Appendix A for information.
- 3.3 A governors meeting was held on the consultation on 1st July 2009 and the staff meeting and public consultation meeting was held at The Grange Comprehensive on 2nd July 2009. The staff meeting was well attended and a copy of the presentation used was placed on the website along with the questions raised.
- 3.4 Those people wishing to respond to the consultation were advised to put their views in writing. They were also advised to note the different timescales for responding to the different elements of the notice. Anyone wishing to make representations on the discontinuance of the three schools would have to respond in writing within 6 weeks of the publication of the proposal. Respondents to the proposal to alter the age range of the school would need to respond within 4 weeks. Finally representation as to the proposal to expand the school size would need to be made within 6 weeks of the publication of the proposal.
- 3.5 A total of 20 responses have been received in response to consultation. The responses have been from staff, parents and governors. There have been no objections to the proposals. All those who have responded have supported the proposal.

3.6 **The Heath Specialist Technology College**

It was agreed at the Executive Board meeting on 9th April 2009 that pre-statutory consultation could be undertaken on the proposal to expand The Heath Specialist Technology College. Consultation commenced on the proposal on 25th June 2009.

- 3.7 Letters were sent to all parents and provided for staff and governors. These letters included a copy of the proposals and included a feedback form and contact details. They also provided the date, time and venue of the meetings.

In addition, the public meeting was advertised in the local press and posters were displayed at the four schools, plus other secondary schools, Children's Centres, Community Centres, Direct Links and the libraries. The consultation details were also included on the circular, (see Appendix B for the consultation proposal).

3.8 The proposed expansion was discussed at the Governors meeting where it was supported. There were a total of 3 responses received to the consultation. These responses were all in support of the proposal to expand the College.

4.0 DECISION

4.1 The Grange Comprehensive, Junior, Infant and Nursery Schools

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 B details the consultation undertaken and Appendix D 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.

4.4 The Heath Specialist Technology College

It is now proposed that statutory consultation be undertaken in Autumn 2009 on the proposal to expand The Heath Specialist Technology College. Following the completion of the statutory consultation a further report will be provided to Executive Board for consideration.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The new "All Through School" will be built on the existing Grange Comprehensive Site. The capital works will be funded through the BSF Programme for secondary provision and the Primary Capital Programme for primary provision.

5.2 It is a condition of the approval for the Outline Business Case for BSF that the statutory consultation to establish The Grange School is completed before the end of September 2009.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Grange Junior School currently has unit provision for pupils with special educational needs. A review of all primary provision is currently being undertaken on primary SEN provision across the Borough.

6.2 Pupils attending the existing day care centre will also transfer to the All Through School.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People

These proposal meet the requirement to provide diversity and choice within the Borough and is supported as part of the BSF secondary proposals.

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

The Grange Comprehensive and The Heath Specialist Technology College are 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 school sites.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

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 Grange Comprehensive is a sample school for BSF failure to agree All Through provision could jeopardise approval of the Outline Business case. It could also lead to programme delay. Approval has already been given to fund the primary developments through Primary Capital funding. It will not be possible to spend this money in the time allocated if this proposal is not agreed.

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 24th September 2009.

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

Documents	Place of Inspection	Contact
Consultation on Federation for The Grange	The Grange Comprehensive School	David Stanley
Executive Board Report – 9 th April 2009 – BSF Secondary Re-organisation	Grosvenor House	Daniel Hennessy
Statutory Proposal and Statutory Notice	As above	As above