

Committee:	Education Consultative Forum
Date:	27 January 2009
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT – Proposals for School Reorganisation in Harrow
Responsible Officer:	Director of Schools and Children’s Development, Heather Clements
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children’s Development, Councillor Anjana Patel
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Cabinet Report and Annexes 15 January 2009

Section 1 – Summary

The January Cabinet report on Proposals for School Reorganisation in Harrow is attached for the Forum to consider. The Forum asked to be kept updated on the progress of the project.

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

1. The statutory consultation on proposals for school reorganisation in Harrow closed on 5 December 2008. On 15 January 2009, Cabinet considered the outcome of the consultation and decided whether to publish statutory proposals that if approved would have the effect of reorganising the schools in Harrow. The Director of Schools and Children’s Development will provide a verbal update to the Forum about the Cabinet decision.

2. The consultation responses have been analysed by officers and high level reporting has been included in the report to Cabinet. The consultation outcomes indicate that there is support for the proposals to change school organisation in Harrow. Although the response rate was low, this could be for a range of reasons and is not believed to reflect on the consultation process. Of the 686 individual responses received, 55% agreed with the proposals, 30% did not agree, and 15% were not sure. The majority of these respondents were parents of children in Harrow schools. Of the 50 responses received from governing bodies, 66% agreed with the proposals, 20% did not agree and 14% were not sure. The majority of the views expressed by young people were supportive of the proposals.
3. Throughout the consultation activities and the responses several themes have emerged, usually posed as questions for the local authority or as reasons given by those who disagree with the proposals. If Cabinet decides to publish statutory proposals that are subsequently approved, the Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) will be well placed to address the issues and concerns raised by stakeholders during the consultation. The SRG workstreams are correlated closely to the main theme areas of the comments made by respondents including themes related to staffing, finance, implementation and accommodation. The SRG and the workstream sub-groups provide a structure and mechanism to address issues raised by stakeholders and build on their progress. The report to January Cabinet presents an up-date on the work of the SRG.

Section 3 – Further Information

4. If Cabinet decided to publish statutory proposals, these would be determined by Cabinet at its meeting on 23 April 2009.
5. The report to January Cabinet also presents information on the Primary Capital Programme and the Building Schools for the Future government initiatives.
6. Harrow's submission for the Primary Capital Programme made in June 2008, received category 1 approval. This approval means that the indicative allocations for 2009-10 and 2010-11 are confirmed.
7. Harrow has submitted its Expression of Interest for Building Schools for the Future funding to the Department for Children, Schools and Families. All the eligible high schools have been allocated into two waves. The DCSF will announce the outcome of the submissions in March 2009 and confirm when local authorities will receive funding.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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Background Papers: None