

CABINET – 5TH MARCH 2007**REVIEW OF SCHOOLS ORGANISATION IN MELTON MOWBRAY AND
THE VALE OF BELVOIR****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE'S SERVICE****PART A****Purpose of Report**

1.
 - i) To inform the Cabinet of the progress made to date in the Review process, in particular to confirm the results of the third stage of consultation with schools, parents, pupils and associated stakeholders.
 - ii) To enable a decision to be taken on a proposed solution for the reorganisation of the schools within Melton Mowbray and the Vale of Belvoir.

Recommendations

2. The Cabinet is recommended to:
 - i) Note the progress made to date in the Review process, in particular the outcomes and issues arising from the third stage of consultation.
 - ii) Approve the preferred option (as set out in paragraph 18 to this report) as the County Council's proposed solution for the reorganisation of schools in Melton Mowbray and the Vale of Belvoir, subject to a two phase implementation process, as set out in paragraph 23 to this report.
 - iii) Agree the early issue of statutory notices to enable the necessary changes to take place.
 - iv) Note the work in progress, particularly the development of post 16 options, and transitional planning relating to curriculum modelling, the review of catchment areas, and supporting staff in schools.
 - v) Note the current Capital funding arrangements and proposals to develop a bid in conjunction with the Learning and Skills Council, for 14-19 Capital funding for a new post 16 centre.

- vi) Agree that the County Council be recommended to approve the action taken which involves a variation to the Children and Young People's Plan 2006 – 2009.

Reasons for recommendations

3. The proposed solution for the Review, as confirmed by the outcomes of the third round of consultation, is considered that best able to meet the objectives previously agreed by Cabinet, to raise standards of achievement and attainment for pupils in schools within the area.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

4. The timetable for the Review process previously agreed by Cabinet anticipates the completion of new and/or refurbished school buildings by September 2009. However, once a decision on the way forward is taken, the speed of change will be subject to schools readiness to do so (in the context of the transitional planning issues outlined in Part B to this report) and the construction programme. This target date is consistent with the DfES requirement for releasing Capital funding to support the Review.
5. Comments on the findings of the third round of consultation will be sought from the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on 26th February 2007 and reported to Cabinet at this meeting.
6. The decisions taken by Cabinet on 5th March are due to be considered by the County Council at its next meeting on 21st March 2007. This will allow the recommended statutory notices proposing any changes to commence publication in the Spring, each followed by a six week period during which any objections can be made. If any objections are received, under current arrangements, the final decision on each notice has to be referred to the School Organisation Committee. If no objections are received, the decision made by Cabinet on 5th March, subject to receiving approval by the County Council, will be confirmed by the Director.

Policy framework and previous decisions

7. The Cabinet agreed to the implementation of the Review process on 23rd November 2005 and subsequently approved the first, second and third rounds of consultation on 13th February 2006, 5th September 2006 and 21st November 2006 respectively.
8. Cabinet recommendations on the preferred option to form the basis for the third round of consultation were presented to the County Council on 6th December 2006 to enable agreement to a variance to the current Plan Framework, to facilitate the Review process.

9. The preliminary findings of the third round of consultation were reported to the Cabinet on 12th February 2007, to enable early consideration to the possible outcome(s), and the transitional planning work necessary to implement such outcome(s).

Resource Implications

10. The County Council has so far been allocated by the DfES, a total of £28.7M Capital funding to support the Review. This comprises a BSF One School Pathfinder capital grant of £22.8M (subject to the project chosen) allocated to the Melton Mowbray secondary schools, and a further £5.9M for the Belvoir High School awarded in support of the new Education and Inspections Act 2006.
11. It may be necessary to supplement the funding from the County Council's resources should the need arise to support development or transitional costs. There is currently no provision incorporated in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
12. Further work to establish the anticipated costs of implementing the proposed solution and the opportunity to access funding from other sources is now in progress. The Learning and Skills Council have indicated that subject to meeting certain criteria, there is potential to bid for a significant contribution to the development costs for the new post 16 centre, via the 16-19 Capital fund arrangements. The purpose of this fund is to facilitate certain joint initiatives across schools and colleges in response to local needs, in the context of 14-19 provision. Achieving a successful bid would significantly enhance our proposals for post 16 provision with the area. The outcome of further discussions with the LSC concerning eligibility to bid and the process to do so, will be reported to Cabinet at this meeting.
13. The Director of Resources has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Circulation under Sensitive Issues

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PART B

Background

14. The review of the organisation of secondary and primary school places in Melton Mowbray and the Vale of Belvoir was agreed by the Cabinet on 23rd November 2005. Its primary aim is to raise standards of achievement and attainment for pupils in our schools, whilst also addressing forthcoming changes to the 14-19 curriculum.
15. The first two rounds of consultation, held in May and October 2006 have sought views on a number of options capable of delivering a transformation in our schools. Strong support for change has been prevalent throughout the process of consultation.
16. Analysis of the reasons influencing the choice of options by respondents in the first two rounds of consultation indicates some consistent and clear messages. They include a preference for local schools of a manageable size, having a good breadth of curriculum offer, recognising the benefits of continuity for pupils from 11-16 years, and the opportunities for development of post 16 provision. These have formed key priorities in determining a suitable outcome for the Review.
17. Other key messages that have emerged from the consultation include the importance of schools working together to achieve effective curriculum delivery, how to manage the change whilst sustaining good practice, and transitional issues particularly school funding, admissions and transport.

The third stage of consultation

18. The third stage of consultation previously approved by Cabinet commenced on 11th December 2006. Based upon the findings of the earlier rounds the preferred way forward for the third round of consultation invited views on the option of:
 - **The re-modelling of the Belvoir High School to provide a 600 place 11-16 school**
 - **Developing three 11-19 schools in Melton Mowbray each of 800 places (for 11-16 year olds) on the existing three school sites**
 - **Providing a new jointly managed post 16 centre of 600 places**
 - **Changing the age range of the primary schools in the Vale of Belvoir to accommodate pupils up to Year 6 (age 11)**
19. The third stage of consultation ended on 26th January 2007. The preliminary findings, to enable an early consideration to the issues arising, were reported to the Cabinet on 12th February 2007. Further analysis now confirms that

1849 respondents have submitted their comments on line or through the post, representing a 20% return. The results show that a 60% majority of respondents support the preferred way forward. Of the remainder 17% support the option proposed by Governors of King Edward VII school for a two school model within Melton Mowbray. A further 8% support a revision of the preferred option which, whilst sustaining a three school model in Melton, would see John Ferneley increase its size to 1000 places to address concerns about potential catchment adjustments. These latter two options were examined in the report to Cabinet of 12th February. The remaining 15% of respondents mainly did not express a preference for any particular option.

20. A summary of the consultation returns is provided at Appendices A1 – A3. Appendix B to this report provides an analysis of the reasons given by respondents for their choice of option. This shows that those that have given their reasons (approximately half of the respondents didn't), the benefits of 11-16 schools generally, opportunities for new post 16 provision, sustaining the current sixth form expertise, and concerns regarding admission arrangements/catchment area adjustments, have formed key influencing factors.

Current position – work in progress

- **Developing options for post 16 provision**

21. The preferred way forward makes proposals for a new jointly managed post 16 centre. Work has been undertaken with the Learning and Skills Council, to examine and make recommendations on the management arrangements and curriculum to be offered by the new centre and how this might work in partnership with other post 16 providers within the area, particularly Brooksby Melton College.

This complex work is being guided by a Steering Group comprising representatives of CYPS and the LSC, the headteacher from each of the secondary schools in the area and the Birch Wood Special School and the principal of Brooksby Melton College.

22. The Steering Group met to consider its preliminary findings on 7th February 2007. From this meeting emerged a shared commitment to build a robust partnership between schools, the College, and the new post 16 centre, to deliver high quality qualifications, tailored to the learning requirements of individual students and the needs of the local and national economy. The headteachers/principal have subsequently issued a joint press statement to this effect.
23. In reaching this position, the Steering Group recognised that there would be benefits to a two phase implementation process. This could enable the development of the 11-16 schools in the Vale of Belvoir and Melton Mowbray by September 2009 (consistent with the release of the DfES capital funding) and the subsequent development of the post 16 centre by 2011/12. The later development of the post 16 centre would support a more managed

process to transfer business from the sixth form currently located at King Edward VII, particularly in terms of supporting staff and students, and provide time to secure 16-19 capital funding administered by the LSC.

24. The group have subsequently met to begin to determine timescales, tasks to be done, and the appropriate resource commitment needed in the context of developing the 16-19 curriculum.

- **Transitional planning**

25. In order to support the Review as it moves towards the implementation phase (to bring about the proposed changes) it will be necessary to have in place effective transitional plans.

26. Particular aspects of transitional planning cover:

- Curriculum development
 - To continue to demonstrate and develop how an 800 place 11-16 school would work in practice, and through collaboration and specialist status, deliver a full range of subjects in the context of increased choice and national change in the 13-19 curriculum offering.
- Supporting staff in schools
 - Developing a staffing protocol with head teachers of the reorganised schools to ensure that staff are treated fairly and equally, and to ensure a flexible approach across the reorganised schools.
- Development of revenue funding arrangements
 - Development of collaborative revenue funding arrangements for the training and skills development of staff in order to ensure that they are equipped to deliver new curriculum areas and that pupils and students attending schools in the transition period are not disadvantaged.
- Accommodation arrangements including resource allocation
 - Agreeing with Head teachers and governing bodies best value outcomes for the provision of additional, refurbished and reconfigured accommodation, within the capital resources currently available and any additional resources that can be secured (for example in partnership with the Learning and Skills Council).
- Organisational and governance issues
 - Organisational issues in terms of managing the change in pupil/student numbers in schools. Governance issues in terms of detailed planning of a governance model for the post 16 centre and the establishment of formal collaborative links between schools.
- Managing admission arrangements
 - Developing catchment models with stakeholders, prior to specific consultation, to show how a balanced intake to each school could be achieved in terms of pupil numbers.

Conclusions

27. The consultation conducted over the last twelve months has been wide ranging and thorough, with an excellent response at each stage. The debate that has taken place has enabled the County Council to shape a proposed solution which directly takes account of public preferences, and offers a viable and sustainable schools model to deliver the curriculum. The long term success of the proposals is however implicit on strong collaborative links between schools, working in partnership with post 16 providers, and building upon the existing good practice.
28. The substantial funding made available by the DfES to support the Review will enable a real transformation to the secondary schools in Melton Mowbray and the Vale of Belvoir. The potential to now add to this from the LSC 16-19 Capital fund provides a welcomed opportunity . Achieving a successful bid for this funding will enhance the provision of first class facilities for post 16 learners within the area.

Background papers

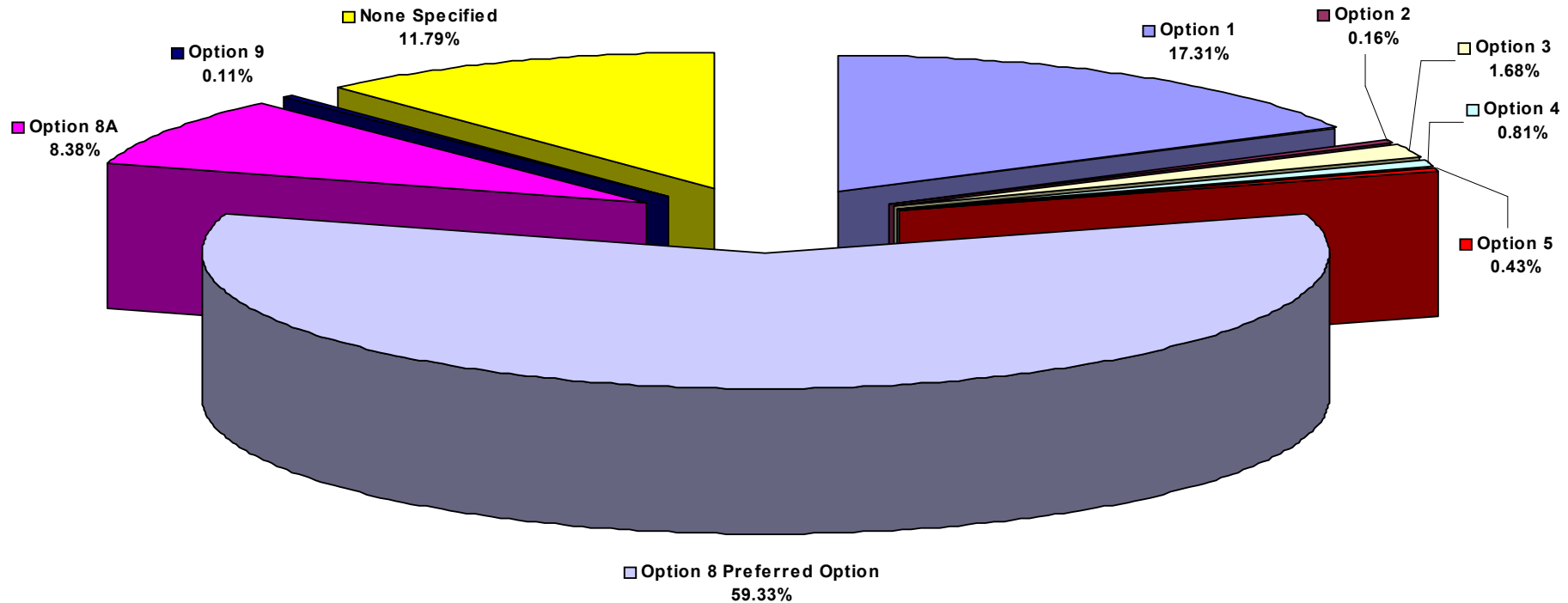
Reports to Cabinet: 13th February 2006, 5th September 2006,
21st November 2006 and 12th February 2007.

Report to CYPS Scrutiny Committee: 26th February 2007

Appendices

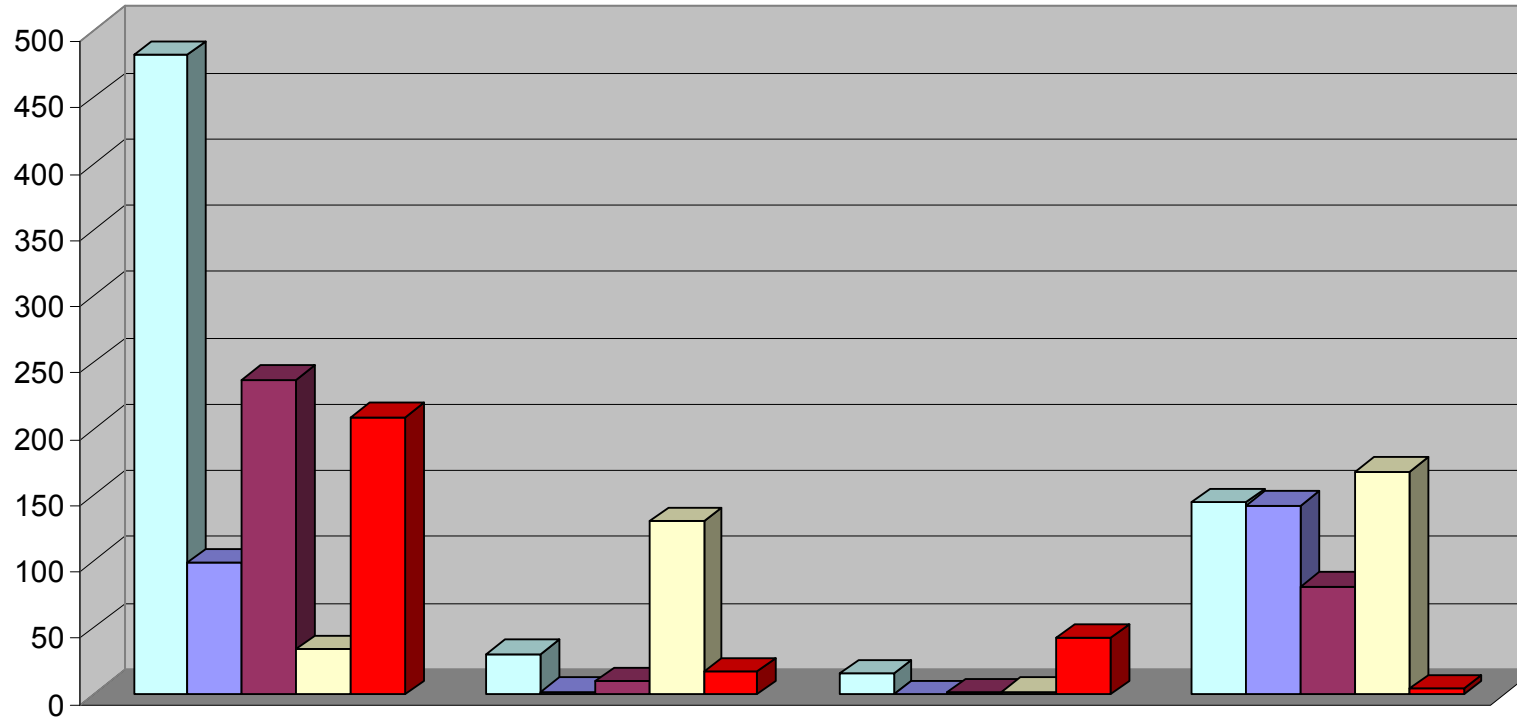
Appendix A1–A3: Summary of responses to the third stage of consultation.
Appendix B. Analysis of reasons influencing choice of option

OPTIONS FOR CHANGE TO SCHOOLS IN MELTON MOWBRAY & THE VALE OF BELVOIR CONSULTATION RESULTS JANUARY 2007 PREFERRED OPTION



- **Option 1** One 11-16 school VOB (600 places) One 11-16 school and one 11-19 school in Melton Mowbray (1200 places and 1800 places respectively)
- **Option 2** One 11-16 school in VOB (600 places) Two 11-19 schools in Melton Mowbray (1200 places 11-16 and 300 places 16-19)
- **Option 3** One 11-16 school in VOB (600 places) Two 11-16 schools in Melton Mowbray (1200 places) Separate Learning Centre for 16+ studies (600 places)
- **Option 4** Leave everything as it is. No Change.
- **Option 5** One 11-16 school in VOB (600 places) Three 11-16 schools in Melton Mowbray (800 places) Separate Learning Centre for 16+ (600 places)
- * **Option 6** One 11-16 school in the Vale of Belvoir (600 places) Three 11-19 schools in Melton Mowbray (1000 places) each incorporating 16+ provision)
- * **Option 7** As Option 3 but with a sixth form centre located on a school site with partnership working between schools (the North East Leics. Learning Partnership model)
- **Option 8** One 11-16 school in VOB (600 places) Three 11-19 schools in Melton Mowbray (each of 800 places) with provision for all 16+ students located on a single school site, but jointly managed by all schools
- **Option 8A** One 11-16 school in VOB (600 places) Two 11-19 schools in Melton Mowbray (800 places) One 11-19 school in Melton Mowbray (John Ferneley 1000 places) with provision for all 16+ students located on a single school site, but jointly managed by all schools
- **Option 9** One 11-16 school in VOB (600 places) Three 11-19 school sites in Melton Mowbray (1000 places) each incorporating 16+ provision operating as a single school with one governing body and headteacher
- **None Specified**
- * **No Returns Specified Option 6 or 7**

**OPTIONS FOR CHANGE TO SCHOOLS IN MELTON MOWBRAY & THE VALE OF BELVOIR
CONSULTATION RESULTS JANUARY 2007 ANALYSIS OF RESPONDENTS**



	Returns from Melton Mowbray	Returns from Vale of Belvoir	Returns from Both Areas	Returns from Unspecified Area	Totals
Parent	482	30	15	144	671
Teacher	99	2	0	142	243
Pupil	237	10	1	81	329
Other	34	130	2	168	334
Not Specified	209	17	42	4	272
	1061	189	60	539	1849

**OPTIONS FOR CHANGE TO SCHOOLS IN MELTON MOWBRAY & THE VALE OF BELVOIR
CONSULTATION RESULTS JANUARY 2007
COMPARISON SOURCE OF RESPONSE FOR EACH OPTION**

	MELTON	VALE OF BELVOIR	BOTH	UNSPECIFIED AREA		
Option 1	185	1	6	128	320	17.31%
Option 2	1	0	1	1	3	0.16%
Option 3	12	1	2	16	31	1.68%
Option 4	11	0	0	4	15	0.81%
Option 5	3	2	0	3	8	0.43%
* Option 6	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
* Option 7	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Option 8	625	183	49	240	1097	59.33%
Option 8A	108	0	0	47	155	8.38%
Option 9	2	0	0	0	2	0.11%
None Specified	114	2	2	100	218	11.79%
	1061	189	60	539	1849	100.00%

* No Returns Specified Option 6 or 7