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**Scrutiny Working Group – Moor Allerton Hall Primary School and Allerton Grange High School Expansion, 1 November 2017**

**In attendance**

Cllr Sue Bentley  
Cllr Dan Cohen  
Andrew Graham  
Celia Foote  
Claire Hopkins  
Joanne Hazelgrave

**Officers in attendance**

Andrew Eastwood – Chief Officer, Learning Improvement  
Viv Buckland – Head of Service, Learning Systems  
Richard Amos – Partnership Team Senior Manager  
Sandra Pentelow – Principal Scrutiny Officer  
Harriet Speight – Project Support Officer

**Purpose of the working group**

- 1.1 To consider the public consultation information regarding the expansion of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School and Allerton Grange High School and to provide feedback to the Scrutiny Board to facilitate the provision of a consultation response or recommendations if necessary.
- 1.2 Supporting documents provided to the working group included
  - Extract from Leeds School Place Planning Website – Consultations on a proposal to join together Moor Allerton Hall Primary School with Allerton Grange High School from September 2018
  - School Places Public Consultation
  - 2x written submissions received by Cllr Dan Cohen

**Background**

- 1.3 The Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities to ensure there are sufficient school places for all children living in its area. The local authority is also required to promote choice and diversity, and therefore must also ensure that there are a range of options available to parents.
- 1.4 Since 2012, Leeds City Council has created an additional 630 permanent primary school places (90 places per year group) as well as adding in temporary/bulge solution in the Roundhay area to address an ongoing demand for places. Some schools in the Roundhay ward and surrounding wards have also had additional accommodation added to their site as part of a short term temporary/bulge increase.

Other schools do not have a large enough site to expand, and therefore options have been limited.

- 1.5 Leeds City Council has worked with a parents group 'The Fair Access Group', who were successful in their bid to open a free school within the Roundhay ward following their application to the Department for Education (DfE). Leeds City Council has since been working with the Fair Access Group and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to identify a suitable site for the school. However, establishing a suitable site has proven problematic and following Government announcements about changes to the free school budget nationally, the ESFA have asked Leeds City Council to self-deliver the project.
- 1.6 To address the longer term need for additional primary school places in the local area, Leeds City Council propose that Allerton Grange High School and Moor Allerton Hall Primary School join together to form a through school for children aged 3 – 19 years. The proposal would require the following changes:
  - Formally closing Moor Allerton Hall as a separate primary school, and reopening the primary provision as part of Allerton Grange Through School;
  - Lowering the age range from 11-19 year olds to 3-19 year olds;
  - From September 2018, expand the reception intake within the through school from 60 places to 120 places, creating an additional two forms of entry of primary school places for the local community.
- 1.7 Public consultation is currently being undertaken and will continue until Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

### **Outcomes of the Working Group**

- 1.8 The working group recognised the need and urgency to provide primary school places in the Roundhay area, and the importance of agreeing a permanent solution, which has been required for some considerable time.
- 1.9 The working group acknowledged that consultation is currently taking place which enables all interested parties to express their views on the proposals. Reassurance was provided that following consultation, all responses will be considered and evaluated. If the proposal is to proceed a report would be submitted to the Executive Board who would need to agree the proposal, after which a statutory notice would be published with a formal consultation period of four weeks. The proposal will then be subject to formal agreement at Executive Board in March 2018 at the earliest. During this time interested parties could continue to have a voice and influence, which could also include input during future planning considerations.
- 1.10 The working group recognised the steps being taken in the public consultation process and that some questions are in the process of being answered. The working group also recognised that further public meetings are still to take place.
- 1.11 The working group made the following observations and raised the following areas as requiring focus going forward:

- The importance of including potentially effected teachers and SEND services in consultation. Working group members expressed particular emphasis on services for visually and hearing impaired pupils;
- The need for clarity regarding the next steps following the current consultation and where there would be opportunity for further views to be formally expressed.
- The importance for clear responses to those individuals who have raised direct questions before the consultation period concludes.
- Having consideration of the emotive nature of change for families and the importance for clear and regular communication, should the proposal proceed.
- Acknowledged that financial commitments and projections would be stated, should the proposal proceed, as the councils governance processes and statutory notice are progressed, to ensure the best use of the Leeds pound.
- The importance of the Council following planning procedures and seeking to avoid retrospective planning.
- Concern regarding the timescales for consultation evaluation and governance processes to allow for September 2018 intake of pupils. The working group were advised that this process would not be rushed and if necessary bulge cohorts would be considered to support the September 2018 intake.
- The need to balance the statutory requirement for the authority to provide adequate school places and school expansion.
- The recognition of the improvement journey in place at the primary school following its Ofsted inspection and the importance of providing robust Learning Improvement support to ensure the school(s), and teaching and support staff receive the best support and guidance to aid a smooth transition, subject to the proposal going ahead.