

Meeting:	School Organisation Committee
Date:	19 July 2006
Subject:	Pinner Wood School update
Responsible Officer:	Executive Director, People First
Contact Officer:	Director of Strategy, People First
Portfolio Holder:	People First
Key Decision:	No – information only
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

In March SOC members were sent a copy of the statutory notice that was published on 2 March 2006 to create a new combined Pinner Wood First and Middle School. The new school would open in September 2006 on the existing site, and would be a two form of entry school.

No objections were received, and the statutory notice and the new admission arrangements have been determined by the portfolio holder on delegated authority from Cabinet.

Decision Required

None. Information only

Reason for report

To inform SOC members of the outcome of the statutory notice published in March 2006 to create a new combined Pinner Wood First and Middle School.

Benefits

The development planning for the new school is proceeding.

Cost of Proposals

The Council has included a provisional figure of £300,000 annually in the Capital Programme to support school amalgamations.

Building work has been identified to be undertaken in support of the amalgamation of the two Pinner Wood schools, along with other planned capital works. The schools have been told that £300,000 would be allocated towards the works in support of the amalgamation.

The schools have received advice from the Schools Finance Manger to assist them with their business case in support of amalgamation.

The Schools Forum have agreed to amend the school formula so any new school will be given the balances of the two closing schools and agreed the protection for 1 year of the fixed lump sum which both closing schools would have received.

Risks

Not applicable.

Implications if recommendations rejected

Not applicable.

Section 2: Report

Brief History

The governing bodies of Pinner Wood First School and Pinner Wood Middle School decided that amalgamation, and opening as a new two form of entry combined school in September 2006, is in the best interests of the schools.

On 16 February 2006, Cabinet resolved that Statutory Notices be published to enable this planning to proceed. Cabinet also resolved that if no objections were received during the representation period, the decision on the amalgamation of the two schools be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Statutory Notices were published on 2 March. The six week representation period ended on 13 April.

On 6 April 2006, Cabinet authorised the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning, following determination of the statutory notices to create the new school, to determine the admission arrangements for the new Pinner Wood school for 2006/2007 academic year and for 2007/2008 academic year.

On 21 April 2006, the portfolio holder determined the statutory notices for the amalgamation of Pinner Wood First and Middle Schools. The portfolio holder also determined the admission arrangements for the new Pinner Wood School for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 academic years, with planned admission number of 60. Cabinet delegated authority to determine these matters to the portfolio holder to make it possible for the new school to open as planned in September 2006.

All pupils attending the two schools at the time of closure will be offered places in the new school.

A temporary governing body has been formed. The name of the new school has been agreed as 'Pinner Wood School'. The headteacher for the new school has been appointed.

Options considered

An alternative course of action to delegating authority to the portfolio holder would have been to ask Cabinet to determine the admission arrangements after the statutory notices were determined. However, this would have delayed implementation of the admission arrangements until some point after the new school had opened.

Consultation

Informal consultation occurred between October and December 2005. Formal consultation to amalgamate the two schools, and to open as a new combined two form of entry school, was started in January and ended on 6 February 2006.

Statutory Notices were published on 2 March. The six week representation period ended on 13 April. No objections were received.

Financial Implications

All revenue cost implications will be contained within the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Legal Implications

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the Council to publish Statutory Notices to make any prescribed alteration to a community school. Closing two schools and the establishment of a new school are prescribed alterations. The Act outlines the procedure to be followed. The initial requirement is informal consultation with all interested parties, followed by the publishing of Statutory Notices.

Once Statutory Notices have been published, legislation provides a statutory timescale in which comments can be made. If no objection is made the Council has a discretion as to whether to implement the proposal. If an objection is made the proposal must be referred to the School Organisation Committee (SOC) for a determination. If SOC agrees the proposals they must be implemented.

Equalities Impact

Amalgamation and the opening of a new combined two form of entry school is likely to have a positive impact through the creation of a financially secure school with full classes, improved Early Years Foundation Unit, a Children's Centre, and enhanced scope to deliver extended school activities.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

Amalgamation and the opening of a new combined two form of entry school is likely to have a positive impact through the creation of a financially secure school

with full classes, improved Early Years Foundation Unit, a Children's Centre, and enhanced scope to deliver extended school activities.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Amalgamation of Pinner Wood First and Middle Schools (Cabinet Report 16 February 2006)

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers should telephone 020 8420 9270