

**Primary expansion consultation – Rawdon St Peter’s C of E Primary School
School Governors’ meeting – 21st September 2011 at 7.00 p.m.**

Present:

Darren Crawley - Children’s Services, School Organisation (DC)

Helen Kirwin – School Improvement Team (HK)

James Saunders – Estate Management (JS)

School Governors – (SG)

Caroline Sibson – Headteacher (CS)

Sharon Hurley – Minutes

These notes are not intended to provide a verbatim account of the meeting but do capture all the key issues raised.

DC – introduced the proposal and outlined the consultation process and timeline. DC advised that comments and views from all meetings plus comments via email or the response forms will be collated and then summarised in a report to the executive board following the end of the consultation.

SG – checked if there was any feedback so far from staff

DC – highlighted that they were mostly in favour of the proposal with some concerns, mainly highways and accommodation issues.

SG – raised concerns about the volume of extra pupils, buildings capacity i.e. hall, playground etc. with 105 extra pupils

JS – clarified there will be a Project Manager from the Estates team who will work with the school during the design stage and support them through the change. There are no guarantees at this stage as to what will be provided but all comments will be noted. There will also be input from colleagues including the School Improvement Team who will help support the transition from a 1.5 form entry to a 2 form entry school.

SG – asked about access to the fields and stated there was parental concern, when would there be answers to this?

JS – confirmed that we are at the beginning of a statutory process but some initial ground works would take place before the outcome of the proposal is made. This is normal and needs to be done at risk due to the timelines to ensure the project can be delivered in time.

SG – parents’ parking, there are issues on local roads too – residents only restriction proposed

JS – noted this, Highways Officer will take a view on whether a wider audit is required. We will be dictated by their requirements. School will be kept informed.

SG – what about a drop off point?

JS – this has had limited success in the past but will propose if appropriate.

SG – parents walking are at risk by those who don’t, causing safety issues – walking on the road, cars are also parked on pavements.

JS – noted this, it is not a capital issue but city wide policy issue and we have to be governed by the decision by highways.

SG – what about a pedestrian area?

SG – where would that be?

JS – residents may be unhappy about parking restrictions but again this will be noted and discussed with highways.

SG – what about permit only?

JS – Highways may consider this if they feel it is necessary.

SG – this could be an opportunity to make it better in the area if highways look at it

SG – as part of the extra accommodation, what other facilities will be provided?

JS – providing extra classrooms plus toilets are our priority.

SG – would there be options to use the fields as additional children will cause problems at break and lunch times?

SG – (discussion)

DC – these issues are down to the school to manage and other schools that have previously expanded implemented staggered break and lunch times to ease congestion.

SG – what are the key drivers in the planning of this proposal?

DC – highlighted the increase of children not just in this area, but the wider area. It is also about being able to offer choice and diversity for parents but also ensuring any expansion is not to the detriment of any other local school.

CS - commented there are already children who have been unable to get a place in this school in reception, plus the school have been asked to take extra children in other year groups due to the demand.

SG – where is the increase?

DC – the increase in the birth rate is a city wide issue. However the pressure within the North West has increased quite rapidly over the past couple of years. Horsforth has already seen schools increased and as well as Rawdon we are aware that we need to look at the Yeadon and Guiseley areas.

SG – will the increase continue?

DC – it is difficult to predict whether the birth rate will continue to increase, but it has consistently increase year on year since 2001 at a rate of approx extra 300 births per year.

SG – has Littlemoor been included also?

DC – when we put together our proposal for this area we looked at all the schools, taking into account a number of factors, such as the number of school places available versus the demand for places. Where parents are preferencing, what site issues there are to deliver extra accommodation and collectively we felt that Rawdon St Peters was the best solution to deliver a scheme for 2013. This isn't to say we would consider the other schools in the future if we feel more places are required.

SG – Rawdon St Peters is highly valued, we are a village community, there are concerns that the community feeling may be lost and preferences will drop.

DC – in 2013 we are expecting nearly 180 children to be requesting a school place within the area that covers the 2 Rawdon schools and Rufford primary. I can not see why increasing to a 2 forms of entry school would remove the community feeling. Surely the community feeling is derived from what happens internally rather than the size of the footprint.

HK - If a school has a good name then parents will choose it as they currently do.

SG – are the extra children from the Rawdon community or from wider area and driving?

DC – 2011 preference data shows that the school attracts from further a field than Rawdon due to the standards and possibly because it is a faith school. Part of this planning is to offer choice and diversity but ensuring that this would not be to any other schools detriment.

SG – what would we know and when?

SG – when will the decision be or when will it all happen.

DC – the public consultation will run until 21st October 2011 and during this time there will be a number of meetings with the school which will include staff, governors, public and school council. Following the end of the public consultation we will be collating all the minutes from the meetings plus any responses forms received and summarising these in a report to the executive board of Leeds City council. This is likely to be at their meeting in December. If the executive board give us permission to proceed, then we will move into a 6 week statutory notice period from January where this will be another opportunity for people to respond either positively or negatively. Notices will be published in the newspaper and placed on the school gates as well. No formal meetings will take place during this time. At the end of this period we will again summarise any response received and then report this to the executive board who will make a final decision on the proposal either during March or April.

JS – the building timeline is different to the statutory timeline, although often get informed during consultation when there would be a plan but not detail. We would be assigning a project officer to work with the school well before we get a final decision.

SG – when would you be able to inform of us the detail of the build?

JS – will work with staff even before planning process, school will know some detail before planning application, there will be constant dialogue between all.

SG – the change of use of rooms and where extra buildings would need to be considered before planning

JS – we will work together, looking at risks and also carry out ground works.

SG – will the cost of the project be paid for by the school and authority

JS – the authority would fund the capital (building) and furniture/resources would be funded through the school.

SG – are there any financial projections?

DC – the school would get the additional funding based on a 60 admissions number in the September. Normally schools get the pupil funding in April following PLASC, but this would be allocated 6 months earlier to help with funding extra teaching staff. Then in April adjustments will be made based on the actual pupils that came into the school.

SG – what about future years for extra 15 children?

DC – would need to check with finance and inform

SG – are there any comparisons of other schools re costs involved?

JS – not at this time, will find out

SG – would there be a modular building on site by September 2013 and would this be done all at once.

JS – this is a small increase so almost certainly will be done in one phase and the buildings would be ready by September 2013. Ideally a lot of the work would be done during the school holidays to ensure minimum disruption

SG – increase in floor space means more funding

SG – would like to talk to another school who have been through a similar increase.

DC – would be useful for staff/govs to visit another school that has modular accommodation and also get the views of the Headteacher as to the transition. I will get details for Caroline to contact another school.

JS – has photos of recent schemes, although every project is different there are lots of examples

SG – own contractors or procurement?

JS – we already have a modular framework and use specific contractors.

DC – asked if governors felt positive about this

SG – replied generally but still not know full picture, need further information but generally positive

DC – noted. The school will be supported through the proposal and also through the transition of becoming a 2 form entry school. The involvement of various teams will change at different stages but there will always be support.

SG – clarification to parents would be useful on the process

DC – we do like to understand concerns so please feed back through the response forms or email.

Meeting closed 8.05 p.m.