

Agenda Item No 8 (p)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

26 July 2016

Report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services

**REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE PRE-PUBLICATION
CONSULTATION ON THE ORGANISATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN
TIBSHELF AND ON THE DISPOSAL OF PART OF THE FORMER
SECONDARY SCHOOL SITE – (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)**

1. Purpose of the Report

To advise Cabinet of the responses to the Authority's pre-publication consultation on the organisation of primary education in Tibshelf, and on the disposal of part of the former secondary school site.

2. Information and Analysis

At its meeting on 15 March 2016, Cabinet gave approval for a pre-publication consultation to be undertaken on the proposal to reorganise primary education in Tibshelf by utilising the site of the former Tibshelf Community School. The consultation was held from 11 April to 13 May 2016. The notice was published in the local press, on the Tibshelf School, Town End Junior School and Tibshelf Infant School websites as well as being displayed outside the former site of the secondary school. Copies of the notice were provided for the families of children at both the junior and infant schools and distributed to the residents around the proposed site and the current user of the site. Notices were also sent to local members at the Authority, Bolsover District Council and the Town Council.

Consultees were asked the following questions:

- Do you prefer the junior and infant schools to remain on separate sites?
- Do you prefer that the junior school is relocated on the old Tibshelf School site?

- Do you think Town End Junior School and Tibshelf Infant School should operate as a federation or do you think they should close and be replaced by a new primary school?
- What are your views on the disposal of surplus land on the former Tibshelf School site and Town End Junior School site and the use of the funds to provide a new building to house a federation of the infant and junior schools?

During the six-week period of consultation, a total of 12 responses were received. The responses indicated that there was no opposition to the provision of primary education on a single site. The concerns and comments expressed in the responses have been identified in the report below.

Junior and Infant Schools to remain on separate sites

A number of responses raised the issue of traffic and parking at the existing schools, and the need to deliver and collect children to and from different sites. There were no comments in favour of leaving the schools on separate sites.

Authority Commentary

Parents do park on the main roads at the respective schools and the co-location of the schools on a site off the main roads would address this.

Co-location on the former site of the secondary school

The respondents saw this as a positive proposal that was a 'great opportunity' for the village and would reduce car movements if parents only had a single drop off/collection point. There was concern that it would result in congestion on the High Street

Authority Commentary

This consultation is about the principle of a new primary school and the proposal to sell part of the site to support the project. The details of the proposal including access arrangements have not been developed in detail and these issues would be addressed at a later stage.

The choice of federation over a primary

Five of the respondents expressed a view that it would be better to create a single primary school. Four respondents were in favour of federation between the schools and three offered no opinion. One felt that they did not fully understand the terms of federation between schools. Of those in favour of a primary, two supported it on financial grounds and one to avoid children having to move schools during the

primary phase. In the responses in favour of federation, one respondent felt that the change from infant to junior prepared children for the more significant move to secondary school.

Authority Commentary

Further work will be carried out to consider the option of moving towards a primary school on the site. This would require a statutory consultation.

Disposal of surplus land

This topic generated a number of concerns. The current user of the former secondary school site is a community football club. Over the past 8 years, it has increased in size using the facilities and has spent its own funds improving the football pitches. There is concern that the plans will result in the club being without a home and, therefore, folding. The club's suggestion is that the school should be built on the site of the old school buildings and the playing fields left as they are.

Other respondents were concerned about the number of dwellings that were likely to be created in the light of other developments in the village and the resultant impact on traffic. Neighbours to the site expressed concern about the type of building and preferred a single-storey building and another felt that the demolition of the Infant School would provide better access to the site for the development. One party expressed an interest in part of the site to provide expansion and parking.

Authority Commentary

Locating the buildings for the primary school where the secondary school buildings stood, has been considered. If this were done, the children would have to cross the access road to the allotments to use the outdoor facilities. Whilst secondary school children were required to do that, it would not be considered suitable or safe for younger children. Even if the new school was to be located on the old school site, there would not be any justification for leaving the current level of playing fields as they exceed guidelines for primary-age children. Furthermore, the lack of capital receipts would impact on the Authority's ability to fund the project.

The design of any future building has not been decided and would be subject to planning permission. It is normal however, for the Authority to build single-storey buildings for schools in the primary sector.

Support for the proposal

Although the response to the consultation was limited, there was support for the move of Town End Junior School to the site of the former Tibshelf School and the co-location of the schools. The majority of respondents supported a primary over a federation of schools. Whilst there were concerns about access and traffic, there was an understanding that land should be used for a new school building.

Next Steps

Officers from Children's Services Development will proceed with the submission to the DfE for the disposal of surplus playing field and school land on the site of the former secondary school. A further report will be submitted to Cabinet in due course to report any decision of the Secretary of State for Education and to decide the next steps at that stage.

3. Financial Considerations

It is proposed that the details of the scheme will be developed in conjunction with Corporate Property and that Cabinet considers the scheme again when more details are available, and a decision taken by the Secretary of State on the proposal of the land disposal.

4. Legal Considerations

The surplus land at the site of the former Tibshelf School is both playing field land and non-playing field land. Under Section 77(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA), the Authority is required to seek approval from the Secretary of State for Education for the disposal of playing fields. Under Schedule 1 of the Academy Act 2010, the Authority is also required to seek approval from the Secretary of State for Education for the disposal of school land.

5. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: - prevention of crime & disorder, equality of opportunity, and environmental, health, human rights, human resources, property and transport considerations.

6. Background Papers

File in Development

7. Key Decision

Yes

8. Call-in

Is it required that the call-in period be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed within this report? No.

9. Officer's Recommendation

That Cabinet notes the responses to the consultation and approves:

the application to DfE for the disposal of land at the former Tibshelf Secondary School.

**Jane Parfrement
Strategic Director for Children's Services**