

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	19 June 2008
Subject:	Strategic Approach to School Reorganisation
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Director Schools and Children's Development, Heather Clements,
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder, Schools and Children's Development Cllr Anjana Patel
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Annexe 1 Proposals for Individual Schools Annexe 2 High Level Timeline Annexe 3 Workstream Groups

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report presents an up-date of the work of the School Reorganisation Stakeholder Reference Group and proposes to undertake consultation to change school organisation and the ages of transfer in Harrow. It also informs Cabinet of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) consultation on Building Schools for the Future (BSF).

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Consider and note the progress of the work of the Stakeholder Reference Group.
2. Agree to undertake a consultation on school reorganisation to change the ages of transfer and age ranges in community schools in Harrow, in accordance with DCSF Guidance to change community schools, with effect from September 2010. The proposed changes will establish:
 - separate first schools (Reception to Year 3) as infant schools (Reception to Year 2)
 - separate middle schools (Year 4 to Year 7) as junior schools (Year 3 to Year 6)
 - combined first and middle schools (Reception to Year 7) as primary schools (Reception to Year 6)
 - high schools (Year 8 to Year 11) as secondary schools with 6th form provision (Year 7 to Year 13)

3. Receive a further report in early 2009 outlining the comments received during the consultation and to consider whether to publish statutory notices.
4. Agree to delegate responsibility to the Director of Schools and Children's Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Schools and Children's Development to submit a response to the DCSF consultation and an Expression of Interest for Building Schools for the Future funding in response to the DCSF guidance.

Reason: (For recommendation)

Cabinet re-affirmed their commitment to changing the age of transfer at their meeting in October 2007 and established the Stakeholder Reference Group. To exercise the local authority's statutory responsibility in relation to school organisation, consultation on proposals is required. This report will enable the Stage 1 consultation to reorganise community schools in Harrow.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The Strategic Approach to School Reorganisation and the potential outcome to change the ages of transfer will contribute to the Corporate Priority to extend community use of schools while making education in Harrow even better.
- 2.1.2 The Vision for Education agreed by Cabinet at their meeting on 21 May 2008 will underpin the development of the strategic approach to school reorganisation.
- 2.1.3 Cabinet's commitment to changing school reorganisation in Harrow is consistent with a range of National and Local policies impacting currently on Children's Services and schools. These include:
 - the aspirations from the Children's Plan,
 - Every Child Matters
 - the local authority's role as champion for pupils and parents
 - the consultation on BSF and the opportunity to re-submit expressions of interest to bring forward BSF funding for Harrow schools, and
 - the investment opportunity provided through the DCSF Primary Capital Programme.

2.2 Background

- 2.2.1 At their meeting in October 2007, Cabinet agreed a Strategic Approach to School Organisation. The rationale for changing school organisation was outlined in the report grouped under the headings Organisation, Education and Social Factors and Stakeholder Support. Cabinet resolved:
 - i) Commitment to implementing changes in the age of transfer from 12 to 11 years of age to secondary school and from 8 to 7 years of age to Junior School.
 - ii) To establish a Stakeholder Reference Group.

- iii) The submission of a revised Building Schools for the Future (BSF) bid in accordance with the Department for Children, Schools and Families guidance be agreed.
 - iv) An amended amalgamation policy be agreed.
- 2.2.2 The amalgamation policy continues to be implemented when circumstances within the policy are met. Proposals arising from the application of the amalgamation policy will be reported to Cabinet accordingly.
- 2.2.3 The DCSF are undertaking a consultation on the management of future waves of the BSF programme. It is expected that guidance will be issued in August and submission made by October 2008. To enable the preparation and submission of the consultation response and the Expression of Interest, Cabinet are requested to agree to delegate responsibility to the Director of Schools and Children's Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Schools and Children's Development to agree the submissions in accordance with the DCSF's timeline and guidance.
- 2.2.4 The remaining focus of this report is on the Stakeholder Reference Group and proposals to consult on changing the age of transfer.

Options considered

2.3 School Organisation in Harrow

- 2.3.1 There are several models of school organisation in Harrow. Community schools in the primary sector in Harrow are organised as separate first schools, Reception to Year 3, separate middle schools, Year 4 to Year 7, combined first and middle schools Reception to Year 7. High schools are currently Year 8 to Year 11; however the addition of sixth forms means that from September 2008, the high schools will be Year 8 to Year 13. The organisation of the special schools will also need to be reviewed to align them with mainstream schools. There are more flexible practices currently that allow some pupils to transfer to special high schools at the end of Year 6.
- 2.3.2 The Strategic Approach to School Reorganisation project is inclusive of the voluntary aided sector. Voluntary aided schools are included in the discussions to do with the project and the workstreams. The education vision has been discussed with diocesan bodies, who are supportive of the approach.
- 2.3.3 The primary schools in the voluntary aided sector (Roman Catholic, Church of England, Jewish and Hindu) are combined first and middle schools or primary schools. The Roman Catholic secondary schools are Year 7 to Year 11. From September 2009 these secondary schools will be Year 7 to Year 13. The Governing Bodies have responsibility for the organisation of their schools. It is proposed that local authority officers offer to work with the governing bodies of the voluntary aided schools to co-ordinate the process for them to bring forward statutory notices, if they so choose, to make changes and align their schools with the arrangements proposed for community sector schools.

2.3.4 The proposed reorganisation for Community Schools is summarised in the table below. There are no proposals to change the number of places in the first and middle schools. The proposals for individual schools are listed in Annexe 1.

Current Organisation (no. of schools)	Year Groups	Proposed Organisation (no. of schools)	Year Groups
First Schools (16)*	Reception to Year 3	Infant Schools (16)*	Reception to Year 2
Middle Schools (16)*	Year 4 to Year 7	Junior Schools (16)*	Year 3 to Year 6
Combined First and Middle Schools (13)*	Reception to Year 7	Primary Schools (13)*	Reception to Year 6
Special Schools (2)	Reception to Year 7	Special Primary Schools (2)	Reception to Year 6
High Schools (8) **	Year 8 to Year 11	Secondary Schools (8)	Year 7 to Year 13
Special High Schools (2)	Year 7 to Year 13	No change	

Notes:

* These numbers may be subject to change. On 21 May 2008, Cabinet decided to publish statutory proposals to amalgamate the West Lodge schools. There may be further consultations about proposals to amalgamate schools that may affect these numbers.

** With effect from September 2008, community high schools will be Year 8 to Year 13 including sixth form provision

2.4 Timescale for Implementation of Proposals

2.4.1 It is proposed that school reorganisation is implemented in September 2010 and that the proposals for each individual school are subject of consultation in accordance with the DCSF Guidance Stage 1 during September, with the consultation ending in early December 2008. An outline high level timeline is provided in Annexe 2.

2.5 Impact of School Reorganisation

2.5.1 The strategic change to school organisation proposed is a complex project that will impact on all community schools in Harrow and has the potential to impact on those schools in the voluntary aided sector also organised with Year 7 pupils. The headline impacts are:

- In September 2010, the first year of the change, pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 at the end of the summer term 2010 in separate first schools will transfer to the newly established junior schools. In the current Academic Year 2007-08 these pupils are in Reception and Year 1.

- Pupils in Year 6 and Year 7 at the end of the summer term 2010 in separate middle schools and combined schools will transfer to newly established secondary schools. In the current Academic Year 2007-08 these pupils are in Years 4 and 5.
- The admissions arrangements will need to be agreed in accordance with the statutory process, meet the requirements of the New Code of Practice and the Admissions Service will need to manage four cohorts of pupils transferring in September 2010.
- SEN statements for all pupils transferring will need to be completed and appropriate induction and curriculum planning in place.
- Appropriate accommodation will need to be available for the pupils changing schools and capital funding deployed to meet these needs. Available sources include Schools Devolved Formula Capital, DCSF modernisation and Basic Need funding, Primary Capital Programme and BSF funding.
- School budgets will need to be adjusted to reflect the movement of pupils, and transitional arrangements agreed within the available funding from the Direct Schools Grant (DSG)
- School staffing structures will need to be reviewed and appointments made appropriate for the school organisation
- Parents, staff and governors will need to be consulted and informed of the proposals and the changes
- Statutory processes will need to be completed to implement the changes
- Curriculum planning, teaching and learning strategies, induction processes etc will need to be in place for the schools

2.6 Stakeholder Reference Group

2.6.1 The Stakeholder Reference Group was established in February 2008. It is a representative group with the remit to provide advice and guidance on the refinement of proposals and options for implementation to change the age of transfer. The Group is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and is supported by a range of officers.

2.6.2 The Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG), which is not a decision-making group, has considered a range of focused workstreams regarding school reorganisation. These are listed as follows:

- i) Admissions
- ii) Capital
- iii) Consultation and Communication
- iv) Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
- v) Early Years and Extended Schools
- vi) Finance
- vii) Pupil Projections and Demographics
- viii) School Leadership, Governance and Management
- ix) Special Education Needs
- x) Workforce Strategy

2.6.3 A Project Officer Team supports the SRG. Each workstream within the project is lead by a senior officer. There are representative working groups for the Admissions, Finance and Workforce Strategy

workstreams with headteachers, governors and union representatives. Officers are developing the other work streams. There are links and cross cutting themes between all the workstreams and the working groups meet jointly as required. Each workstream has a project scope document which includes reference to key milestones. The diagram in Annexe 3 illustrates the workstream groups.

2.7 Workstreams Progress to Date on Key Impacts

Admissions

- 2.7.1 The Admissions Group are considering admission arrangements to ensure that they meet the Admissions Code of Practice and are fair to all parents. The arrangements are also being considered in the context of proposed changes to school organisation. There will be an exercise during June and July 2008 to gather 'soundings' on models of admissions. This will be followed by a formal consultation in the Autumn Term 2008. The models developed for consultation will be informed by the soundings.

Capital

- 2.7.2 School Site Development Plans for all high schools have been commissioned and are being agreed with Headteachers and Chairs of Governors. The plans include the provision for Year 7 pupils and the sixth forms. These plans will form the basis of the BSF submission in September 2008.
- 2.7.3 In the primary school sector, there is a rolling programme of completing School Site Development Plans. The Schools' Asset Management Data has been reviewed and up-dated. A desktop exercise is being undertaken to identify potential capacity in schools, which could be used to expand capacity for places in the future. The submission for the Primary Capital Programme is being prepared and agreed for submission by 16 June 2008.

Consultation and Communications

- 2.7.4 A communication and consultation plan is being developed that will be implemented following the Cabinet decision in June. There will be a DCSF Statutory Stage 1 consultation from September to December 2008. The Stakeholder Reference Group considered the most efficient mechanisms for communication and suggested the following: school based meetings using a standard presentation prepared by the local authority, road shows, newsletters for staff, governors and parents in addition to a website and dedicated email address.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning/Leadership, Governance and Management

- 2.7.5 The approach adopted to address School Improvement and Leadership issues is to mainstream activities arising from changes to school organisation to Harrow's School Improvement Strategies. For example, the Review of the Secondary Curriculum would be implemented nationally but in Harrow this will now be in the context of the change in age of transfer. Opportunities to engage school senior management teams are being implemented to support the development of approaches to a range of issues including pupils' induction programmes, pastoral systems, curriculum planning. This group has a link with the Workforce Strategy in relation to workforce re-

structuring and training for staff. Investigations are being undertaken to confirm if New Instruments of Governance are required.

Finance

- 2.7.6 There have been a series of modelling exercises undertaken to illustrate the overall impact on school budgets generated by funding following pupils. The challenge for this group is to move from a high level position of understanding to more specific impact on individual school budgets and then to determine an acceptable middle position. Further considerations are being given to the Government's Minimum Funding Guarantee, LA Protection and transitional funding arrangements that are affordable within the available resources of the Direct Schools Grant (DSG) and avoid redundancies and associated costs.

Pupil Projections and Demographics

- 2.7.7 Pupil population and roll projections have been completed and there is an indication of an increase in the number of 4-10 year olds by 2015. This is generated from increases in population and potential growth in child yield from housing developments. Schools will be identified with the potential to increase capacity for places in the future.

Special Educational Needs

- 2.7.8 The main issues highlighted to date are the need for statements of special educational needs to be reviewed and published for all pupils transferring and to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met within the planning of the curriculum group. The special schools' age ranges will need to be aligned with primary and secondary phases. This will mirror the current practices.

Workforce Strategy

- 2.7.9 An initial impact assessment exercise has been completed to identify the potential number of posts affected by the proposed changes. This is based on general assumptions, which need to be developed further into specific assumptions. The effects on schools will vary according to the profile of the staff and existing staffing structures. The group are working towards an agreed statement on the avoidance of redundancy and process for managing change. Advice regarding re-structuring will be re-issued to schools after Cabinet. There will be further joint meetings with the Finance Group to ensure that resource issues are considered together.

2.8 Implications of the Recommendation

Equalities Impact

- 2.8.1 An initial Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and this will be reviewed throughout the project. Overall the alignment of Harrow community schools with the VA sector and neighbouring boroughs will enhance the equality of opportunity and choice for young people.

Legal comments

- 2.8.2 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides a framework for consultation, publication and determination of statutory notices in respect of proposals for schools, including changing the age range. There are responsibilities for both local authorities and governing

bodies within this legislation to bring forward proposals for changes to schools. Changes to Admissions Arrangements are also included in this Legislation.

- 2.8.3 If the project proceeds school governing bodies will have access to legal advice under the terms of their Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Legal Services and for Human Resources and Development Services.

2.9 Financial Implications

- 2.9.1 The School Reorganisation project is being managed currently within existing resources. In the formation of the implementation strategies, each of the workstream leads is developing the business case for additional resources. It is expected in some areas that there will need to be a time limited additional resource. For example, managing four cohorts of admissions for September 2010 and, supporting schools to re-structure accordingly. Additional resources will only be considered where the School Reorganisation project is generating additional work that would not usually arise as part of a service. Any additional requirements for school organisation will be included in the MTBS process.

- 2.9.2 The Finance Working Group is considering the revenue implications for Schools. Any changes to the funding formula will need to be agreed by the Schools Forum and contained within the Dedicated Schools Grant.

- 2.9.3 Capital funding will be available from a range of sources including Schools' Devolved Formula Capital, DCSF Modernisation Funding, Primary Capital Programme and Building Schools for the Future.

- 2.9.4 For Harrow to be part of the Building Schools for the Future programme there will need to be sufficient funding to support the process and satisfy the DCSF that this will be available. The process includes the development of Strategies for Change for Schools for each school. In addition, the Council will need to establish an appropriate vehicle to procure the building programme. The DCSF's preferred model is a Local Education Partnership (LEP). This procurement will be through the Competitive Dialogue Process and will incur costs for technical, legal and other professional advisers. The costs will be developed further once the position of Harrow in the BSF programme is clarified.

2.10 Performance Issues

- 2.10.1 Delivering School Reorganisation so that Harrow Schools are in line with the national agenda is Council Improvement Plan project IP7D and contributes to a range of performance indicators, in particular the following from the new National Indicator Set. NI 72 – 109 'Enjoy and Achieve' indicators covering Key Stage achievement and progression, narrowing the gap for lower performing and vulnerable groups, attendance, behaviour, special educational needs.

- 2.10.2 Whilst Harrow's performance is currently above national and statistical neighbours averages at all Key Stages, Harrow's targets, which are set annually for the DCSF, are highly challenging. The table below

presents Harrow's performance against its targets and the national averages.

Harrow's 2006-07 Results

KS1	Actual	Target	National
Reading L2+	84.7%	Not set	84%
Writing L2+	81.0%	Not set	80%
Maths L2+	90.5%	Not set	90%
Science L2+	88.2%	Not set	89%
KS2	Actual	Target	National
English L4+	82%	85%	80%
Maths L4+	79%	85%	77%
Science L4+	88%	Not set	88%
KS3	Actual	Target	National
English L5+	79%	82%	74%
Maths L5+	79%	80%	76%
Science L5+	75%	78%	73%
GCSE	Actual	Target	National
% 5+ A*-C	68.0%	67.5%	62.0%
% 5+ A*-C incl E&M	56.1%	Not set	46.8%

2.11 Risk Management Implications

2.11.1 Each of the work stream leads has developed a Risk Log including actions to mitigate potential risks. These will be subject to on-going review and development.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Bharat Jashapara.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 23.5.08.....		
Name: Helen White.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 20.5.08.....		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director (Strategy and Improvement)
Date: 22.5.08.....		

Section 5 - Contact Details and Background Papers

- Annexe 1 Proposals for Individual Schools
- Annexe 2 High Level Timeline
- Annexe 3 Workstream Groups

Contact: Johanna Morgan, Service Manager, Partnerships and Well-Being,
020 8736 6841

Background Papers:

- Paper 1 Cabinet Report Strategic Approach to School Organisation
October 2007
- Paper 2 Department for Children Schools and families (DCSF) Building
Schools for the Future (BSF) Consultation