

## Agenda Item No: 5, Appendix 2

### Proposed amalgamation of Eastfield Community Infant & Nursery School and Westfield Community Junior School.

Questions from informal consultation period (19 April to 18 May 2018)

#### Location/Land/site

- **Where will the school entrance be as the current entrance is very busy and an entrance for both schools could cause traffic difficulties?**  
A new entrance will be developed as part of the design process for the new school
- **What will happen to the land the school is on?**  
The land will be used to provide what is required for a 3FE Primary school
- **Will the LA be reducing the site size and getting rid of any land?**  
The land will be retained and used to provide what is required for a 3FE Primary school
- **How will the site be accessed?**  
Site access will be determined as part of the design process for the whole site in consultation with the Planning Authority, Highways and other statutory consultees
- **Will any school land be sold?**  
No, the whole site is for Educational usage
- **Where will the new school be located?**  
The plan is to build the new school between the current Infant and Junior school site
- **Will the site for the new school remain the same size as the current Eastfield/Westfield sites?**  
Both existing school sites will be used to develop and deliver the new 3FE Primary school
- **Are there any plans to reduce the size of the site for the new school?**  
No, the whole site is for educational usage

#### Staff

- **What opportunity will there be for the staff to prepare? Will there be an additional day?**  
It is expected that once the merger has been approved the current headteachers will ensure that the school improvement plan for both schools will detail training and development opportunities for staff to work together.

This would include staff training and work to develop shared policy and practice. Therefore staff will be increasingly working as one team prior to the merger. The organisation of training days is the responsibility of the headteacher and governors. They have the flexibility to plan days where they feel they will benefit school most.

In terms of the actual move, the needs for additional time will be assessed once it is clear what the plans are for the move from the existing to the new building. A removal company is used to support the process but staff will need to be involved in packing anything they want to retain from their classroom / work area.

- **Is there salary protection for staff, teachers and support staff?**

At this time we do not know if it will be necessary to apply pay protection. If this was necessary the requirements of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) would be applicable to teaching staff. For support staff the local authority currently has a policy of one years' pay protection where a post is secured on one grade below the current grade.

- **When will all staff know if they have a job?**

Once the Governing Body has been appointed for the new school they will be focused on determining the leadership and staffing needs of the new school. Once the leadership team is in place they will determine the staffing structure needed. As required consultation would be undertaken on the proposed staffing structure. At this time we cannot be clear on the timeframes. It is proposed the new school will open from September 2020 therefore decisions and plans for the staffing structure are likely to take place later in 2019.

- **Will staff need to reapply for their jobs, teachers and support staff?**

We do not anticipate staff will need to apply for their current roles when they transfer to the new school. If changes to roles are proposed and a restructuring consultation undertaken the process for selection would be outlined in the consultation paper.

- **How long will staff have to move things over?**

We intend the new school to open for the start of the 2020/21 academic year so we would anticipate everything is moved into the school to enable this. Senior leaders will ensure there is a detailed plan of action to prepare classrooms for learning. This will include how resources are to be packed at the end of the school year ready for a removal team to deliver them to their correct location as term ends. It should not be necessary for teachers to spend more time preparing their classrooms than they would do normally following a classroom move.

- **Is there a budget to allow staff to work together before September?**

There are no additional resources available for this however the schools will consider how best to utilise staff training days to support staff with the transition.

- **Will the headteacher start sooner?**

Please refer to the answer to the question above: *When will all staff know if they have a job?*

## **Building/demolition**

- **Are fixtures and fittings included in the build?** Yes, anything which is fixed to the building is part of the building works. The school will have a Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture budget (FF&E) and an ICT budget to support the need for additional equipment and furniture.

- **There will be disruption to the building, there will be noise, can you explain the how this will be managed?**

Neither the Infant school nor the Junior school buildings will be touched during the construction of the new building. There will inevitably be some noise. The intention is to undertake most of the ground works during the school holiday period. The appointed contractor will provide both schools and parents with regular updates on progress and at times will rearrange activities to accommodate the schools e.g. during SATs weeks. The site manager for the scheme will meet regularly (in some instances once a week) with the senior leadership team to ensure that any issues are ironed out as part of their communication strategy.

- **How long will the new school take to build?**

The indicative programme is showing 35 weeks to construct the new building. There are 3 weeks allowed for both schools to move in. Phase 2 would involve demolition of the two sites and then landscaping and delivering a new car park.

- **How will you minimise the disruption?**

It is inevitable that there will be some disruption. However as we are not touching the existing buildings there will be less disruption and it will be more about how the site is managed and children/staff and community are kept safe during the build. Contractors on CCC framework have been through a rigorous tender process. They have to provide evidence of having worked on live school sites which also includes answering the above question. However, as all sites are different we will ask this question again as part of the mini tender process for the contractor.

- **How long will the demolition take?**

The indicative programme is showing demolition in 2 phases with 12 weeks for each building. We will have a more definitive answer once the design team and contractor have been appointed to develop the scheme as the current plan is high level.

- **Why can't the demolition be done before the school opens in September?**

Due to the timescales for construction of the new school and then emptying both buildings, there is not enough time to complete demolition work before opening the new school. Once the project team has been appointed and is able to provide a more detailed project plan this will be shared with both schools and governing bodies.

- **When will the new build be completed?**

The building will be ready for September 2020 opening.

- **Will lessons be learnt from previous builds?**

Each scheme delivered by CCC is evaluated by the end users (schools), project team (contractors and architects) and CCC staff after handover in order to continuously improve delivery but also recognising that each scheme is unique. Alongside BB103 \* building guidance from government, CCC has also developed a set of guidance for contractors and architects which sets out expectations based on lessons learnt. An example is the usage of energy efficiency lightbulbs in order to reduce energy consumption on school sites.

- **What form will the contract take?**

CCC will enter into a standard legal contract with the Project Manager and the contractor.

- **When will the master plan be available?**

CCC need to appoint a team from its contractor framework by undertaking a mini tender. The process between appointment and master planning will take about 30 weeks.

- **How long will the children not have a play area?**

As part of the design the contractor will need to provide play area for children. As the scheme has identified the land between the two schools, the hard and soft play area surrounding both schools should remain intact apart from the requirement for an entrance for construction traffic. The team will share this information once they have started to develop the detailed design.

- **My children will be in Key Stage 2 when the planned building work commences. Although I believe that every effort will be made by staff to reduce disruption for the children in the school during this year. How can the county council support the school so that the site has adequate access for all the personnel and materials required for such a huge build and reserve outside space for the children of both schools at break times and also for PE?**

Please see above answer

## Facilities/Classes

- **Is the nursery staying?**

The proposal includes provision for permanent accommodation for the nursery in the amalgamated school

- **Thorndown has much more car parking that exists at Eastfield and Westfield, what parking will be provided for the new school?**

This will form part of the detailed design. However as part of the planning process we will be required to provide adequate parking for staff in line with County Council and Huntingdon District Councils planning policies.

- **Can we request bike racks, scooter racks**

These will be required as part of the design and planning requirements

- **and showers?**

This will form part of the discussion about the detailed design and will be dependent upon the BB103 \* guidance which states what is required for a 3FE primary school

- **What input will we have into the school design?**

The design of the build is partly influenced by a Government document called BB103\*. There will be an architect appointed as part of the process and there will be regular meetings held with the schools throughout the design process.

- **Will there be a swimming pool**

This is dependent upon BB103\* guidance for a 3 FE primary school. Should the guidance not include a swimming pool the school may wish to work with local businesses to raise funds, **or apply for grants, to provide one.**

- **Are any other facilities lost other than the pool?**

The new school will have enhanced facilities as some of the areas within both schools are undersized e.g. staff accommodation and some teaching areas

## Process

- **Please explain the process after the public consultation?**

The governing bodies of each of the two schools will meet independently during the first week of June to decide formally whether or not they wish to proceed with the amalgamation process. If both governing bodies decide to proceed then the next stage will be what is termed a 'formal' consultation period. This will be triggered by the publication of a statutory notice (by the County Council) setting out the proposal and giving a further opportunity for anyone to respond. The final decision will be made by the Office of the School Adjudicator.

- **How will the school be named?**

This will be a decision for the joint governing body working group which will take forward the work required if amalgamation proceeds. This group will decide if and how it might involve the school community in coming to its decision on the name for the new school

- **If only one GB approve will the amalgamation still go ahead?**

No. Both governing bodies have to decide, independently of each other, to proceed with the amalgamation process. If one of the two decides not to, then the process will be halted and the proposal abandoned.

- **What will happen if the new school doesn't do ahead?**

The County Council will need to re-consider how best it can provide permanent accommodation of 90 places in each year group at the two schools.

## Other

- **Can we have a time capsule?**

This can be built into the brief for the project team managing the development of the new building

- **How likely is it that this plan will happen?**

The response to the informal consultation which took place between 19 April and 18 May was overwhelmingly positive with 90% of respondents in favour of the amalgamation proposal

- **Has amalgamation been considered before?**

Yes amalgamation has been considered previously however the governing bodies in place when it was discussed decided the time was not right for amalgamation.

- **Will the Lump sum reduction have an impact on the children?**

Based on the current national methodology, in 2021-2022 the new school will receive 85% of both lump sums. Although the lump sum declines in the following year 2022/23 the Council's experience is that the economies of scale do not leave amalgamated schools at a financial disadvantage.

- **Are we planning for the future or just responding to increasing numbers now?**

The number of children requiring a reception place in St Ives for a September 2018 start dropped this year. Numbers of children living in the area is monitored closely, population forecasts are considered along with plans for housing developments to ensure there are sufficient school places in the area. Our data suggests that the expansion of Eastfield and Westfield will provide school sufficient places for the currently community and planned developments, though we will continue to monitor the need for places.

- **How will this benefit the children?**

Academic studies have reached different conclusions on this issue. The evidence in Cambridgeshire is that generally (not always) separate infant and junior schools have found themselves in difficulty more than primary schools. There is strong evidence of the transition dip from infants to juniors and that primary schools provide consistency of practice and continuity for the whole 4-11 age range.

- **As this will be a new school will children have to reapply for a place?**  
No. Pupils attending either the infant or junior schools at the end of the summer term 2020 will be automatically transferred to the roll of the new school (except for those in Year 6 who will transfer to a place in their allocated secondary school. Children due to start in Reception in autumn term 2020 will need to apply in the usual way when the admission round opens in November 2019.

\*NB. Link to government guidance BB103

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mainstream-schools-area-guidelines>