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SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE
WALSALL

12 July 2004

AGENDA ITEM 7

Statutory Proposals to close Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools from 31 August 2006 and to open a replacement school from 1 September 2006

Papers

1 The Provision of Primary School Places in South Willenhall
Report of the Secretary to the Committee

Appendix 1 Decision Makers' Statutory Guidance: Proposals to Close Schools
Appendix 2 Decision Makers' Statutory Guidance: Proposals for New Schools

2 Prescribed Information: Closure of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School and Little London JMI School.

3 Prescribed Information: Establishment of a New Community Primary School.

4 Appendices to the Prescribed Information (common to papers 2 and 3)

1 Statutory Notice published on 29 April 2004

2 Report to Cabinet on the Outcome of Consultation 21 April 2004

3 Consultation Document

4 Notes from Consultation Meetings
Details of other consultation responses provided in Appendix 2

5 Map of Schools within a 2-mile radius of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School and Little London JMI School

6 Details of Pupil Numbers etc at Schools within a 2-mile radius of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School and Little London JMI School

5 Representations and Education Walsall's observations.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE
WALSALL

Agenda Item 7
Paper 1

12 July 2004

THE PROVISION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES IN SOUTH WILLENHALL

Report of the Secretary to the Committee

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to inform Members of the School Organisation Committee of proposals to change the pattern of primary school provision in South Willenhall. The report outlines the consultation that has taken place, and summarises the representations that have been received.

2. The Proposals

Walsall Council proposes to cease to maintain Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools from 31 August 2006.

It is further proposed to open a new, two-form entry school from 1 September 2006; the new school to be built on the former Willenhall Motor Radiator Club Sports Ground site, Noose Lane, Willenhall.

3. What the Proposals are intended to Achieve

The proposals are intended to:-

- Increase school effectiveness, by providing a flexible and modern environment in which teaching and learning can flourish.
- Improve the opportunities available to children in the area served by the school.
- Raise standards of attainment, which are currently a cause for concern. All three schools achieve outcomes at KS2 below the floor thresholds of 65% in English and mathematics.
- Target resources at pupils by reducing Facilities Management costs.
- Remove 222 surplus primary places from the South Willenhall area.

4. Chronology

The need for reorganisation of the provision of primary school places in South Willenhall was recognised by Walsall Council some years ago and in the intervening period the Council undertook extensive consultation and sought PFI financial support for the proposed replacement school. In all, three PFI bids were made but these were not supported by the Government. Education Walsall took advantage of an opportunity of an alternative funding source, the Targeted Capital Fund, and the Government, having considered details of the proposal to close Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London primary Schools

and open a single replacement school, decided to make funding available to the Council subject to the approval of the associated statutory proposals.

The table below shows the timetable of events for the proposals under consideration, and a projected timetable for reorganisation, should the scheme be approved by the School Organisation Committee.

Table 1 Timetable of Events

Date	Event	Comment
15 Oct 2003	Report to Cabinet	Cabinet approved submission of Targeted Capital Fund bid to DFES and consultation on provision of primary places in South Willenhall
12 Feb 2004	Capital allocated	DfES announce allocation of Targeted Capital for the proposed new school, subject to approval of statutory proposals.
27 Feb 2004	Consultation commences	Consultation document published and circulated to schools, governors, parents and interested parties; this outlined options for re-organisation and invited responses.
2 Apr 2004	Consultation ends	Closing date for receipt of consultation responses.
21 Apr 2004	Report to Cabinet	Cabinet considered a report on the outcome of the consultation and identified the option it wished to proceed with.
29 Apr 2004	Statutory proposals published; 6 week representation period commences	Publication of statutory proposals to cease to maintain Clothier Street, Little London and Lakeside Primary Schools and to establish a new primary school on the Willenhall Motor Radiator Club Sports Ground site.
10 Jun 2004	Representation period ends	Representations received during the representation period are collated for consideration by the School Organisation Committee.
12 Jul 2004	Meeting of School Organisation Committee	Determination of statutory proposals.

The School Organisation Committee is required to make four decisions as follows:-

- to close Clothier Street Primary School from 31 August 2006;
- to close Lakeside Primary School from 31 August 2006;
- to close Little London Primary School from 31 August 2006;
- to open a new two-form entry Primary School on the former Willenhall Motor Radiator Club Sports Ground site from 1 September 2006.

A unanimous vote of the School Organisation Committee is required if the proposals are to be enacted or rejected. It is not possible for the School Organisation Committee to agree to some, but not all of the proposals. Should the Committee be unable to reach a unanimous decision on all of the proposals, they must all be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.

5. Demographic Analysis

The birth rate in South Willenhall has declined over recent years (Table 2). Analysis of live births and the associated take up of primary school places in Willenhall South shows that there will continue to be a large number of surplus places in primary schools.

Table 2 Live Births in the Willenhall South Ward

93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01
249	225	213	210	204	213	195	192

The proposals for primary school re-organisation in South Willenhall are consistent with the 'Recommended Actions' in the School Organisation Plan approved by the School Organisation Committee for Walsall. They are also in accordance with the vision to bring about continuous improvement in pupil achievement and innovation to secure learning environments which enable all learners to realise their ambitions.

6. Resource Issues

The cost of the new school building would be met by an 80% capital grant from the Department for Education and Skills. The remaining 20% would be found from Walsall Council's New Deal for Schools formula allocation, over the period of the scheme. This would be an interim arrangement as the Cabinet gave support in principle to the earmarking of capital receipts to enable this specific scheme to progress, subject to confirmation of the value required for the scheme.

There are no recurrent costs associated with the proposal. Marginal costs may be incurred for a small number of children who may qualify for free home to school transport, under Walsall Council's policy.

Recurrent revenue savings would include items detailed in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Recurrent Revenue Savings

	Savings
Staffing costs	£163,764
Premises related savings	£95,815
General Resources	£2,300
Travel	£ 200
Courses/conferences	£600
SEN Transport	£3,900

Total Annual Recurrent Savings: **£266,579**

7. Summary of Representations received

Thirteen representations have been received. As required, these representations and Education Walsall's observations on them are provided as Paper 5.

A petition with 1,250 signatures has also been received. The petition is supportive of the proposal that a new primary school should be created, but raises issues about the location of the school site.

8. Implications for Children travelling from Home to School

- Distance from Home to the New School Site
  It is inevitable that the movement of pupils from three school sites to one will result in new travel arrangements. For some families the distance between home and school will increase, for others it will decrease. The overwhelming majority of pupils live less than two miles away from the site proposed for the new school. Those who would live more than two miles away already attend a school other than the nearest school to their address by virtue of parental preference.

- Entitlement to Free Transport
  All pupils currently attending Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools will be guaranteed a place at the new school. In line with Walsall Council's transport policy, free home to school transport will be provided for any current pupils who become entitled as a result of the move to a new site.

- Safety of Walking Routes to School
  The walking routes to the site identified for the proposed new school (the former Willenhall Motor Radiator Club Sports Ground) are judged

to be safe walking routes for children, accompanied as necessary by their

parents or a responsible adult. The provision of Crossing Patrol Officers and the introduction of traffic calming and other road safety measures will be subjects for discussion by the relevant planning authority, should planning consents be applied for.

- Safety Issues
  Interrogation of records at Walsall Council's Engineers Department reveals that there have been six reported accidents in the last three years on Noose Lane. There has been one reported accident outside Clothier Street Primary School in the last three years and two outside Little London Primary School. No accidents have been reported outside Lakeside Primary School.

- Public Transport Availability
  Some bus services which serve the South Willenhall area run close to the proposed site for the new school and would be available to families in the local area.

  Service 528 (Wolverhampton via Woodend and Ashmore Park) runs on Fibbersley at 30 minute intervals. The vehicles providing the service are 'low entrance' buses which give easy access for prams or wheelchairs.

  Service 525 (Wolverhampton via Bilston and Woodend) is an evening service running on Fibbersley every 60 minutes.

  Service 171 (Walsall via Mossley) runs on Noose Lane, but it is an occasional service, and may not be available throughout the school year.

  Discussions would be held with transport providers with a view to enhancing service provision if the proposed new school goes ahead.

9. Educational Merits of the Proposals

Attainment & Progress

In Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London School there is considerable scope for further improvement in standards and levels of attainment achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. In all three schools, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 in English at the end of Key Stage 2 (2003), was low when compared with other schools. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 in the three schools ranged from 56% – 59% compared with a borough wide average of 72% and a national average of 75%. This places each school in the lowest quartile of attainment in the Borough. Similarly in Maths, two out of

the three schools attained less than 60% against a borough wide average of 66% and a national average of 73%. When the results in English are considered alongside other contextual variables – for example the percentage of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the three schools achieve levels below those expected when compared with the performance of schools across the Borough. In addition the 'improvement' measure shows that the three schools performed significantly below the LEA average (219) and the National Average (234). On this measure Clothier Street achieved 204, Lakeside 188 and Little London 175.

Table 4 shows the 2003 Key Stage 2 results in English, Maths and Science and compares those results against the Walsall average, the national average and the average achieved by schools in LEAs considered to be similar to Walsall (Statistical Neighbours).

Table 4 - % of Pupils Achieving Level 4 at Key Stage 2, 2003

	English	Maths	Science
Clothier Street	59	63	81
Lakeside	58	58	71
Little London	56	53	67
Walsall	72	66	83
Statistical Neighbours	72	70	85
National	75	73	87

The results provide clear evidence of relatively low levels of attainment. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) benchmarks the end of Key Stage results against **all** schools nationally and against **similar** schools nationally. The outcomes of the benchmarking process provide further clear evidence of relatively low levels of attainment. Perhaps not entirely surprisingly the results benchmarked against all schools nationally show performance for the 3 schools considerably below average and in some cases amongst the lowest in the country. However, many educational professionals believe that benchmarking against **similar** schools is a much fairer way of measuring relative performance. Even when compared with similar schools however, levels of attainment at Lakeside and Little London schools register within the lowest quartile and in some cases the lowest 5% of schools.

The three schools have been inspected by Ofsted at varying stages over the past four years. Clothier Street School was last inspected in 1999, Lakeside School in 2004 and Little London in 2000. Lakeside School was judged to be in need of special measures for the period 1999-2002, though it has since been inspected and removed from this category. Whilst commenting positively on a number of issues inspectors reported that in Lakeside School *'standards attained in the 2003 national tests ... were well below average overall'*. The report goes on to note that *'although the children do well in their early years the standards they reach in key areas is still well below that found in other*

schools…standards are currently well below average in English, mathematics, science and ICT in Years 2 and 6'.

The three schools have been inspected by Ofsted at varying stages over the past four years. Clothier Street School was last inspected in 1999, Lakeside School in 2004 and Little London in 2000. Lakeside School was judged to be in need of special measures for the period 1999-2002, though it has since been inspected and removed from this category. Whilst commenting positively on a number of issues inspectors reported that in Lakeside School *'standards attained in the 2003 national tests … were well below average overall'*. The report goes on to note that *'although the children do well in their early years the standards they reach in key areas is still well below that found in other schools…standards are currently well below average in English, mathematics, science and ICT in Years 2 and 6'.*

Significant benefits for educational opportunity.

- DfES Guidance on Asset Management Planning notes the influence school buildings can have on a child's learning environment, and consequently on aspirations and standards of achievement.
- The new building would be fit for education in the 21st Century, taking account of increased use of information and communications technology.
- Flexible spaces inside the building would allow for the use of more innovate methods of teaching and learning and simplify the delivery of whole class and small group learning.
- The creation of the new school would enable a dynamic and sustained effort to raise pupil attainment at Key Stage 1 and Key stage 2, where currently achievement is below the Walsall and National averages.
- The proposed site is extensive, and will include enhanced outdoor sports facilities.
- The new school would have a barrier free environment, simplifying the inclusion of children with mobility or sensory difficulties.
- The proposals would create a school for 420 pupils. This is a sustainable number and would generate a sufficient budget to enable the Headteacher and Governors to engage in meaningful medium and long term planning.
- There would be no need for the vertical grouping of year groups.
- The Headteacher and Governors would have more flexibility in appointing staff with specialisms across the curriculum.
- There would be an improved career structure for staff.
- Facilities Management costs would be kept to a minimum, maximizing resources spent in the classroom.

10. Recommendation

Members of the School Organisation Committee are recommended to approve the proposals.

A copy of the Statutory Guidance for Decision Makers is attached as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Paper 1
Appendix 1

Decision Makers Guidance Section 2.2

Statutory Guidance - Factors to be considered - Proposals to close schools and school sites

2.2. PROPOSALS TO CLOSE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SITES

The following factors should not be taken to be exhaustive. The importance of factors will vary, depending on the type and circumstances of proposals. All proposals should be considered on their individual merits.

The Decision Maker must consult the statutory guidance in Section 1, in particular any paragraphs referred to in brackets.

There should be a presumption to:

- approve both sets of proposals where a failing school is to close and a Fresh Start school is to open on the same site (paragraph 11 of Section 1);

- approve proposals to close a failing school, if there is sufficient capacity in the area for the displaced pupils and to meet future demand (paragraph 14 of Section 1);

- approve proposals for a school to close so that it may be merged with a more successful school, if there is sufficient evidence that the development will have a positive impact on standards (paragraph 15 of Section 1);

- approve proposals for the closure of a school that is to be replaced by an Academy, conditional on the making of the agreement for the Academy (paragraph 26 of Section 1);

- reject proposals for the closure of rural schools and sites unless the case for closure is strong and the proposals clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area (paragraph 52 of Section 1);

- reject proposals for the closure of a maintained nursery school, unless the case for closure is strong, the proposals are clearly in the best interests of local children and families, and the LEA can show that it has properly evaluated all the options (paragraph 59 of Section1).

In addition, the Adjudicator should not approve proposals for the closure of a denominational school where the relevant church SOC group had voted against its closure and it is clear that the closure, in conjunction with any related changes, will reduce the proportion of such denominational places within the LEA, unless it is failing or severely undersubscribed (paragraph 30 of Section1).

Effect on Standards and contribution to school improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area (Para 1-3, 5, 7-17, 24-26);

- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan (Para 2-4);

- The standards of education in existing and proposed alternative provision, and, particularly in the case of nursery schools, that the alternative provision will be able to maintain or enhance the standards of education provision (Para 4-5, 59-60);

- The effect of the proposals on other institutions.

Need for places

- The overall supply and likely future demand for places;
- Whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils in the area;
- Whether the proposals will reduce the proportion of denominational places (Para 30).

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds (Para 32);
- Whether the capital resources required are available (Para 33-34);
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary (Para 35-36).

Views of interested parties (Para 38)

- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them;
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest;
- The views of other schools and colleges in the area;
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education);
- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).

Other issues

- The length and nature of journeys to alternative provision (Para 54-55);
- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues (Para 51);
- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields (Para 76);
- The effect of the proposals on infant class sizes (Para 63);
- The overall effect of a closure on the local community, particularly in areas receiving funding as part of regeneration activity (Para 57);
- Whether the proposals are in connection with the establishment of an Academy (Para 24-26).

Additional factors if the school is on special measures

- If proposals are linked to expansion of other schools for transferring pupils, consider popularity of alternate schools (Para 10);

- If straight closure of school, whether there are sufficient places available to cater for displaced pupils and foreseeable demand (Para 14);

- If Fresh Start school proposed, whether the places being provided are needed (Para 12);

- If Fresh Start school proposed, whether the school is making progress sufficiently quickly (Para 14).

Rural schools and sites

- Whether the case is strong and in the best interests of educational provision in the area (Para 52);

- The overall effect of the closure on the local community (Para 52);

- The transport implications (Para 52);

- Whether the possibilities of federated or extended schools to increase viability has been considered (Para 52);

- (Closure of a site) Whether the schools had recently been amalgamated and if there was an expectation that the site would continue to be used as part of the school (Para 53).

Closure of maintained nursery schools

- Whether the case is strong and clearly in the best interest of local children and families in the area (Para 59);

- The quantity, quality, value for money and convenience to parents of the nursery school and proposed replacement provision (Para 59-60);

- The impact of the loss of the nursery school's experience and knowledge in delivering early years education (Para 59);

- Whether the LEA has duly considered alternatives to closing the nursery school, such as using it to support the development of integrated services for young children and their families (Para 59).

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Paper 1
Appendix 2

Decision Makers Guidance Section 2.1

Statutory Guidance - Factors to be considered - proposals for new schools

2.1. PROPOSALS FOR NEW SCHOOLS

(For new nursery schools see Section 2.5 and for new sixth form schools see Section 2.6)

The following factors should not be taken to be exhaustive. Their importance will vary, depending on the type and circumstances of decisions. All proposals should be considered on their individual merits.

The Decision Maker must also consult statutory guidance in Section 1, in particular any paragraph(s) referred to in brackets.

There should be a presumption to approve proposals for a new school to replace a failing school closed by direction of the Secretary of State (paragraph 16 of Section 1).

Effect on standards and contribution to school improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area (Paras 1-3, 5, 19-23);

- Whether they advance the national and local transformation strategies set out in the documents Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan (Para 2-4);

- Whether the proposals will deliver a broad and balanced curriculum (Para 6);

- The effect of the proposals on other institutions' standards, bearing in mind the effect on quantity and quality of other schools' intakes and any suggestions put forward for collaboration, partnership or federation (Para 2-3).

Need for places

- Whether there is a need for additional places in the area, or whether there are surplus places (Para 18, 31);

- The extent of parental demand for the type of school in question, for example, provision for particular faiths or denominations or specialisms (Para 18, 19).

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds (para 32);

- Whether the capital resources required are available (Para 33-34);

- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary (Para 35-36);

- If the proposal is for a new voluntary aided school, whether the promoters have provided a statement that the governing body would be able to meet their financial responsibilities for building work (Para 37).

Views of interested parties (Para 38)

- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them;

- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest;

- The views of the CE and RC dioceses in the area

- The views of other schools and colleges in the area;

- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education);

- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).

Community cohesion, inclusiveness and partnerships

- The extent to which, and how satisfactorily in the circumstances of the community, the proposals address the need to promote community cohesion (Para 39-41);

- Where a proposed new maintained school already exists as an independent school, its current approach and contribution to community cohesion will be relevant (Para 42);

- The extent to which the proposals take account of the needs of families and the wider community (Para 43).

14-19 issues

- Where 14-19 provision is involved, the extent to which appropriate collaborative arrangements have been considered (Para 44 – 45);

- The criteria for considering new sixth forms should also be taken into account where the proposed school includes 16-19 provision (See Section 2.6).

Equal opportunities

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues including any sex discrimination issues in relation to proposals for a single sex school (Para 51).

Effect on school journeys

- The existence of safe walking, cycling and bus routes to the proposed site (Para 54).

Other issues

- Whether the school will provide strong links with the local community and provide family and community services (Para 56);

- (Primary provision only) Whether the proposals comply with the infant class size limit (Para 63);

- For voluntary and foundation schools where a trust is not to hold the freehold of the site, whether the land tenure arrangements are satisfactory (Para 77-80);

- For voluntary and foundation schools, whether the proposal is to join an existing group foundation body or to jointly establish a new group foundation body (Para 67);

- Whether the proposal is to join an existing federation or to jointly establish a new federation (Para 68);

- Whether the new school will meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields (Para 76).

Proposal from an existing independent school:

- if co-educational, whether it would provide equal opportunities for boys and girls (Para 51);

- whether it would have suitably qualified staff and the premises would be suitable for the purpose of a maintained school (Para 69).

Publication Date: 30/5/2003 Version: 3

Agenda Item 7 Paper 2

School Organisation Proposals

published by

Walsall Local Education Authority

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION RELATING TO THE CLOSURE OF CLOTHIER STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL, LAKESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL, AND LITTLE LONDON JMI SCHOOL

DfES school numbers:	2111, 2231, 2113
Local Education Authority area:	Walsall
Proposals published by:	Walsall Council
Date Proposals published:	29 April 2004
Closing Date for representations:	10 June 2004
Proposed implementation date:	31 August 2006

1. The main objectives of the proposals:

The main objective of the proposals is to close Clothier Street Primary, Lakeside Primary and Little London JMI Schools and to open a replacement purpose-built 2 form entry community primary school with 26 full-time equivalent nursery places.

Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools have high levels of surplus places and buildings which are in poor condition and are unsuitable for the breadth and delivery of the curriculum in the 21st century.

There has been a significant and sustained fall in the number of pupils attending the three schools. Overall, the number of pupils fell by 23% between 1997 and 2004. If the schools were full, Clothier Street and Lakeside would each have 210 pupils and Little London would have 315 pupils giving a total of 735. In January 2004, the number of pupils on roll at the schools totalled 507. The fall in numbers means that, overall, a third of the places could be considered to be surplus. The level of surplus places at Clothier Street is 21%, 42% at Lakeside and 29% at Little London. These high levels of surplus places have been in existence for some years. Pupil numbers are expected to stabilise at the current lower levels over the next few years.

Condition expenditure of £1.7 million has been identified as necessary over the next five years. This excludes the provision of replacement buildings for Clothier Street (wooden main building and a mobile classroom unit) and Little London (five buildings the oldest of which dates from 1883). Both schools' key suitability issue relates to the need for a new building.

The proposed reorganisation of the provision of primary school places in the area is intended to:-

- Increase school effectiveness, by providing a flexible and modern environment in which teaching and learning can flourish.
- Improve the opportunities available to children in the area served by the schools.
- Raise standards of attainment.
- Target resources at pupils by reducing facilities management costs.
- Remove 222 surplus primary places in the South Willenhall area.

Attached as Appendix 1 - Statutory Notice published on 29 April 2004.

Further detailed information on this proposal is contained in the report to Cabinet on 21 April 2004. This report is attached as Appendix 2.

2. Details of consultation on the proposal

The consultation detailed below was undertaken by Education Walsall. Prior to that consultation, Walsall Council undertook extensive consultation, which included these proposals, over a number of years.

Date	Time	Consultation Undertaken by Education Walsall
2 March 2004	4.00 pm to 7.00 pm	Meeting at Lakeside Primary school with staff, governors and parents.
3 March 2004	4.00 pm to 7.00 pm	Meeting at Clothier Street Primary school with staff, governors and parents.
4 March 2004	4.00 pm to 7.00 pm	Meeting at Little London JMI School with staff, governors and parents.
18 March 2004	4.00 pm	Meeting at Clothier Street Primary School with staff.
22 March 2004	7.00 pm	Meeting with Friends of Willenhall Memorial Park.
28 April 2004	2.30 pm	Meeting with Unions.
4 May 2004	2.30 pm to 4.00 pm	Little London JMI School - parents' "Drop in" sessions. Meeting with staff.
5 May 2004	2.30 pm to 5.00 pm	Lakeside Primary School - parents' "Drop in" sessions. Meetings with staff and governors.
6 May 2004	2.30 pm to 5.00 pm	Clothier Street Primary School - parents' "Drop in" sessions. Meetings with staff and governors.
10 May 2004	6.00 pm	Meeting with Little London JMI School governors.

Copies of :

a. **consultation documents, and**

b. **the views and responses of the persons consulted.**

These are attached as Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 respectively.

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3. Map showing location of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School, Little London JMI School and all other community, voluntary and foundation schools within a 2-mile radius.

Attached at Appendix 5 - Map of schools within a 2-mile radius of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School, and Little London JMI School.

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4 and 5. Details of all primary schools (including Clothier Street Primary, Lakeside Primary School and Little London JMI School) within a 2-mile radius showing

- The admission number for each relevant age group
- The number of year groups
- The capacity of each school, and
- The number of pupils at each school

- A forecast of pupil numbers for the next five years

Attached as Appendix 6- Table of information detailing the above for all schools within a two-mile radius of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School, and Little London JMI School.

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6. Details of Accommodation at Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School, and Little London JMI School.

	Location of the accommodation	Whether the schools occupy a single or split site	Details of general and specialist accommodation
Clothier Street Primary	Harry Perks Street Willenhall WV13 1BN	Single	7 Class bases, ICT room, Library, hall
Lakeside Primary	Holman Close Willenhall WV13 3AN	Single	5 Class bases, Kiln room, Art room, ICT room, hall
Little London JMI	Stafford Street Willenhall WV13 2PG	Single	10 Class bases, ICT area, Library, Kiln room, music room, dining room, hall

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7. Details of proposals for pupils who are currently at the schools to transfer to the new community primary school on Noose Lane Willenhall together with any other transitional provisions.

A place at the proposed new community primary school will be offered to all pupils on roll at Clothier Street Primary, Lakeside Primary and Little London JMI schools.

If parents wish to seek places at alternatives schools, assistance with this will be provided in order to effect as smooth a transition for pupils as possible.

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8. An assessment of the quality of any schools to which it is proposed that such pupils may transfer

It is anticipated that almost all pupils will transfer to the new community primary school. The new school will be a viable 2 form entry school with sufficient staffing to cover the curriculum range and facilities designed for curriculum delivery in the 21st Century. It will thus provide a high quality educational setting.

Before the new school opens, there will be joint activities across the three schools to enable staff to plan and prepare for the transition to the new school. During the construction period there will be opportunities for pupils on roll at the three schools to come together and there will be a programme of activities to enable them to get to know each other.

9. Inspection under section 10 of the School Inspectors Act 1996 during the last three years and, if it has, the date and outcome of the inspection

School	Date of Inspection	Outcome (Overall Evaluation)
Clothier Street Primary	January 1999	n/a (last Inspection - January 1999)
Lakeside Primary	March 2002	The school was removed from Special Measures in which it had been placed in March 1999. This time span is one year longer than the national expectation. Inspectors found that the school was providing 'an acceptable standard of education'. Standards of education are improving but are well below average in Year 6 and attainment overall is below average.
Little London JMI	June 2000	Little London has made very good progress since it was inspected in 1997. Standards of education are below average. The school provides satisfactory, and improving, value for money,

School Organisation Proposals

published by

Walsall Local Education Authority

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION RELATING TO

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL SITUATED ON NOOSE LANE, WILLENHALL

Local Education Authority area:	Walsall
Proposals published by:	Walsall Council
Date Proposals published:	29 April 2004
Closing date for representations:	10 June 2004
Proposed implementation date:	1 September 2006

1. The main objectives of the proposals:

The main objective of the proposal is to open a purpose-built 2 form entry community primary school with 26 full-time equivalent nursery places. This new school would replace Clothier Street Primary, Lakeside Primary and Little London JMI schools which have high levels of surplus places and buildings which are in poor condition and are unsuitable for the breadth of curriculum delivery.

Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools have high levels of surplus places and buildings which are in poor condition and are unsuitable for the breadth and delivery of the curriculum in the 21st century.

There has been a significant and sustained fall in the number of pupils attending the three schools. Overall, the number of pupils fell by 23% between 1997 and 2004. If the schools were full, Clothier Street and Lakeside would each have 210 pupils and Little London would have 315 pupils giving a total of 735. In January 2004, the number of pupils on roll at the schools totalled 507. The fall in numbers means that, overall, a third of the places could be considered to be surplus. The level of surplus places at Clothier Street is 21%, 42% at Lakeside and 29% at Little London. These high levels of surplus places have been in existence for some years. Pupil numbers are expected to stabilise at the current lower levels over the next few years.

Condition expenditure of £1.7 million has been identified as necessary over the next five years. This excludes the provision of replacement buildings for Clothier Street (wooden main building and a mobile classroom unit) and Little London (five buildings the oldest of which dates from 1883). Both schools' key suitability issue relates to the need for a new building.

The proposed reorganisation of the provision of primary school places in the area is intended to:-

- Increase school effectiveness, by providing a flexible and modern environment in which teaching and learning can flourish.
- Improve the opportunities available children in the area served by the schools.
- Raise standards of attainment, which are currently a cause for concern at two of the existing schools.
- Target resources at pupils by reducing facilities management costs.
- Remove 222 surplus primary places in the South Willenhall area.

Attached at Appendix 1- Statutory Notice published on 29 April 2004.

Further detailed information on this proposal is contained in the report to Cabinet on 21 April 2004. The report is attached at Appendix 2.

2. Details of consultation on the proposal

The consultation detailed below was undertaken by Education Walsall. Prior to that consultation, Walsall Council undertook extensive consultation, which included these proposals, over a number of years.

Date	Time	Consultation Undertaken by Education Walsall
2 March 2004	4.00 pm to 7.00 pm	Meeting at Lakeside Primary school with staff, governors and parents.
3 March 2004	4.00 pm to 7.00 pm	Meeting at Clothier Street Primary school with staff, governors and parents.
4 March 2004	4.00 pm to 7.00 pm	Meeting at Little London JMI School with staff, governors and parents.
18 March 2004	4.00 pm	Meeting at Clothier Street Primary School with staff.
22 March 2004	7.00 pm	Meeting with Friends of Willenhall Memorial Park.
28 April 2004	2.30 pm	Meeting with Unions.
4 May 2004	2.30 pm to 4.00 pm	Little London JMI School - parents' "Drop in" sessions. Meeting with staff.
5 May 2004	2.30 pm to 5.00 pm	Lakeside Primary School - parents' "Drop in" sessions. Meetings with staff and governors.
6 May 2004	2.30 pm to 5.00 pm	Clothier Street Primary School - parents' "Drop in" sessions. Meetings with staff and governors.
10 May 2004	6.00 pm	Meeting with Little London JMI School governors.

Copies of:

a. **consultation documents, and**

b. **the views and responses of the persons consulted.**

These are attached as Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 respectively.

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3. Map showing location of the proposed new community primary school on the Willenhall Motor Radiator Club Sports Ground, and other schools within a 2-mile radius is attached

Attached at Appendix 5- Map of schools within a 2-mile radius of the proposed new community primary school.

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4. Details of all primary schools within a 2-mile radius of the proposed community primary school showing

- The admission number for each relevant age group
- The number of year groups
- The capacity of each school, and
- The number of pupils at each school
- A forecast of pupil numbers for the next five years

Attached at Appendix 6- Table of the above information for all schools within a two-mile radius of the proposed new community primary School.

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5. Details of the proposed new community primary school

Number of Year Groups	Capacity	Number of nursery pupils	Capacity of the accommodation provided for nursery education	Forecast of Nursery pupils			
				2007	2008	2009	2010
7	420	52 part-time	26 full-time equivalent places	52	52	52	52

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6. Details of Proposed Accommodation at the new Community Primary School

Location of the accommodation	Whether the schools occupy a single or split site	Details of general and specialist accommodation and how accessible the accommodation will be	Details of the accommodation for nursery education
Noose Lane Willenhall	Single	14 classrooms plus 2 additional classrooms to accommodate bulge year groups, (these classrooms will be used later for environmental education and additional specialist rooms). Technology rooms/resource areas, ICT room, library, group rooms, parents' room. The school will be fully accessible. Team games playing fields available on site. There would also be the opportunity to develop a Children's Centre on the site.	Teaching space and ancillary facilities for 26 full-time equivalent pupils

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7. Statement indicating how the proposal would contribute to enhancing the diversity and quality of education and the extent to which parental preference would be met.

The proposal would retain the existing diversity of provision in this area of South Willenhall. It would contribute to the raising of standards by establishing a single, more viable 2 form entry school with improved levels of specialist staffing to cover the curriculum range, and facilities designed for curriculum delivery in the 21st century. With the decline in birth rates, it is anticipated that the new school will be of a sufficient size to enable parental preference in the area to be met.

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8. Additional Information:

a) the objectives which the local education authority or promoters intend to set to further the aims of inclusiveness and partnership working;

The design of the school will provide a flexible and barrier free learning environment, allowing children with a wide range of learning needs to be educated efficiently and effectively together.

The school will have sufficiently flexible accommodation to facilitate partnership working as recommended in the Children Bill (2004). There will also be the opportunity to develop a Children's Centre on the site.

- Every learner must have the opportunity to have their individual needs met
- Schools and services will work in partnership so that all settings meet the presence, participation and achievement of all learners with SEN
- Learners and their parents/carers participate fully in their education and community and take part in decisions about their education
- Develop support mechanisms to build the capability and confidence of staff to meet diverse needs
- Develop monitoring and evaluation procedures to ensure the effectiveness of provision and support in securing high expectations and achievement for all learners

b) what activities are planned to achieve the objectives specified in (a) above; and

- Provision of appropriate in-service training
- Professional support to the Governing Body
- Provision of expertise from central support services
- Maintenance of good working relationships with partners in Social Services, the Police force and the Primary Care Trusts.

c) the measures proposed to be taken to ensure that the governing body, teachers, pupils and parents are aware of their role in contributing to inclusiveness and partnership working

- The Temporary Governing Body appointed for the new school will be requested to adopt a policy for inclusive education, in line with Education Walsall's policy, at an early meeting. The adoption of the policy will influence the recruitment process for all staff appointed to the new school. The school accommodation will lend itself to partnership working,
- Education Walsall has a developed programme and policy framework for special educational needs, inclusion and partnership working to which the whole school community will have access

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9. Proposed admission arrangements and over subscription criteria:

Walsall Council's admission arrangements and over subscription criteria for community schools will apply to the new school. The current over subscription criteria are provided below in order of priority.

a) Children in Public Care (looked after children)
b) Children who have a brother or sister already in attendance at the school when the application is made
c) Children for whom a place at the school is essential on medical or social grounds as supported in writing by a medical practitioner or social worker

d) Distance between the home address and the school as measured in a straight line, with priority given to those living closest to the school

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10. Finance – A breakdown of the costs of the establishment of the new community primary school and details of how it is proposed to fund the proposals

The estimated capital cost of the proposed new school is £3,188,522. The DfES has agreed a Targeted Capital Fund allocation of £2,550,818 subject to approval of the associated statutory proposals. The balance of £637,704 will be met from Walsall's NDS Modernisation Allocations over the period of the project. This would be an interim arrangement as the Cabinet gave support in principle to the earmarking of capital receipts to enable this specific scheme to progress, subject to confirmation of the value required for the scheme.

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11. SEN Information –

a) **information as to whether the school will have provision which is recognised by the LEA as reserved for children with special educational needs, and is so, the nature of such provision and the proposed number of pupils for whom such provision is made;**

The new school will not have provision reserved for children with special educational needs in the first instance.

b) **details of the proposed policy of the school relating to the education of pupils with special educational needs**

The proposed policy of the new school will be in line with Education Walsall's recently developed Policy Framework for special educational needs. The framework has been drawn up after extensive consultation with headteachers and other partners. The new school building will provide a barrier-free environment and will be able fully accessible to physically challenged pupils, unlike the existing three schools.

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12. Staffing –

Details of the proposed staffing of, and the balance of specialisms at the new community primary school

The staffing establishment will include a headteacher, a deputy and assistant headteacher and co-ordinators for Foundation, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The staffing of the new school will be determined by the Temporary Governing Body. As it is to be a two form entry, there will be sufficient teaching staff to ensure that specialisms cover the breadth of the curriculum. The Temporary Governing Body will be encouraged to maximize the opportunities provided by workforce re-modelling in the appointment of non-teaching staff, to increase opportunities to provide individualised learning for pupils.

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13. Curriculum –

How the proposed curriculum at the school will meet the requirements of the basic curriculum (as defined in section 352 of the Education Act 1996. This includes religious education as appropriate, the National Curriculum)

The curriculum in the new school will be based on Walsall's Primary Curriculum Policy (revised June 2004). It will reflect the National Primary Strategy and embrace the principles laid out in the DfES paper 'Excellence & Enjoyment'. The school will make full use of modern learning technology, including ICT, Interactive White-Boards and other ideas generated through the Classrooms for the Future initiative.

The development of the curriculum will be supported by Walsall's Primary Strategy Consultants. Walsall's arrangements for monitoring, challenge, intervention and support would initially place the school at Phase One for School Improvement advice. (Phase One provides the most intensive support.) It is anticipated that the school would rapidly move to Phase Three or Phase Four of the Monitoring, Challenge, Intervention and Support policy, providing results at Level 4 of the National Curriculum that are equal to, or better than the Walsall and National Average.

Initial targets for pupil attainment in literacy and numeracy will be set with the Headteacher (designate) of the new school, based on PANDA data from Clothier Street, Little London and Lakeside primary schools, which will close upon the opening of the new school. Arrangements will be made to include the school in an appropriate local Benchmarking group.

Religious education at the school will be provided in line with Walsall's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (revised and re-launched May 2004).

The new school will have access to help from the Music Support Service for the development of creative and performing arts.

Agenda Item 7

Paper 4

Appendices to the Prescribed Information (common to papers 2 and 3)

1. Statutory Notice published on 29 April 2004
2. Report to Cabinet on the Outcome of Consultation 21 April 2004
3. Consultation Document
4. Notes from Consultation Meetings
   Details of other consultation responses provided in Appendix 2
5. Map of Schools within a 2-mile radius of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School and Little London JMI School
6. Details of Pupil Numbers etc at Schools within a 2-mile radius of Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School and Little London JMI School

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Appendix 1

WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Proposals to discontinue CLOTHIER STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL, Harry Perks Street, Willenhall, WV13 1BN, LAKESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL, Holman Close, Willenhall, WV13 3AN and LITTLE LONDON JMI SCHOOL, Stafford Street, Willenhall, WV13 2PG from 31 August 2006 and to establish a new community primary school on Noose Lane, Willenhall from 1 September 2006.

Notice is hereby given in accordance with section 29(1) and section 28 (1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 that Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council intends to discontinue

Clothier Street Primary School, Harry Perks Street, Willenhall, WV13 1BN
Lakeside Primary School, Holman Close, Willenhall, WV13 3AN
Little London JMI School, Stafford Street, Willenhall, WV13 2PG

from 31 August 2006 and to establish a new community primary school for 476 boys and girls mainly between the ages of 3 and 11 from 1 September 2006.

The new school is to be situated on Noose Lane, Willenhall on the site of the former Willenhall Motor Radiator Club Sports Ground adjacent to the Willenhall Town Football Club.

Pupils at the schools to be closed may transfer to the new school or parents may seek places at other schools.

The proposed arrangements for transport of pupils to the new school are in line with the Council's existing transport policy.

The new school will promote community cohesion and racial harmony across the South Willenhall area by taking into account the features of the local community. It will promote racial equality and the understanding of other cultures and faiths and will encourage good citizenship.

The number of pupils to be admitted to the main school at age 4 in September 2006 and subsequent years will be 60. The number of full-time equivalent pupils aged 3 years to be admitted to the nursery class is 26 in September 2006 and subsequent years.

The Admission authority for the new school will be Walsall Council.

Within six weeks after the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to or make comments on the proposals by sending the representations to Susan Lupton, Education Walsall, Education Development Centre, Pelsall Lane, Rushall, Walsall, WS4 1NG

Within one month after the end of the representation period, the LEA will send to the School Organisation Committee for the area copies of all representations made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the representation period, together with Education Walsall's observations on them.

Signed Annie Shepperd **Date 29 April 2004**
Chief Executive

Explanatory Notes
It is proposed to close Clothier Street Primary School, Lakeside Primary School and Little London JMI School from 31 August 2006 and to open a single replacement Primary School from 1 September 2006.

The replacement school will admit 60 pupils to at age 4 and 52 part time pupils at age 3.

A place at the new school will be available for pupils on roll at the schools to be closed. Parents may apply for a place at another school should they wish.

These proposals are linked and will only proceed if all are approved.

Paper 4
Appendix 2

	CABINET 21 APRIL 2004	AGENDA ITEM: 10

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION ON THE PROVISION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES IN SOUTH WILLENHALL IN THE AREA SERVED BY CLOTHIER STREET, LAKESIDE, AND LITTLE LONDON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Ward(s): SOUTH WILLENHALL

Forward Plan: Yes

Portfolio: Councillor Mrs E E Pitt

Service Area: Education

Summary of report:

In the light of a successful targeted capital bid, Education Walsall has undertaken consultation on the provision of primary school places as agreed by the Cabinet on 15 October 2003. The consultation responses are detailed in the report.

Background Papers:

Consultation Document
Consultation Response Forms and Letters etc

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

i. note the content of the report
ii. approve the publication of statutory proposals to close Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools from 31 August 2006 and to open a single replacement school from 1 September 2006
iii. approve the use of the Fibbersley site as the site for the new school.

Signed: Elaine V Simpson

Elaine Simpson
Managing Director – Education Walsall

Date: 29.3.04

4/2

David McNulty. Elsie Pitt

Executive Director: David McNulty EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mrs. E.E. Pitt
Date: 8.4.04	Date: 8.4.04

Resource and Legal Considerations

There are no financial implications as a result of this report. Subject to the approval of statutory proposals, the DfES will fund 80% of the cost of a new school and the remaining 20% would be met from NDS formulaic allocations over the period of the scheme.

Citizen Impact

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the provision of a replacement school, this will significantly enhance learning environments for pupils in the Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools and would provide an inclusive setting.

Environment Impact

A scheme to provide a replacement school would use sustainable resources wherever possible and the design would incorporate developments to reduce the impact on the environment.

Performance Management and Risk Management Issues

Investment in a new school building would contribute to the raising of school standards and linked performance indicators.
The DfES has allocated funding towards the cost of a scheme to provide a replacement school should the Cabinet decide to proceed with that option. The allocation is subject to the publication of statutory proposals before the end of May 2004 and the subsequent approval of the statutory proposals.
The existing school buildings are in poor condition and will require significant investment over the coming years. Such investment would not address the suitability issues at the schools.

4/2

Equality Implications Investment in new school premises would enhance learning environments for pupils and meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
Consultation The report has been prepared in consultation with stakeholders.
Vision 2008 The proposed investment would contribute to the delivery of Walsall's vision for 2008 – Section 4.
Contact Officer: Susan Lupton Strategic Leader: School Organisation, Admissions, Capital & Asset Management Susan.lupton@we.serco.com

4/2

1. CONSULTATION PROCESS

1.1 A consultation document on the provision of primary school places in the area of South Willenhall served by the Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools was issued by Education Walsall on 27 February 2004. The consultation period ended on 2 April 2004.

1.2 This document sets out the issues relating to the provision of primary school places and current and projected surplus capacity in South Willenhall and explains why reorganisation of the provision of primary school places in the area is necessary. It also provides a range of options to reduce the number of school places in the area and includes possible sites for consideration should it be decided to provide a replacement school.

1.3 The consultation document and consultation response form were issued to all parents, staff and governors at Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools and were circulated to all stakeholders and neighbouring authorities. The documents were also made available to the general public and were posted on Education Walsall's website.

1.4 Three consultation meetings were held at each of the schools for parents, staff and governors. Further meetings were offered to schools and this resulted in a follow-up meeting with the staff at Clothier Street Primary School.

1.5 Staff from Education Walsall also attended a meeting of the Friends of Willenhall Memorial Park which gave an opportunity for wider public discussion of the issues associated with the reorganisation of primary school places in the area.

2. REASONS WHY REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES IS NECESSARY

2.1 There are four main reasons why it is necessary to reorganise the provision of primary school places in the area. These are:

- falling rolls
- surplus places
- curriculum issues
- condition and suitability of school buildings.

Falling Rolls

2.2 There has been a significant and sustained fall in the number of pupils attending the schools; overall, numbers fell by 23% between 1997 and 2004 because of a fall in the number of births. The birth rate is expected to continue at its present low level and therefore pupil numbers are expected to stabilise over the next few years.

2.3 If the schools were full, Clothier Street and Lakeside would each have 210 pupils and Little London would have 315 pupils, giving a total of 735. In January 2004 pupil numbers were 162, 122 and 223 respectively, giving a total of 507. The fall in numbers means that, overall, a third of the places at the schools are not filled.

4/2

Surplus Places

2.4 Where schools have a large number of surplus places, the Secretary of State expects proposals to be brought forward to bring the supply of school places more in line with the demand for places. This is to ensure effective deployment of public resources made available to the Council by the Government and the local community.

2.5 Details of surplus places at Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London are provided in the table below.

School	Net Capacity	Number of Pupils*	Surplus Places	
			Number	%
Clothier Street	206	162	44	21%
Lakeside	210	122	88	42%
Little London	313	223	90	29%
Total	729	507	222	30%

* excludes nursery pupils

* net capacity is a measure of school places based on school accommodation

2.6 These high levels of surplus places have been in existence for some years and this has created a difficult situation for schools to manage. It is now essential that action is taken to address the issue.

Curriculum Issues

2.7 Schools with small numbers of pupils face many pressures. Schools receive most of their funding (approx 80%) on the basis of pupil numbers and small schools are not usually viable financially. Schools' greatest expenditure is on staff and as the number of pupils decreases, schools may have to reduce the number of staff and reorganise classes. In some cases, it may be necessary for schools to lose one teacher a year over several years. The classes must also be taught in groups covering 2 or even 3 year groups.

2.8 If the number of teachers decreases, it becomes more difficult to ensure that a school is viable educationally. The delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum becomes more difficult as individual teachers become responsible for more curriculum areas and more year groups. In these circumstances it becomes extremely difficult to raise or even maintain standards.

Condition and Suitability of School Buildings

2.9 The condition and suitability of the existing school buildings is a cause of major concern. Condition expenditure of £1.7 million has been identified as necessary over the next five years at the schools, merely to deal with urgent issues of condition. This sum excludes the provision of replacement accommodation for Clothier Street School (wooden main building and mobile classroom) and Little London School (five separate buildings, oldest built in 1883). Almost no wooden schools remain in use nationally. This £1.7m investment would bring no benefit in terms of addressing the difficulties associated with surplus places or the suitability of the buildings for curriculum delivery in the 21st Century and would not make the buildings accessible by those with physical needs.

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3. CONSULTATION OPTIONS

3.1 A reduction in the number of school places in the area needs to be effected and could be achieved in a number of ways;

3.2 Option 1: reduce the number of places at Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London schools.

It would be necessary to reduce the accommodation at each school, in order to do this. This would not address financial viability issues or building stock issues and it is likely that at least one school would need to close during the next few years. Curriculum viability would also be a problem.

3.3 Option 2: reduce number of places in the area by closing either Clothier Street School or Lakeside School and re-building a new school to replace Little London and one of the other two.

Overall, there would be enough places for all pupils but significant investment in the buildings would be required and it would be necessary to vacate the school buildings and disperse pupils elsewhere whilst extensive works were carried out. Also, once a new improved building was in place, replacing two of the schools, the numbers at the third school are likely to reduce even further, hence leading to an unplanned closure.

3.4 Option 3: close Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools and open a single replacement school.

This would enable a state of the art learning environment up to 21st century standards to be provided and would create a viable school.

3.5 These possible options would all address the issue of surplus places in the area but only the last one would result in educational provision that is sustainable in terms of pupil numbers and is viable educationally and financially.

3.6 The consultation process also included consideration of possible sites should it be decided to proceed with an option to provide a replacement school.

Site Options

3.7 The following possible sites were identified prior to the consultation process:

- Existing school sites
  - Clothier Street Primary School
  - Lakeside Primary School
  - Little London Primary School
- Willenhall Memorial Park Extension
- Fibbersley.

3.8 Other sites were proposed during the consultation and these are considered in Section 5 of this report.

3.9 The selection of a site for a new school is a major decision and is governed by a number of constraints. These include Government guidance on the size of school sites, community accessibility and the availability of land. An appraisal of the sites listed above has been undertaken. Although each site has some advantages and disadvantages as a possible site for a new school, some sites are more suitable

than others. A map showing the sites is included in the consultation document provided as Appendix 1.

3.10 **Site Option A: build a new school on the site of one of the existing schools.**

Clothier Street Site
This site is approximately half the minimum size required for the proposed school and would not satisfy Government requirements for site areas.

Any development on the site would require closure of the existing building and the transfer of pupils to other schools in the area for up to 2 years.

Lakeside Site
Although larger than the other two school sites, this site is only approximately two- thirds of the minimum size required by the Government. Any development on the site would further reduce the undersized playing field area.

This site is the least centrally located in terms of convenience for all parents.

Development on the site would require the closure of the existing building and the dispersal of pupils to other schools in the area for up 2 years.

Little London Site
This is the smallest of the school sites and is approximately half the minimum size required in the Government's national standards for site areas. Adequate on-site playing fields could not be provided.

The school is within a conservation area; this would restrict any development and make it difficult to provide appropriate accommodation for pupils at the new school.

Although this school has the largest number of pupils, the site would be less convenient than one of the more centrally located sites for parents whose children attend Clothier Street and Lakeside Primary Schools.

Development on the site would require the closure of the existing building and the dispersal of pupils to other schools in the area for up 2 years.

3.11 **Site Option B: build a new school on the site of Willenhall Memorial Park Extension.**

This option would involve building in the corner of the site. The provision of new, purpose-built accommodation would address the considerable premises-related issues at the existing schools and provide a suitable learning environment for pupils in the 21st century.

This site gives an opportunity to create a facility in line with Government requirements for the size of school sites. It is envisaged that approximately 16,000 m^2 of land would be required for the school site. This area would enable the statutory minimum playing field requirement of 5,000 m^2 to be provided together with approx 1,000 m^2 of hard surfaced games courts - which would extend the

range of sports activities available in the area for use by the community - a large area for informal and social activities and habitat areas. The building would be designed with a view to maximising the playing field area and other grassed areas and this would ensure that community facilities for sports outside the school day were enhanced.

The Willenhall Memorial Park Extension site is approximately 67,000 m^2 in size. If this site is chosen for a replacement school, no pitches would be lost, indeed, sports facilities available in the area would be enhanced by the provision of a fenced pitch and other games courts on the school site.

This site has the advantage of being centrally located relative to the existing schools and access could be provided from Noose Lane and Park Road. This site would be more accessible for all parents than the other sites.

Whilst this option would use part of the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension, there would be no impact on the pitches and it is planned to provide an additional fenced junior pitch for use by the school and the community.

Approximately 10,000 m^2 of the existing 67,000 m^2 of park land would be lost to the community as park land as it would be built upon. There would be an opportunity to enhance environmental education provision in the area by providing a specialist resource base when larger year groups have moved through the school. This facility would be available for use by other schools and community groups.

3.12 **Site Option C: build a new school on the Fibbersley site.**

This site is also suitable for the new school, however, it would not be as centrally located for all parents as the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension site.

The Fibbersley site is approximately 20,000 m^2 in size and is larger than is required to satisfy Government requirements for school sites. This would enable the statutory minimum playing field requirement of 5,000 m^2 to be provided together with approx 1,000 m^2 of hard surfaced games courts - which would extend the range of sports activities available in the area for use by the community - a large area for informal and social activities and habitat areas. The building would be designed with a view to maximising the playing field area and other grassed areas. There would be opportunities for community use of sports facilities outside the school day.

Use of this site would result in the loss of a football pitch and bowling green, however, a junior pitch and hard surface games courts would be provided for the school and some replacement facilities would be secured.

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

4.1 The consultation meetings provided a number of opportunities for parents, staff, governors and the wider community to discuss the issues relating to the need to reorganise the provision of primary school places in the area and possible options. At each meeting notes were taken of issues that were raised and the responses given to questions. At the time of writing the report, 68 written consultation responses had been received, of which 44 were from parents/staff at Clothier

Street, 9 from parents/staff at Lakeside and 10 from parents/staff/governors at Little London. The meetings comprised a presentation on the key issues, a question and answer session and a more informal discussion period.

4.2 Numbers attending the consultation meetings are provided in the table below. In all cases a number of staff and governors were present at the parents' meetings. Schools were asked to consider whether further meetings were required and a further meeting was held with the staff at Clothier Street. A meeting was also held with the Friends of Willenhall Memorial Park at which 56 were present, including some parents.

School	Parents	Staff	Governors
Clothier Street	40	17,18	6
Lakeside	36	13	11
Little London	26	17	10

4.3 Given the subject of the consultation, attendance at the meetings and the number of written response forms returned are comparatively low.

4.4 A wide range of opinions were shared and inevitably there were, in some cases, differences in views between the parents, staff and governors groups.

4.5 Although there was general acceptance of the reduction in pupil numbers which has occurred over the last few years many parents considered that this did not necessitate reorganisation as it was a benefit to the schools. Most parents stated that their children were happy at the existing schools and preferred no change to the current provision of school places. Concern was expressed about job security for staff.

4.6 At the Clothier Street meetings, there was little support for reorganisation and many were strongly against it.

4.7 At the Lakeside meetings, the prevailing view was to retain the status quo or to build a replacement school on an enlarged Lakeside site.

4.8 At Little London, the largest school, there was a general acceptance of the need for reorganisation and the provision of a replacement school although concerns were expressed about possible sites.

4.9 Much of the discussion at all of the meetings was focused on possible sites should it be decided to build a replacement school.

4.10 At each school it was suggested that their site be enlarged and used for a possible new school. In each case this would have significant implications for existing neighbouring land users and major financial and timescale issues would need to be addressed.

4.11 There was extensive discussion of the relative merits of the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension and Fibbersley sites. Concern was expressed about the distance to these sites, the volume of traffic on Noose Lane, the increased volume of traffic that would follow any development, the closeness to a large haulage depot, pollution

from vehicle fumes, the proposed Metro line, the existence of deep ponds in the area, increased number of pedestrians in residential streets and many parents felt that it would not be safe to walk their children to school through the park. Concern was also expressed about the loss of open space that would be associated with any development, particularly with regard to the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension. These concerns were expressed very strongly at the meeting held with the Friends of Willenhall Memorial Park.

4.12 Analysis of the consultation response forms shows approximately equal levels of preference for both of these sites. The majority of responses from Clothier Street state that neither site is preferred. Responses from local residents indicate support for the Fibbersley site. Many respondents did not indicate a preferred site.

5. ALTERNATIVE SITES

5.1 A number of alternative sites were proposed at the consultation meetings and these are currently being evaluated. Initial indications are that these are unsuitable because of ground conditions, small size, or contamination.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Cabinet is recommended to address the need for reorganisation of primary school places in the area of South Willenhall served by Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools by approving the publication of statutory proposals to close Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London primary Schools from 31 August 2006 and to open a single replacement school from 1 September 2006.

6.2 Regarding the site, having consulted upon and assessed all available options we would, on balance, recommend that Cabinet approve the use of the Fibbersley site as the site of the new school. The major reasons for this are:

(i) The parents group clearly felt that the Memorial Park site, whilst potentially environmentally more attractive for their children's school, would be very difficult to make safe. There is a perception that the park is used illicitly much of the time.

(ii) The alternative sites proposed during the consultation process were either unsuitable as a result of size or contamination problems or had existing land users. Changing current use, for example from housing, would require a very lengthy consultation process which would jeopardise the new build.

If however, Cabinet approve the recommendation consideration will have to be given to the following:

(i) Security issues in the park. Many families will wish to walk through the park to reach the new site and this must be made an environment in which they believe they are safe.

(ii) Traffic issues on Noose Lane must be considered and traffic calming measures possibly developed.

(iii) Consideration will need to be given as to how the development of the Aspray's site could impact on the school and arrangements made to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

7.1 The DfES has allocated funding towards the cost of a scheme to provide a replacement school should the Cabinet decide to proceed with that option. The allocation is subject to the publication of statutory proposals before the end of May 2004 and the subsequent approval of the statutory proposals.

7.2 The existing school buildings are in poor condition and will require significant investment over the coming years. Such investment would not address the suitability issues at the schools.

8 SUMMARY

8.1 The need for reorganisation was first recognised some years ago when Walsall Council sought funding for the proposed replacement school through PFI (Public Finance Initiative). In all, three PFI bids were made and unfortunately these were not supported by the Government. Education Walsall has taken advantage of an alternative funding source, the Targeted Capital Fund, and the Government, having considered the reasons why reorganisation is necessary, has decided to fund option 3 subject to the completion of the statutory decision-making process.

8.2 Retaining the three existing schools is not a realistic option as it would not address surplus places, suitability and viability issues.

8.3 If action is not taken now, more far reaching proposals may be required in the future if the viability issues result in fewer pupils attending the schools.

8.4 Funding has been made available by the Government for the purpose of building a replacement school in order to address the issues outlined above; it would not be possible to use the funding to remodel/refurbish the existing school buildings. If the option of building a replacement school does not go ahead it is likely that the investment would be reallocated by the Government and that another area would benefit.

4/2

Appendix 1

Education Walsall

BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE

Consultation On The Provision of Primary School Places In South Willenhall In The Area Served by Clothier Street, Lakeside & Little London Primary Schools

Consultation Document

Elaine Simpson
Managing Director
Education Walsall

February 2004

serco

Consultation on the Provision of Primary School Places in South Willenhall in the areas covered by Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Primary Schools

Introduction

Education Walsall is undertaking public consultation on the provision of primary school places in South Willenhall.

The consultation period will last until 2 April 2004. No decisions will be taken by Walsall Council until 21 April 2004, following full consideration of consultation responses.

What is the purpose of the consultation?

The purpose of the consultation is to consider the issues relating to the provision of primary school places and current and projected surplus capacity in South Willenhall.

Why is the reorganisation needed?

Reorganisation of the provision of primary school places in South Willenhall is necessary for a number of reasons.

1 Falling Rolls

There has been a significant and sustained fall in the number of pupils attending Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools. Overall, the number of pupils attending the three schools fell by 23% between 1997 and 2004 and details are provided in Table 1 below. This fall in numbers occurred because of a fall in the number of births in the area and live birth figures lead to an expectation that the birth rate will continue at its present low level for the foreseeable future. Pupil numbers are projected to stabilise over the next few years, rather than continue to drop.

Table 1 Pupil Numbers at the Schools

School	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Clothier Street	202	199	195	195	190	182	172	162
Lakeside	168	142	120	111	101	118	123	122
Little London	287	288	294	282	264	241	247	223
Total	657	629	609	588	555	541	542	507

4/2

Details of the number of pupils in each year group at the three schools are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Pupil Numbers by Year Group at the Schools*

School	Admission Number	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
Clothier Street	30	27	24	13	30	21	24	23	162
Lakeside	30	19	24	18	16	14	15	14	122
Little London	45	29	36	20	36	28	35	39	223
Total	115	75	84	51	84	63	74	76	507

* Jan 2004; excludes nursery pupils

If the schools were full, Clothier Street and Lakeside would each have 210 pupils and Little London would have 315 pupils giving a total of 735. In January 2004 the number of pupils on roll at the schools totalled 507. The fall in numbers means that, overall, a third of the places at the schools are not filled and could be considered to be surplus.

2 Surplus Places

Each year, details of the number of pupils on roll at every school and the net capacity (a measure of school places based on the accommodation) are sent to the Secretary of State. Where schools have a large number of surplus places, authorities are expected to bring forward proposals to bring the number of school places more in line with the demand for places. This is to ensure effective deployment of public resources made available to the Council by the Government and the local community. The number of surplus places at Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London is given in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Surplus Places, Jan 2004

School	Net Capacity	Number of Pupils*	Surplus Places	
			Number	%
Clothier Street	206	162	44	21%
Lakeside	210	122	88	42%
Little London	313	223	90	29%
Total	729	507	222	30%

* Excludes nursery pupils

These high levels of surplus places have been in existence for some years and this has created a difficult situation for schools to manage. It is now essential that action is taken to address the issue.

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3 Curriculum

Schools with small numbers of pupils face many pressures. Schools receive most of their funding (approx 80%) on the basis of pupil numbers and small schools are not usually viable financially. Schools' greatest expenditure is on staff and as the number of pupils decreases, schools may have to reduce the number of staff and reorganise classes. In some cases, it may be necessary for schools to lose one teacher a year over several years. The classes must also be taught in groups covering 2 or even 3 year groups.

If the number of teachers decreases, it becomes more difficult to ensure that a school is viable educationally. The delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum becomes more difficult as individual teachers become responsible for more curriculum areas and more year groups. In these circumstances it becomes extremely difficult to raise or even maintain standards.

4 Condition and Suitability of School Buildings

The condition and suitability of the existing school buildings is a cause of major concern. Condition expenditure of £1.7 million has been identified as necessary over the next five years at the schools, merely to deal with urgent issues of condition. This sum excludes the provision of replacement accommodation for Clothier Street School (wooden main building and mobile classroom) and Little London School (five separate buildings, oldest built in 1883). Almost no wooden schools remain in use nationally. This £1.7m investment would bring no benefit in terms of addressing the difficulties associated with surplus places or the suitability of the buildings for curriculum delivery in the 21st Century and would not make the buildings accessible by those with physical needs.

What are the Options?

A reduction in the number of school places in the area needs to be effected and could be achieved in a number of ways.

Option 1

Reduce the number of places at Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools.

It would be necessary to reduce the accommodation at each school, in order to do this. This would not address financial viability issues nor building stock issues and it is likely that at least one school would need to close during the next few years. Curriculum viability would also be a problem.

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Option 2

Reduce the number of places in the area by closing either Clothier Street School or Lakeside School and re-building a new school to replace Little London and one of the other two.

Overall, there would be enough places for all pupils but significant investment in the buildings would be required and it would be necessary to vacate the school buildings and disperse pupils elsewhere whilst extensive works were carried out. Also, once a new improved building was in place, replacing two of the schools, the numbers at the third school are likely to reduce even further, hence leading to an unplanned closure.

Option 3

Close Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools and open a single replacement school.

This would enable a state of the art learning environment up to 21st century standards to be provided and would create a viable school.

These possible options would all address the issue of surplus places in the area but only the last one would result in educational provision that is sustainable in terms of pupil numbers and is viable educationally and financially.

The need for reorganisation was first recognised some years ago when Walsall Council sought funding for the proposed replacement school through PFI (Public Finance Initiative). In all, three PFI bids were made and unfortunately these were not supported by the Government. Education Walsall has taken advantage of an alternative funding source, the Targeted Capital Fund, and the Government, having considered the reasons why reorganisation is necessary, has decided to fund option 3 subject to the completion of the statutory decision-making process.

Retaining the three existing schools is not a realistic option as it would not address surplus places, suitability and viability issues.

If action is not taken now, more far reaching proposals may be required in the future if the viability issues result in fewer pupils attending the schools.

Funding has been made available by the Government for the purpose of building a replacement school in order to address the issues outlined above; it would not be possible to use the funding to remodel/refurbish the existing school buildings. If the option of building a replacement school does not go ahead it is likely that the investment would be reallocated by the Government and that another area would benefit.

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Where would a new school be built?

A number of possible sites have been identified:

- Existing School Sites
  - Clothier Street Primary School
  - Lakeside Primary School
  - Little London Primary School
- Willenhall Memorial Park Extension
- Fibbersley

These are considered in detail in the site options section below. The final decision on the site will be taken by Walsall Council, taking account of consultation.

Site Options

The selection of a site for a new school is a major decision and is governed by a number of constraints. These include Government guidance on the size of school sites, community accessibility and the availability of land.

An appraisal of all possible sites in the area has been undertaken. Although each site has some advantages and disadvantages as a possible site for a new school, some sites are more suitable than others. A map showing the sites is attached.

Option A – Build a new school on the site of one of the existing schools

All three of the existing school sites are available as they are currently used for education. However, whilst each is accessible by the parents of current pupils, none is centrally located and therefore accessible by the wider community. All these sites are much smaller than the Government guidelines require and could only be considered for development if no alternative site were available. Use of a small site would probably necessitate the construction of a three storey building in order to maximise the play area for pupils.

Clothier Street Site

This site is approximately half the minimum size required for the proposed school and would not satisfy Government requirements for site areas.

Any development on the site would require closure of the existing building and the transfer of pupils to other schools in the area for up to 2 years.

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Lakeside Site

Although larger than the other two school sites, this site is only approximately two-thirds of the minimum size required by the Government. Any development on the site would further reduce the undersized playing field area.

This site is the least centrally located in terms of convenience for all parents. Development on the site would require the closure of the existing building and the dispersal of pupils to other schools in the area for up 2 years.

Little London Site

This is the smallest of the school sites and is approximately half the minimum size required in the Government's national standards for site areas. Adequate on-site playing fields could not be provided.

The school is within a conservation area; this would restrict any development and make it difficult to provide appropriate accommodation for pupils at the new school.

Although this school has the largest number of pupils, the site would be less convenient than one of the more centrally located sites for parents whose children attend Clothier Street and Lakeside Primary Schools.

Development on the site would require the closure of the existing building and the dispersal of pupils to other schools in the area for up 2 years.

Option B – Build a new school on the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension Site

The option would involve building in the corner of the site. The provision of new, purpose-built accommodation would address the considerable premises-related issues at the existing schools and provide a suitable learning environment for pupils in the 21st century.

This site gives an opportunity to create a facility in line with Government requirements for the size of school sites. It is envisaged that approximately 16,000 m^2 of land would be required for the school site. This area would enable the statutory minimum playing field requirement of 5,000 m^2 to be provided together with approx 1,000 m^2 of hard surfaced games courts - which would extend the range of sports activities available in the area for use by the community - a large area for informal and social activities and habitat areas. The building would be designed with a view to maximising the playing field area and other grassed areas and this would ensure that community facilities for sports outside the school day were enhanced.

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The Willenhall Memorial Park Extension site is approximately 67,000 m^2 in size. If this site is chosen for the replacement school, no pitches would be lost, indeed, sports facilities available in the area would be enhanced by the provision of a fenced pitch and other games courts on the school site.

This site has the advantage of being centrally located relative to the existing schools and access could be provided from Noose Lane and Park Road. This site would be more accessible for all parents than the other sites.

Whilst this option would use part of the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension, there would be no impact on the pitches and it is planned to provide an additional fenced junior pitch for use by the school and the community.

Approximately 10,000 m^2 of the existing 67,000 m^2 of park land would be lost to the community as park land as it would be built upon. There would be an opportunity to enhance environmental education provision in the area by providing a specialist resource base when larger year groups have moved through the school. This facility would be available for use by other schools and community groups.

Option C – Build a new school on the Fibbersley Site

This site is also suitable for the new school, however, it would not be as centrally located for all parents as the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension site.

The Fibbersley site is approximately 20,000 m^2 in size and is larger than is required to satisfy Government requirements for school sites. This would enable the statutory minimum playing field requirement of 5,000 m^2 to be provided together with approx 1,000 m^2 of hard surfaced games courts - which would extend the range of sports activities available in the area for use by the community - a large area for informal and social activities and habitat areas. The building would be designed with a view to maximising the playing field area and other grassed areas. There would be opportunities for community use of sports facilities outside the school day.

Use of this site would result in the loss of a football pitch and bowling green, however, a junior pitch and hard surface games courts would be provided for the school and some replacement facilities would be secured.

How can I make my views known?

Consultation meetings will be held for parents, staff and governors at each of the three schools and details of these are given below.

School	Date	Staff	Governors	Parents
Clothier Street	Wednesday 3 March	4 00 pm	5 30 pm	7 00 pm
Lakeside	Tuesday 2 March	4 00 pm	5 30 pm	7 00 pm
Little London	Thursday 4 March	4 00 pm	5 30 pm	7 00 pm

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It may not be possible for everyone to attend these meetings, however, the attached consultation response form provides an opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Please do complete the consultation response form. We do want to hear your views. Unfortunately it will not be possible to make individual replies to consultation responses, however, issues raised will be included in a report on the outcome of consultation which will be considered by Walsall Council (Cabinet).

All responses should be received by 2 April 2004. A report on the response to the consultation will be considered by Walsall Council (Cabinet) on 21 April 2004.

What happens next?

The timetable below is provisional, however, every effort will be made to keep to it.

27 February 2004	Consultation starts
2 April 2004	Consultation ends
21 April 2004	Walsall Council (Cabinet) considers response to consultation and decides whether to proceed with the proposal
May 2004	Statutory notices published, 6 week representation period
July/August/September 2004	Consideration of proposal by the School Organisation Committee for Walsall
July/August/September 2004	Notification of decision to parents, staff and governors at the schools

Frequently Asked Questions

What will happen to the children at the existing schools?

All children attending the three schools would be offered a place at the new school. Although the new school would only admit 60 pupils, there will be enough accommodation for all pupils currently attending the three schools. However, parents may, if they wish, seek a place at another school.

What will happen to the staff at the existing schools?

It is expected that the number of children in the new school would be similar to the current number across the three schools and that a similar number of staff would be needed. There is a legal requirement

to advertise nationally all headteacher and deputy headteacher posts. It may be that some members of staff decide to seek retirement or a post elsewhere.

What will happen to class sizes?

Some classes in the new school may be smaller than at present, whilst others may be slightly larger. There would be less likelihood of mixed age classes. No infant class would exceed 30 pupils. .

What will happen to the schools' Governing Bodies?

A shadow Governing Body would be set up to oversee the planning of the new school, including the appointment of staff. It is expected that the membership would largely be drawn from members of the three schools' governing bodies.

The existing governing bodies would continue to be responsible for their own school until the proposed closure date in August 2006.

What will happen to the existing school sites?

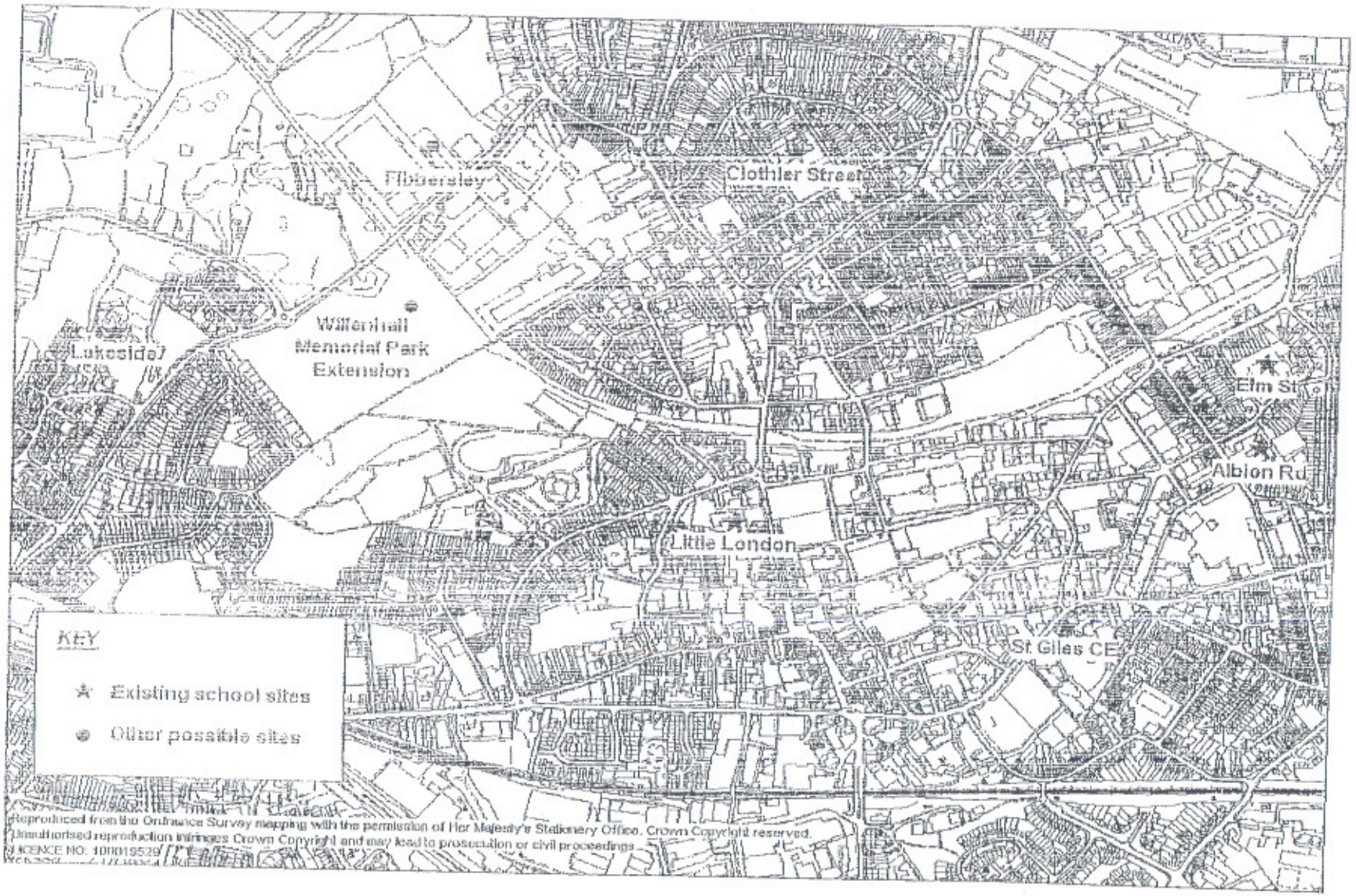
Any decisions regarding the future use of the sites would be taken by Walsall Council. Future use of the sites would be subject to planning and development controls.

What will the new school be called?

This has not yet been decided; however, it is felt that the name chosen would have links with the local community and suggestions for names would be invited at a later date.

Appendix 1

Schools in South Willenhall



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Education Walsall

Paper 4
Appendix 3

BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE

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Consultation Document

Elaine Simpson
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What are the Options?

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Option 1

Reduce the number of places at Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools.

It would be necessary to reduce the accommodation at each school, in order to do this. This would not address financial viability issues nor building stock issues and it is likely that at least one school would need to close during the next few years. Curriculum viability would also be a problem.

Option 2

Reduce the number of places in the area by closing either Clothier Street School or Lakeside School and re-building a new school to replace Little London and one of the other two.

Overall, there would be enough places for all pupils but significant investment in the buildings would be required and it would be necessary to vacate the school buildings and disperse pupils elsewhere whilst extensive works were carried out. Also, once a new improved building was in place, replacing two of the schools, the numbers at the third school are likely to reduce even further, hence leading to an unplanned closure.

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Close Clothier Street, Lakeside and Little London Schools and open a single replacement school.

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Retaining the three existing schools is not a realistic option as it would not address surplus places, suitability and viability issues.

If action is not taken now, more far reaching proposals may be required in the future if the viability issues result in fewer pupils attending the schools.

Funding has been made available by the Government for the purpose of building a replacement school in order to address the issues outlined above; it would not be possible to use the funding to remodel/refurbish the existing school buildings. If the option of building a replacement school does not go ahead it is likely that the investment would be reallocated by the Government and that another area would benefit.

Where would a new school be built?

A number of possible sites have been identified:

- Existing School Sites
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    - Lakeside Primary School
    - Little London Primary School
- Willenhall Memorial Park Extension
- Fibbersley

These are considered in detail in the site options section below. The final decision on the site will be taken by Walsall Council, taking account of consultation.

Site Options

The selection of a site for a new school is a major decision and is governed by a number of constraints. These include Government guidance on the size of school sites, community accessibility and the availability of land.

An appraisal of all possible sites in the area has been undertaken. Although each site has some advantages and disadvantages as a possible site for a new school, some sites are more suitable than others. A map showing the sites is attached.

Option A – Build a new school on the site of one of the existing schools

All three of the existing school sites are available as they are currently used for education. However, whilst each is accessible by the parents of current pupils, none is centrally located and therefore accessible by the wider community. All these sites are much smaller than the Government guidelines require and could only be considered for development if no alternative site were available. Use of a small site would probably necessitate the construction of a three storey building in order to maximise the play area for pupils.

Clothier Street Site

This site is approximately half the minimum size required for the proposed school and would not satisfy Government requirements for site areas.

Any development on the site would require closure of the existing building and the transfer of pupils to other schools in the area for up to 2 years.

Lakeside Site

Although larger than the other two school sites, this site is only approximately two-thirds of the minimum size required by the Government. Any development on the site would further reduce the undersized playing field area.

This site is the least centrally located in terms of convenience for all parents. Development on the site would require the closure of the existing building and the dispersal of pupils to other schools in the area for up 2 years.

Little London Site

This is the smallest of the school sites and is approximately half the minimum size required in the Government's national standards for site areas. Adequate on-site playing fields could not be provided.

The school is within a conservation area; this would restrict any development and make it difficult to provide appropriate accommodation for pupils at the new school.

Although this school has the largest number of pupils, the site would be less convenient than one of the more centrally located sites for parents whose children attend Clothier Street and Lakeside Primary Schools.

Development on the site would require the closure of the existing building and the dispersal of pupils to other schools in the area for up 2 years.

Option B – Build a new school on the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension Site

The option would involve building in the corner of the site. The provision of new, purpose-built accommodation would address the considerable premises-related issues at the existing schools and provide a suitable learning environment for pupils in the 21st century.

This site gives an opportunity to create a facility in line with Government requirements for the size of school sites. It is envisaged that approximately 16,000 m^2 of land would be required for the school site. This area would enable the statutory minimum playing field requirement of 5,000 m^2 to be provided together with approx 1,000 m^2 of hard surfaced games courts - which would extend the range of sports activities available in the area for use by the community - a large area for informal and social activities and habitat areas. The building would be designed with a view to maximising the playing field area and other grassed areas and this would ensure that community facilities for sports outside the school day were enhanced.

The Willenhall Memorial Park Extension site is approximately 67,000 m^2 in size. If this site is chosen for the replacement school, no pitches would be lost, indeed, sports facilities available in the area would be enhanced by the provision of a fenced pitch and other games courts on the school site.

This site has the advantage of being centrally located relative to the existing schools and access could be provided from Noose Lane and Park Road. This site would be more accessible for all parents than the other sites.

Whilst this option would use part of the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension, there would be no impact on the pitches and it is planned to provide an additional fenced junior pitch for use by the school and the community.

Approximately 10,000 m^2 of the existing 67,000 m^2 of park land would be lost to the community as park land as it would be built upon. There would be an opportunity to enhance environmental education provision in the area by providing a specialist resource base when larger year groups have moved through the school. This facility would be available for use by other schools and community groups.

Option C – Build a new school on the Fibbersley Site

This site is also suitable for the new school, however, it would not be as centrally located for all parents as the Willenhall Memorial Park Extension site.

The Fibbersley site is approximately 20,000 m^2 in size and is larger than is required to satisfy Government requirements for school sites. This would enable the statutory minimum playing field requirement of 5,000 m^2 to be provided together with approx 1,000 m^2 of hard surfaced games courts - which would extend the range of sports activities available in the area for use by the community - a large area for informal and social activities and habitat areas. The building would be designed with a view to maximising the playing field area and other grassed areas. There would be opportunities for community use of sports facilities outside the school day.

Use of this site would result in the loss of a football pitch and bowling green, however, a junior pitch and hard surface games courts would be provided for the school and some replacement facilities would be secured.

How can I make my views known?

Consultation meetings will be held for parents, staff and governors at each of the three schools and details of these are given below.

School	Date	Staff	Governors	Parents
Clothier Street	Wednesday 3 March	4 00 pm	5 30 pm	7 00 pm
Lakeside	Tuesday 2 March	4 00 pm	5 30 pm	7 00 pm
Little London	Thursday 4 March	4 00 pm	5 30 pm	7 00 pm

It may not be possible for everyone to attend these meetings, however, the attached consultation response form provides an opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Please do complete the consultation response form. We do want to hear your views. Unfortunately it will not be possible to make individual replies to consultation responses, however, issues raised will be included in a report on the outcome of consultation which will be considered by Walsall Council (Cabinet).

All responses should be received by 2 April 2004. A report on the response to the consultation will be considered by Walsall Council (Cabinet) on 21 April 2004.

What happens next?

The timetable below is provisional, however, every effort will be made to keep to it.

27 February 2004	Consultation starts
2 April 2004	Consultation ends
21 April 2004	Walsall Council (Cabinet) considers response to consultation and decides whether to proceed with the proposal
May 2004	Statutory notices published, 6 week representation period
July/August/September 2004	Consideration of proposal by the School Organisation Committee for Walsall
July/August/September 2004	Notification of decision to parents, staff and governors at the schools

Frequently Asked Questions

What will happen to the children at the existing schools?

All children attending the three schools would be offered a place at the new school. Although the new school would only admit 60 pupils, there will be enough accommodation for all pupils currently attending the three schools. However, parents may, if they wish, seek a place at another school.

What will happen to the staff at the existing schools?

It is expected that the number of children in the new school would be similar to the current number across the three schools and that a similar number of staff would be needed. There is a legal requirement

to advertise nationally all headteacher and deputy headteacher posts. It may be that some members of staff decide to seek retirement or a post elsewhere.

What will happen to class sizes?

Some classes in the new school may be smaller than at present, whilst others may be slightly larger. There would be less likelihood of mixed age classes. No infant class would exceed 30 pupils. .

What will happen to the schools' Governing Bodies?

A shadow Governing Body would be set up to oversee the planning of the new school, including the appointment of staff. It is expected that the membership would largely be drawn from members of the three schools' governing bodies.

The existing governing bodies would continue to be responsible for their own school until the proposed closure date in August 2006.

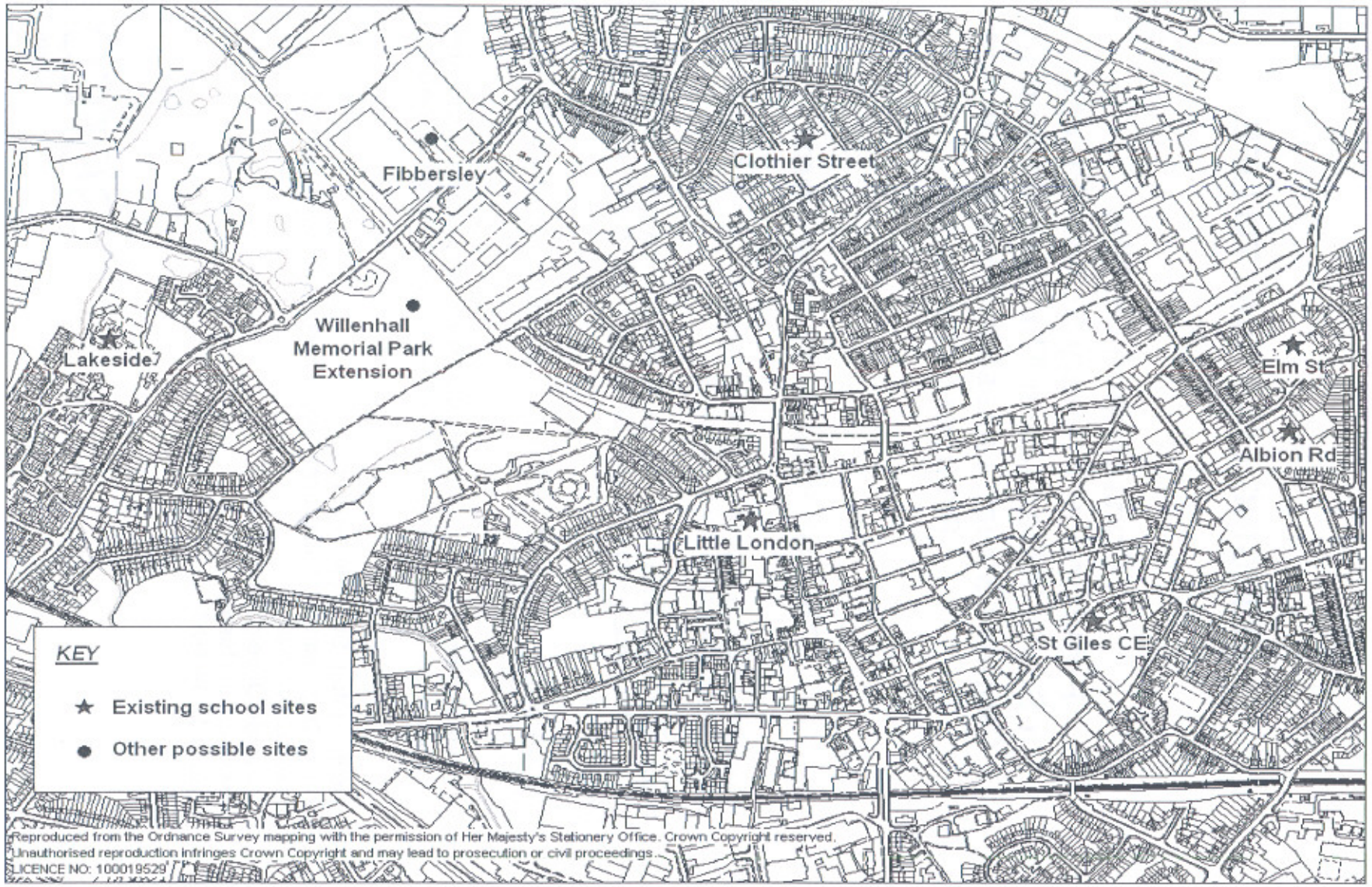
What will happen to the existing school sites?

Any decisions regarding the future use of the sites would be taken by Walsall Council. Future use of the sites would be subject to planning and development controls.

What will the new school be called?

This has not yet been decided; however, it is felt that the name chosen would have links with the local community and suggestions for names would be invited at a later date.

Schools in South Willenhall



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BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE

Consultation On The Provision of Primary School Places In South Willenhall In The Area Served by Clothier Street, Lakeside & Little London Primary Schools

Consultation Response Form

Education Walsall is undertaking public consultation on the provision of primary school places in South Willenhall.

A consultation document has been published and is available from Education Walsall, the schools and Willenhall Library and is on the Education Walsall website:-

http://www.walsalleducation.org/wegfl/intranet/files_uploaded/walsall_ed/Consultation-Document.doc)

All interested parties are invited to make their views known by using this form to comment on the proposals. The form should be returned by 2 April 2004 to:-

Susan Lupton, Strategic Leader
School Organisation, Admissions, Capital and Asset Management
Education Walsall
Education Development Centre
Pelsall Lane, Rushall
Walsall WS4 1NG

serco

It will help us to analyse consultation responses if you would indicate your interest in the proposal:

Parent/carer of a pupil at:	Clothier Street Primary School	☐
	Lakeside Primary School	☐
	Little London JMI School	☐
Future parent of a pupil at:	Clothier Street Primary School	☐
	Lakeside Primary School	☐
	Little London JMI School	☐
Member of staff at:	Clothier Street Primary School	☐
	Lakeside Primary School	☐
	Little London JMI School	☐
Governor at:	Clothier Street Primary School	☐
	Lakeside Primary School	☐
	Little London JMI School	☐
Local resident:		☐
Other:		☐

Please note that, in view of the large number of responses expected, it will not be possible to reply individually to consultation responses. However, issues raised will be included in a report on the outcome of consultation which will be considered by Walsall Council (Cabinet).

1. **Why is the reorganisation needed?**

Do you have any comments on the reasons why the proposed reorganisation is needed?

Comment:

2. **The existing school sites are too small for the possible new school and a new site is therefore required.**

Please indicate your preferred site

Willenhall Memorial Park Extension ☐

Fibbersley ☐

Do you have any comments on the proposed sites?

Comment:

3. **Do you have any other comments on the proposal?**

Comment:

Paper 4
Appendix 4

Lakeside Primary School

Staff Meeting

Tuesday 2 March 2004 at 4.00pm

PRESENT:

Trevor Edinborough, Susan Lupton and Stewart Snow – Education Walsall

Deputy Headteacher and staff

Trevor Edinborough gave a presentation, highlighting Education Walsall's duty to deal with schools with large surplus places and the problems at Lakeside, Clothier Street and Little London Primary schools. He stated that staff views would be reported back to the Cabinet and that notes of the meeting would be taken for this purpose.

Questions, Comments and Education Walsall Responses

Q. Why retain Little London?

Little London has space to accommodate pupils from one of the smaller schools. Some work is needed at the school but it has space.

Q. Falling school rolls as a result of the PFI Bids?

There is a lower birth rate across the borough, more acute in Willenhall South. This is the case nationally as well. There is more impact on the secondary sector than the primary sector regarding pupils moving from schools under threat of closure.

Q. Piece of land by Lakeside Primary under control of Walsall Council, access from Watery Lane

The planners had suggested two available sites named in the report. Consideration will be given to this piece of land as a possible site option.

Q. The Fibbersley site is further away

This site is closer to Clothier Street and Little London Primary Schools.

Q. There are safety issues about the Memorial Park Extension site

There would be separate access to the school from the park.

Q. There are concerns about childrens' safety

The views of people in the area are important and their needs should be taken into account.

Q. There are electricity pylons in the Park

The views of local people will be considered.

Q. There are plans to run the Metro across the park

Any plans for a Metro line will be taken into account in siting the new school.

Q. If the school sites are surplus, what happens to them?

Any decision on surplus land will be made by Walsall Council. The Council has made a commitment that money from the sale of land will be used for education purposes.

Q. What about the condition of Lakeside?

The Condition Survey has identified about £300,000 for urgent work on the school over the next 5 years.

Q. If there is housing, what about extra pupils?

People have an optimistic view of housing developments and the number of pupils generated by new housing. We are not aware of what future use of may be made of the school sites.

Q. The Fibbersley site has a conservation area.

People's views of sites are different. The proposed site at Fibbersley is the old radiator works site.

Q. How will staff be affected at the schools concerned?
If Little London remains, will the staff at Lakeside and Clothier Street have to apply for posts?

If schools close there is potential for staff redundancies. At Manor Farm there were very few redundancies at the end of the process. A Personnel Team was attached to the school to support staff. Support can be created for families and pupils in terms of relocation.

Q. If Little London remains open, are the staff safe?

The staff would be safe at the school if it remains open and one of the other smaller schools closes.

Q. The surplus places at Little London could be filled by pupils from Clothier Street or Lakeside

If Little London remains as it is, it will not be affected by any other proposed closure. If there are more children on roll then staffing levels may increase. Ring-fencing could be considered for redundant staff from another school.

Q. If all three schools close and one new school opens, what happens?

Ring-fencing of vacancies would be considered, however no jobs can be guaranteed.

Q. Entry of 60 pupils per year group. There are some year groups above 60, what happens with these extra pupils?

As part of the bid, additional accommodation has been secured for the extra numbers. When they move out of the school, the accommodation can be used for other purposes. These are issues for the School Management Team. The temporary Governing Body and Management Team will construct the staff structure for the new school.

Q. Will there be consideration for a nursery class at the new school? This had not been referred to in the document.

There will be a 52 place nursery, with 26 morning and 26 afternoon places.

Q. There are more children in nursery at Lakeside at the moment.

There are more nursery places available than are being taken up, due to falling births. Need a strategy for Children's Centres, SureStart and Neighbourhood Nurseries to be included in any new development. Walsall Council are still firming up their strategy on Children's Centres. A decision on this is awaited.

Q. Lakeside has been admitting pupils who have moved from Little London

We have looked at the PLASC data for January 2004. It is not expected that there will be huge changes in numbers between now and April.

Q. Whatever proposal is agreed, everyone should be treated fairly.

People's view of fair will be different.

Q. Are there any plans to consult pupils?

Not at this point in the process, but this idea could be considered.

Q. If option 2 or 3 were considered, will the Headteacher be appointed before other staff?

The temporary Governing Body would appoint a new Headteacher, who would then be involved in staff appointments at the school.

Trevor Edinborough closed the meeting by thanking all staff for their attendance and stating that he would be happy to talk to staff again if necessary within the available timescale.

Lakeside Primary School

Governing Body Meeting

Tuesday 2 March 2004 at 5.30pm

PRESENT

Elaine Simpson, (part of meeting) Trevor Edinborough, Susan Lupton and Stewart Snow – Education Walsall

Governing Body and Deputy Headteacher

Trevor Edinborough gave a presentation, highlighting Education Walsall's duty to deal with schools with large surplus places and the problems at Lakeside, Clothier Street and Little London Primary schools. He stated that Governors' views would be reported back to the Cabinet and that notes of the meeting would be taken for this purpose.

Questions, Comments and Education Walsall Responses

Q. With regard to the Memorial Park extension, what will be the enhanced sports facilities?

As part of the development an additional pitch and hard area would be created for the school. These would be fenced off for school use. The facilities could be used by the community outside school hours.

Q. There is transport firm, Aspray which is situated opposite the proposed Fibbersley site. There are safety issues for parents and pupils. Aspray are looking to expand on their present site.

Issues regarding safety and access will be considered as part of the consultation process.

Q. The suggestion of Lakeside is not just to save Lakeside but as a potential site option for the new school. This option may be difficult to sell to parents from Little London and Clothier Street.

Consideration will be given to the land by lakeside as a possible site option.

Q. Pupil numbers are rising at Lakeside.

In overall terms, the numbers wanting places in the area are falling.

Q. The school site would be nearer to Lakeside, away from central Willenhall. Housing developments are being built on the edges not in the centre.

Dot maps are available highlighting where pupils are coming from.

Q. Are the figures available for the number of pupils attending schools outside the borough.

The dot maps showing the spread of pupil addresses are available. Other maps could be produced to show pupils attending other schools.

Q. This was all being said 2 ½ years ago. In the best interests of pupils and schools in the area the status quo should be maintained. When previous proposals were suggested the Governors supported them. The situation needs to be well managed. The school had been put in a difficult position previously, it has come out of special measures and has just had a brilliant OFSTED inspection. There needs to be an exit strategy for staff and pupils, all three schools are concerned about the future.

The review is not focused on standards and performance, it is being driven by falling pupil numbers in the area. The status quo is not an option, we need to move forward and resolve the issues for the schools in the area.

Q. Following the report to cabinet in May 2003, officers were due to meet with schools regarding the failed PFI bid. Governors were concerned at the lack of discussion. They thought there were other options to be considered but there weren't.

Apologies for this but it was felt that it was not useful to meet as there were no other options to be considered.

Q. Is the funding dependent upon new build?

The DfES have agreed the bid submitted by the Education Walsall to remove surplus places in the area. It depends on what decision is reached as to whether we draw the money down. The funding cannot be used for the refurbishment of existing buildings. We cannot leave things as they are now. We would be willing to hold extra drop-in sessions to gain the widest consultation possible.

Q. What will be the Exit Strategy.

We will build a team around the pupils and staff in the same way as happened at Manor Farm. Staff would be encouraged to be involved in the design of the new building. A temporary Governing Body will be established and a new Headteacher appointed. We want to retain good staff in Walsall. With regard to pupil numbers, this is more difficult. We will make it a process, a managed strategy. A positive culture for pupils.

Q. Is there Match funding from Walsall Council?

The Council have agreed to find the additional funding needed. It will be a decision for the Council to declare any of the school sites surplus. The Cabinet has made a commitment to allocate money from the sale of any surplus school sites for educational purposes.

Q. Will a child in the nursery at Lakeside be guaranteed a place at the new school?

The planned number of places in the new school would guarantee a place. There may be bulges in some year groups that have been factored into the numbers. The new school will have the appropriate number of places needed.

Q. How are the number of surplus places determined?

There is a DfES formula which is capacity driven, which measures capacity within schools.

Q. If Lakeside is allowed to carry on and following a good OFSTED Inspection the numbers on the roll will rise.

There still remains the problem of falling pupil numbers within the area.

Q. A prospective parent at Little London was not aware of these proposals and the consultation exercise.

We have focused on existing parents of children in school. Other parents and members of the community can be involved in these meetings. Surgeries and drop-in sessions can also be arranged.

Q. What size will the new school be?

The new school will be a two-form entry school (60 places per year group). We have secured the funding for this. There would be additional accommodation for the bulges in some year groups. This space would be used for other purposes at a later date. We would like to see this as an extended school. The new school will cater for existing pupils.

Q. What about falling pupil numbers.

The declining birth rate will flatten out the pupil numbers in the area.

The Chair of Governors closed the meeting and thanked the Education Walsall staff for the presentation.

Lakeside Primary School

Parents' Meeting

Tuesday 2 March 2004 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Elaine Simpson, Trevor Edinborough, Susan Lupton and Stewart Snow – Education Walsall

Councillor S Coughlan – Ward Councillor

Parents including Governors and Deputy Headteacher and staff

Elaine Simpson opened the meeting and introduced the staff present. She stated that parental views would be reported back to the Cabinet and that notes of the meeting would be taken for this purpose.

Trevor Edinborough gave a presentation, highlighting Education Walsall's duty to deal with schools with large surplus places and the problems at Lakeside, Clothier Street and Little London Primary schools.

Questions, Comments and Education Walsall Responses

Q. Little London is in a conservation area, what is meant by this?

Part of the school building is in a conservation area due to the historic value of the clock.

Q. There is a lack of playing fields. It had been Council policy to sell off playing fields. If the park is used as a site will the playing fields be sold off?

There is no policy of selling off playing fields. Sports England will look very closely at any changes to sports fields, as a result it is very difficult to sell off land. We would need sufficient playing fields for the pupils at the new school.

Q. Will residents be involved in the consultation process?

There is a need to focus on schools and parents in the first instance. We would be happy to hold meetings with the wider community at a later date.

The Walsall Chronicle article was not accurate in the report on the consultation exercise.

Q. The consultation document and response form were unclear. The wording seemed to imply that the school was closing and that a new site was being chosen.

Elaine Simpson apologised if parents thought the documents were unclear. Responses would be sent back via the schools, a post box would be set up for this purpose in each school.

Q. People feel angry, they feel that the decision has already been taken. There seems to be more emphasis on option 3.

This is not the case, no decision has been made. No emphasis has been put on any option

Q. Parents prefer smaller schools

Lakeside is built for 30 pupils in each year group, 17 pupils per year group is not viable. Governors have difficulties in staffing the school because of the low numbers.

Q. The small classes do work at the school and the school's budget is sound. The school is secure.

This is not the case, the budget is not sound, discussions regarding the future of the school have happened before, the school can't be secure. We have to reduce large surplus numbers, the DfES are saying this.

Q. Are you aware of the new housing developments on Aston Road and School Street.

The potential numbers have been looked at, they will not fill either Lakeside or the other schools.

Q. Could the funding for the new school be used to improve the existing school buildings?

Neither Little London or other school sites are large enough for a new 2 FE school.

Q. Is the funding only for a new school?

Yes, it may be decided not to draw down the money, this could be an outcome

Q. Could the money be used to refurbish the current schools?

The money cannot be used for any other purpose other than new build

Q. If a new school is built on a new site, who has ownership of the buildings and site?

The building and site will be owned by Walsall Council not Serco

Q. There have been some misconceptions about the sites.

The sites have been suggested by Walsall Planners not Serco. The sites have been considered previously under the PFI bids

Q. There are too many children for a two-form entry school.

The pupil numbers are stabilising down to a two-form entry school. There will be bulges in some year groups that can be accommodated.

Q. Will pupils be involved in the design of the new school. Could they be asked what they would like to see?

This is a good idea, there would be involvement from the community as well.

Q. House values will be affected

If a new school is built then there will be a separate process and planning issues will have to be looked at.

Q. What will happen if the land is sold off?

The disposal of land will be a Council decision. The Cabinet has said that any money from the sale of land will go to education use in Willenhall South.

Q. How will people get to know about the consultation process?

Information has been made available in libraries. Needed to get to parents in schools first. Meetings with parents were seen as first priority. Further consultation meetings will take place if needed.

Q. Will we see Cabinet report?

Cabinet will see the feedback from the parents. The Cabinet report will be sent to schools for distribution to parents

Q. There is a feeling that the decision has already been made.

Parental views will be taken into account before any decision is made.

Q. Environmental pollution from traffic at Fibbersley. The response form seems to indicate that a decision has been made.

Apologies for this impression. This is not the case. The professional view is to close the schools and open a new school. There is no preference regarding the site.

Q. What about St Giles and Albion Road/Elm Street?

The bid for the amalgamation of Albion Road/Elm Street failed.

Q. The money for building work at the school has been quoted at £350,000, what will this be spent on?

The work and costs have been identified through the Condition Survey

Q. The land behind Lakeside should be considered as a site

This will be considered as a possible site option. We will check with planners regarding its availability.

Q. If a new school is built, how far into the future do you estimate pupil numbers?

We can forecast pupil numbers for the next few years based on births and other data.

Q. Does the birth rate match our figures?

Yes, it does.

Q. Could you build upwards at the school?

Yes, but still need enough playing fields for the school. These are well regulated.

Q. What will be the size of the new school?

The school will be built as a two-form entry school, 420 full-time children on the roll. There is the possibility of the school attracting pupils from elsewhere.

Q. What is the timetable for building the new school?

The plan is for the new school to open in 2006. Before this a temporary Governing Body will be set up in order to deal with matters relating to the new school including the appointment of the new Headteacher and other staff.

Q. What is the position for staff?

Staffing levels are dependent upon pupil numbers. The main posts at risk are those of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher at each school.

Q. Parents are happy with the school, pupils are happy to stay here rather than move to a new bigger school with facilities.

It is our view that it is better to plan for the future rather than have the closure of the school at a later date.

Q. The Headteacher will have the staff he or she wants

This is not permitted in a transitional school

Q. Schools will lose children from the Willenhall area based on these proposals. This has happened before.

This situation could happen but children could be drawn back into a new school. The situation cannot remain as it is.

Q. A state of the art school sounds very exciting. If the new school is built on the park the last piece of green land between housing and industry will be lost.

These views will be included in the Cabinet report.

Q. There are only two potential sites not five as stated in the consultation document.

There are only two viable sites. The existing school sites are too small. The Lakeside land would be considered as a third option.

Q. Who has the final decision on the new school?

The decisions will be made by the School Organisation Committee on the new school. The decision on the site will be made by Walsall Council and through the planning process.

Clothier Street Primary School

Staff Meeting

Wednesday 3 March 2004 at 4.00pm

PRESENT:

Trevor Edinborough, Susan Lupton and Stewart Snow – Education Walsall

Headteacher and staff
Dave Jones – NASUWT Rep

Trevor Edinborough gave a presentation, highlighting Education Walsall's duty to deal with schools with large surplus places and the problems at Lakeside, Clothier Street and Little London Primary schools. He stated that staff views would be reported back to the Cabinet and that notes of the meeting would be taken for this purpose.

Questions, Comments and Education Walsall Responses

Q – Why are the nursery numbers not included in the figures?

They are not required for PLASC or included in the measurement of school capacities.

Q – What about housing developments in the area?

All available information has been taken into account in looking at projected numbers.

Q – The report refers to pupil numbers stabilizing.

The birth rate trend is stabilizing at lower levels. There will be a further slight decline in numbers.

Q – Lakeside was originally built as a 3 FE school?

Lakeside is 1 FE and is large enough for 30 per class with seven class bases.

Q – Is the Clothier Street site large enough for a 2 FE school?

The presentation site is not large enough for a 2 FE school under current DfES regulations.

4/K

Q – There are too many children for a 2 FE school

Overall the numbers can be accommodated in a 2 FE school. There will be additional accommodation for the year groups with bulges. This accommodation can be used for other purposes at a later date.

Sketch maps are available for the proposed Fibbersley and Memorial Park Extension sites, highlighting how a new school might look. Both sites are physically large enough for a new school and playing fields.

Q – Money in bank – enough for one 2 FE school.

Funding is available for one 2 FE school. This is what was bid for, there is no proposal for two 1 FE schools. The funding is only available for new build not refurbishment of existing buildings. We don't have to draw down the funding, there are a range of other options that can be considered. This is an opportunity to provide a 21st Century learning environment for pupils in the area.

Q – Will the Cabinet report be made available?

The Cabinet report is a public document, it will enter the public domain seven days before the Cabinet meeting. Copies of the report will be sent to schools before the meeting.

Q – How does the School Organisation Committee work?

The membership and role of the School Organisation Committee were explained to the meeting.

Q – Will parents' views be taken into account?

Views will be included in the body of the Cabinet report.

Q – Clothier Street has a smaller surplus in pupil numbers, it is being sucked into the problems of the other schools.

The schools in total have to be looked at in the area, schools can't be looked at in isolation.

Q – Are there falling pupil numbers elsewhere?

There are falling numbers in other schools. Dot maps are available to show the spread of pupils in the area. Reference was made to the three previous PFI bids for the Willenhall South area.

Q – Are there schools elsewhere with falling numbers?

This area is being looked at because of the large overall surplus. Other areas of the Borough will be looked at in the future.

Q – Will all children be offered places in the new school?

The existing pupils on roll will have a right to places in the new school. There is sufficient accommodation built into the plans for the new school to cater for the numbers.

Q – Staff live in the community, they are committed to the school and the community. Staff are very upset at the press coverage and the comments regarding the quality of education at the school.

Press coverage can and does differ from what was said. The review is not about quality or performance, we want to find best solution to resolve the problem.

Q – Nursery provision at the new school.

There will be nursery provision at the new school.

Q – How will the Governing Body be set up?

A temporary Governing Body will be established for the new school. The Governing Bodies of the existing schools will carry on until the schools close. The temporary Governing Body will work on setting up the new school and the staffing structure. We are mindful of bringing the community together. Pupils still deserve the best education they can get until the schools close.

Q – It is difficult for staff to be motivated if they think they maybe out of a job in the future.

We accept that these proposals will have an impact on morale. We will do everything to help staff through the process. Teams will be working with staff and pupils if needed.

Q – With regard to Lakeside, many things haven't happened as had been thought.

The situation has changed over time. Numbers are expected to decline, in the future, predictions are difficult built on current knowledge. We do not want to see an unplanned school closure.

We are very willing to come back again and speak to staff.

Clothier Street Primary School

Governing Body Meeting

Wednesday 3 March 2004 at 5.30pm

PRESENT:

Trevor Edinborough, Susan Lupton and Stewart Snow – Education Walsall

Governing Body and Headteacher

Trevor Edinborough gave a presentation, highlighting Education Walsall's duty to deal with schools with large surplus places and the problems at Lakeside, Clothier Street and Little London Primary schools. He stated that governors' views would be reported back to the Cabinet and that notes of the meeting would be taken for this purpose.

Questions, Comments and Education Walsall Responses

Q. Do we know how many pupils go outside borough.

We have figures of children going out and coming into Walsall. We are a net importer of children. We also have maps showing where children live in the Willenhall South area.

Q. Lakeside was under threat of closure a while ago. Children went to schools outside area.

Numbers have declined in area due to the falling birth rate in area and other reasons.

Q. A proposal is to build a 2 FE school, pupil numbers are too big for 2 FE.

One of the proposals is to build a new 2 FE school. Bulges in some year groups will be accommodated in the new school. This space can be used for other community purposes.

Q. Are the numbers registered for nursery for next few years available?

The demographic trends indicate that a 2 FE school will be large enough. There is flexibility built into the plans for the new school.

Q. I am worried as governor and parent about class sizes with numbers increasing from 30 to 35 in class.

These are school management and budget issues. There will be sufficient classrooms to provide normal class sizes in school. There will not be the situation of two classes for 85 children.

Q. There is a lot of house building in area on the old St Thomas More site and at Temple Bar. Is there the possibility of the school sites being used for housing developments?

Any decision on the school sites will be made by Walsall Council.

Q. It is not fair to ask young children to travel further to school. Many of the children in the area walk to school on their own. If the school moves it may be too far for parents to get children to school.

Distances will vary for individual pupils. Some live nearer to the proposed sites than the school they currently attend.

Q. Is the funding PFI?

No, the funding is match funded, DfES 80%, 20% from Walsall Council.

Q. We do not feel that this is proper consultation, we feel that people have made up their mind about option 3.

No decisions have been taken. The Cabinet will decide on what to do after the consultation process.

Q. It is felt that there are only 2 options for sites not 5.

The 3 school sites and the other sites have been evaluated. The school sites have been considered but they do not match current DfES requirements for site size.

Q. Do we want our children to breathe in fumes etc from Aspray's?
Do we want to disrupt staff etc.

The sites have been suggested by Walsall planners.

Q. What about access to sites?

Sketch plans have been drawn up of the two sites to show how the new school might look.

Q. If the Fibbersley site was being considered, why have Walsall Council allowed Aspray to extend their premises? This is no good for children, with lorry fumes and added road danger. There will be an affect on childrens' health with the Fibbersley site, it cannot be an option because of this. Children can't be expected to put up with this. There will be an extra 250 staff on the Aspray site.

The sites have been suggested by Walsall planners.

Q. There are brown field sites in Willenhall, unused factories and industrial land. There are problems with both sites suggested in the consultation document.

We are not sure if these sites are owned by the Council. We need to find a site that is accessible to all parents in area. Planners have identified possible sites in area.

Q. What would be the situation with option 2?

We would retain Little London and close one of the smaller schools. All present pupils could be accommodated in the two schools.

Q. If this is the case, would Clothier Street stay as it is? Why close Clothier Street as it has lowest surplus?

We would need to look at where children are to determine which school should close.

Q. Why retain Little London with no playing fields, why should the other schools close? Is Little London being kept because of its size rather than being the most preferred?

Little London has the space for the largest number of pupils. We would have to move lot of pupils of the school closed. The funding can only be drawn down for new build, not for any other reason.

Q. What criteria will be used to close Lakeside or Clothier Street?

Further consultation will be undertaken to decide which school should close. The bid process was very competitive and nationally, relatively few bids were awarded funding; our bid was scored against surplus place removal. We were not successful in our bid for Albion Road/Elm Street.

Q. Is there match funding for the site?

Walsall Council will provide funding for capital build. The land doesn't count as part of the match funding. The Council funding will come from existing DfES funding streams available to the Council.

Clothier Street Primary School

Parents' Meeting

Wednesday 3 March 2004 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Elaine Simpson, Trevor Edinborough, Susan Lupton and Stewart Snow – Education Walsall

Cllr H Withnall - Ward Councillor

Parents including Governors and Deputy Headteacher and staff

Elaine Simpson opened the meeting and introduced the staff present. She stated that parental views would be reported back to the Cabinet and that notes of the meeting would be taken for this purpose.

Trevor Edinborough gave a presentation, highlighting Education Walsall's duty to deal with schools with large surplus places and the problems at Lakeside, Clothier Street and Little London Primary schools.

Questions, Comments and Education Walsall Responses

Q. Is the £1.7m for building work extra to school budgets?

This is extra money that comes to Walsall for building work and is outside the budgets allocated to schools.

Q. How much would new school cost?

The cost would be in the region of £3m.

Q. If you reduce accommodation at schools to reduce building surplus can you take out old parts such as wooden buildings at Clothier Street and the old Little London building?

It is not that easy to take out parts of buildings. The upside is that we retain schools, the downside is that there is still a cost for work needed on the schools. Funding for refurbishment would have to be found from local money, the funding for new build is government grant.

None of three school sites are suitable for a 2 FE school under current DfES regulations. The land at Lakeside raised at the meeting last night has been looked at. The land is unsuitable because of ground conditions: it is on a lower level than the school and is prone to flooding.

Q. Lakeside shouldn't be considered as an option, the school has not succeeded with pupil numbers.

People will bring their own value judgements about schools/sites.

Q. The Fibbersley site is in Wednesfield, why build school there for Wolverhampton pupils?

The Fibbersley site is in the Walsall borough.

Q. The pupil numbers at Clothier Street are not falling the same as the other schools.

We need to look at all schools in the area, can't just look at individual schools.

Q. You are looking at 2 FE school with extra in some year groups. A 2 FE school will not big enough, we do not have figures for nursery numbers.

Birth dates have been looked at in forecasts and the number that will become pupils in schools. 60 will be enough for the new school, there will be extra room for children.

Q. It is unacceptable for children to go from small school to larger school of nearly 3 FE. It will be too big a change for the children.

Q. Parents want a new school for the Clothier Street children. Why can't a new school be built at Clothier Street.

The site at Clothier Street is not big enough for a new school. The building will take about two years to complete.

Q. Why have sites by busy roads (Aspray)? There are safety issues of a site by a busy transport yard. The Metro is planned to run by both sites.

We would have to look at traffic calming measures.

Q. We can't see what is wrong with Clothier Street school. It is not physically falling down.

We estimate that £560,000 needs to be spent over the next 5 years for urgent work at Clothier Street.