

Subject:	Proposed amalgamation of Hangleton Infant and Hangleton Junior Schools from September 2015: responses to Statutory Notice		
Date of Meeting:	13 October 2014		
Report of:	Executive Director of Children's Services		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Michael Nix	Tel: 29-0732
	Email:	Michael.nix@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	Hangleton & Knoll		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The reasons for proposing the amalgamation of Hangleton Infant and Junior Schools were set out in the report to the Children and Young People Committee on 21 July. The Committee agreed that a Statutory Notice concerning this proposal should be published.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the responses to the statutory notice and to recommend that the proposal be approved

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee confirms the proposal contained in the statutory notice to amalgamate Hangleton Infant and Junior Schools from 1 September 2015

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the outcomes of the Statutory Notice process in respect of the proposed amalgamation of Hangleton Infant and Junior Schools from September 2015 and to recommend that the Committee now approve this proposal. The reasons for the proposal and the outcomes of informal consultation during the Summer Term 2014 were described in a report to the Committee's meeting on 21 July 2014.
- 3.2 The Statutory Notice (Appendix 1) was published on 1 September 2014 and the closing date for receipt of any representations was 28 September 2014. The full proposal information was available on the Council's web site and in hard copy by request.
- 3.3 There were no requests received for the full proposal information during the Notice Period and no comments on or objections to the proposal were received.

- 3.4 The previous head teacher of Hertford Junior School left at the end of the Summer Term 2014 and the head teacher of the Infant School is acting as the Interim Head of the Junior School. The two schools have formed a joint governors committee and are working closely together to plan for the primary school.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 As explained in the report to the previous meeting of the Committee, the alternative option would be for the two schools to continue to operate as separate infant and junior schools. The Council's policy of considering amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools is based on sound educational and organisational reasons and the rationale for the amalgamation has been strongly supported through the consultation.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation on changes to school organisation must follow the processes set out in section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) as amended. The Act and associated regulations require that any proposal to close a school must go out to statutory consultation before any statutory notices can be published. There is no longer any statutory requirement to consult on proposals to extend the age range of a school by three years or more. However recent Guidance from the DfE (January 2014) provides that 'there is a strong expectation on LA's to consult interested parties in developing their proposal prior to publication'. Accordingly a combined public consultation was carried out on both the proposal to close Hangleton Junior and the proposal to extend the age range of Hangleton Infants during May and June 2014 and reported to the Committee at the meeting on 21 July 2014.
- 5.2 The required Statutory Notice period, including the provision of full proposal information has now been completed.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed amalgamation of Hangleton Infant and Junior Schools is in accordance with the Council's policy and has been strongly supported locally. The Governing Body of Hangleton Junior School has already agreed that the head teacher of Hangleton Infant School should be their interim head teacher and she is now in post. There have been no objections made in the Statutory Notice period.
- 6.2 In light of these factors, the Committee is recommended to approve the proposal to amalgamate the two schools from September 2015.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The school is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and will continue to be funded mainly based on pupil numbers, which would remain

unchanged; however there would be a change in the lump sum payable to the Primary school (one element of £150k) rather than two lump sums payable to both the Infant and Junior schools (£300k in total). This is protected to 85% of the total lump sum in the first year £255k. The school would also have staff savings e.g. by only employing one Headteacher rather than two, which would offset the reduction in budget.

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore

Date: 01/10/14

Legal Implications:

The Education and Inspections Act 2006, as amended, provides that the Local Authority is the decision maker on any proposals to close a school and to alter the upper age limit of a school. The Children and Young Persons Committee will act as the decision maker for the Local Authority on these proposals. The decision must be made within two months of the end of the representation period. The exact process by which a decision maker carries out their decision making process is not prescribed however it must have regard to the statutory 'Decision-makers Guidance' published by the DfE in January 2014. A full copy of this Guidance is available in the Member's Room.

The Guidance states that the decision-maker will need to be satisfied that the appropriate representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has had regard to the responses received. The decision maker must consider all the views submitted, including all support for, objections to, and comments on the proposals.

In issuing a decision the decision-maker can:

- reject the proposal
- approve the proposal without modification
- approve the proposal with modifications, having consulted the governing body
- approve the proposal-with or without modification- subject to certain prescribed conditions being met

Lawyer Consulted:

Serena Kynaston

Date: 03/01/2014

Equalities Implications:

- 7.2 There are no equalities implications arising from this proposal. The great majority of children already transfer from the infant school to the junior school and this will continue in the new primary school without the need for a 7+ admissions exercise.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.3 There are no sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.4 None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Statutory Notice for the proposed amalgamation of Hangleton Infant and Hangleton Junior Schools, published on 1 September 2014

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. Decision Maker's Guidance, Department for Education, January 2014

Background Documents

1. Full proposal information for the proposed amalgamation of Hangleton Infant and Hangleton Junior Schools from September 2015