

Meeting:	Employees' Consultative Forum
Date:	11 December 2008
Subject:	School Reorganisation Consultation
Responsible Officer:	Heather Clements Director of Schools and Children's Development
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Anjana Patel Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 Cabinet report 19 June 2008 Appendix 2 Proposals for Harrow Schools' consultation booklet (circulated separately)

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report presents the school reorganisation proposals to the Employees' Consultative Forum for their consideration and comments as part of the consultation process.

Recommendations:

1. The Forum consider the proposals and provide comments

Reason: (For recommendation)

To engage stakeholder representatives in the consultation process of the school organisation proposals.

Section 2 – Report

Background

In June 2008, Cabinet considered a report on an up-date of the work of the School Reorganisation Stakeholder Reference Group and proposals to undertake consultation to change school organisation and the ages of transfer in Harrow.

Cabinet decided that a consultation on school reorganisation be undertaken to change the ages of transfer and age ranges in community schools in Harrow, with effect from September 2010. The proposed changes would 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)

Cabinet decided to receive a report in early 2009 outlining the comments received during the consultation and to consider whether to publish statutory notices.

Current situation

The school reorganisation consultation was held from Monday 8 September to Friday 5 December 2008. The consultation responses will be reported to Cabinet on 15 January 2009, and Cabinet will decide whether to publish statutory proposals with a view to implementing the proposed changes.

It has not proved possible to report to an Employees' Consultative Forum meeting during the consultation period. However, the comments of the Forum will be included in the report to Cabinet on 15 January 2009.

Options considered

The June Cabinet report and consultation booklet set out the background to the proposals, the specific changes proposed, the impacts of the changes, and the work of the Stakeholder Reference Group.

The Stakeholder Reference Group, including local Trade Union representatives has continued to meet monthly during the consultation period, and work within the designated work streams has been progressed.

The Workforce Strategy sub-group including local Trade Union representatives has met regularly and has agreed arrangements to track the progress of workforce planning in schools, and to introduce a scheme to alert staff to career opportunities in schools across the borough, both aimed at avoiding the risk of redundancies in schools potentially needing to reduce their workforce.

Financial Implications

The School Reorganisation project is being managed currently within existing resources. 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.

The School Finance sub-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. The sub-group is developing proposals for the Schools Forum to consider about the amount of protection required for some schools and where this may need to be targeted. A set of principles for the protection factor for schools have been agreed, which seek to distribute the burden equitably.

Performance Issues

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.

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.

Risk Management Implications

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

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name:	Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:	2 December 2008		
Name:	Helen White	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:	3 December 2008		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Chris Melly, Senior Professional, Transforming Learning Team
020 8420 9270 chris.melly@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Additional information about the school reorganisation project can be found on the Council website www.harrow.gov.uk/schoolreorganisation

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES In 19 June 2008 Cabinet report