

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

9 May 2022

APPROVAL OF CHANGE OF AGE RANGE OF CHAWSON COMMUNITY FIRST SCHOOL

Relevant Cabinet Member
Councillor M J Hart

Relevant Officer
Director of Children's Services

Local Member
Councillor B Brookes

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education is recommended:**
 - (a) to note the details of the representations made in response to the Public Notice of the School Organisation Change at Chawson Community First School during the representation period from 28 March 2022 25 April 2022; and**
 - (b) to approve the change of age range of Chawson Community First School from 5-9 to 3-9 from 1 September 2022 as per their delegated authority in relation to prescribed alterations to maintained schools**

Background

2. On 18 March 2022 the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education Approved the publication of the Public Notice of the proposal to change the age range of Chawson Community First School from 5-9 to 3-9 (see Appendix 1).
3. In accordance with this decision and the guidance provided by the Department for Education outlined in 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools: Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers October 2018', Public Notice of this proposal was issued on 28 March 2022 and a four-week representation period commenced.
4. Six responses were received during this representation period: five were in support of the proposal; one was in objection to the proposal.
5. In accordance with the delegation of authority given by the Leader of the Council on 25 April 2018 to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education as outlined in appendix 2, they are able to approve the change following Public Notice where objections are received can it be shown that the decision is still lawful and appropriate. This authority was endorsed by Cabinet in January 2020.

Responses received

6. Of the six responses in support of the proposal, all were received from a parent/carer of a child at the school. The key reasons for support of this proposal are outlined below:

- a) Improved educational opportunities for younger children
- b) Support in the transition for children into reception
- c) Reduce travel for families who have older children attending the school who can also use the school nursery for younger children
- d) Positive feedback on the existing Governor-Led provision and a desire to secure this for the future.

7. The objection was received from a neighbour of the school. The key reasons for objection to the proposal is outlined below:

- a) Existing traffic levels at school opening and leaving times
- b) Inappropriate parking across drives and paths at drop off and pick up times resulting in blocked pathways and children walking on roads
- c) Emergency vehicles struggle to get through the parked cars
- d) Concern that the proposal will create more traffic and further exacerbate this issue.

8. This objection has been considered and it is still recommended that this change is approved. The reasons for this are outlined in paragraphs 9-14 below.

9. The proposed change will see the conversion of a Governor-Led Nursery to maintained provision. There will be no change in the number of places available to this age range and therefore this change will not increase or exacerbate any existing traffic related issues.

10. The school have not received a greater number of complaints about parking or safety in the local area since opening the Governor-Led Pre-school. This academic year the school have received two informal notifications of concern about parking since the beginning of the academic year and no formal complaints

11. The school have no recorded Health and Safety 'near misses' due to parking or driving at drop off and collection times

12. The school currently works closely with parents/cares of pupils at the school to promote considerate driving and parking. This is done via:

- a) Letters to parents
- b) Regular reminders and notices in the newsletter
- c) Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher presence on the school grounds and at entrances and exits at key times
- d) Headteacher has investigated and followed up on any concrete concerns shared by other parents and residents. While these are largely historic it shows our commitment to supporting local residents
- e) Working with local PCSOs

13. The possible impact on traffic and parking has already been considered and mitigated as part of this proposal in the following ways:

- a) The school have scheduled pre-school session times carefully so that they do not extend the period of disruption for residents; start and finish times match those of the school. This is desirable when linked to the point below.

- b) Only a proportion of pre-school places bring an increase in traffic. This is because the pre-school is well placed to serve the local community and catchment area
- c) Many families walk to pre-school and are encouraged to do so
- d) Over 40% of pre-school children are siblings of existing families. This is likely to increase as the pre-school becomes established.
- e) Only seven families currently arrive during the middle of the day meaning that periods of disruption are kept to a minimum
- f) The pre-school admissions policy matches the County admissions policy meaning that it is local families with siblings in the school who are prioritised for places

14. Existing traffic issues and any inappropriate or unlawful parking can be challenged through the local member as a traffic/parking query and is not a reason not to expand or change education provision.

15. All respondents felt that they had been provided with sufficient information to respond to this proposal.

Recommendations

16. On the basis of the information contained in this report, taking account of the representations made in response to the Public Notice, the Cabinet Member for Education is recommended to authorise the change of age range of Chawson Community First School from 5-9 to 3-9 for September 2022.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

17. Capital funding will be provided through S106 where the provision of additional education provision at Chawson Community First School has been named. The requirement for this change is a direct result of the increase in population following related new housing developments and therefore this capital funding approach is appropriate.

18. There are no legal or HR implications. Staff are already employed by the school delivering the provision through the Governor led setting.

Privacy and Public Health Impact and Equality and Diversity Implications

19. A Joint Impact Assessment (JIA) screening was completed in respect of the change of age range proposal. The screening did not identify any potential concerns requiring further consideration during implementation (Appendix 3).

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Record of Delegated Member Decision 18 March 2022
- Appendix 2 – Delegation of authority given by the Leader on 25 April 2018, endorsed by the Cabinet on 30 January 2020 [8. Cab 20200130 Change of age range-final.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- Appendix 3 – Joint Impact Assessment Screening

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Specific Contact Points for this report

Lucy Langdon, Project Manager, Sufficiency and Place Planning

Tel: 01905 844119

Email: llangdon@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children's Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

'Prescribed Alterations' regulations: *Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools: Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers October 2018*
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/756572/Maintained_schools_prescribed_alterations_guidance.pdf