

**Report of Director of Children and Families Service**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 7 February 2018**

**Subject: Outcome of consultation to join Moor Allerton Hall Primary School with Allerton Grange School as a Through-School and to increase primary learning places**



Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Moortown, Roundhay		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

**Summary of main issues**

This report contains details of proposals brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places. The changes that are proposed form prescribed alterations under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and accompanying statutory guidance set out the process which must be followed when making such changes. The statutory process to make these changes varies according to the nature of the change and status of the school and the process followed in respect of these proposals is detailed in this report.

The decision maker in these cases remains the local authority.

Following a successful 'pre-opening' bid, the 'Fair Access Schools Trust' was granted approval by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to open the Roundhay Park Primary School in 2017 with 60 pupils in each year group. A consultation regarding four potential sites which the ESFA had identified as having some potential for a free school was completed in May 2017. The conclusion and recommendation from that consultation was that site 2 - Roundhay Park Lane East would seem the more appropriate option for the ESFA to pursue to planning application stage.

During the summer months of 2017, following Government announcements about changes to the free school budget nationally the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) asked the council to 'self-deliver' the free school project. A lack of clarity around what 'self-delivery' meant and a major shortfall in funding for the scheme from the ESFA alongside significant planning issues made it unlikely that the Trust would be in a position to provide the required places in Roundhay for September 2018 and 2019. In light of these issues the council has sought creative and innovative solutions to provide good school places within walking distance of the families who need them.

A consultation on proposals to join together Moor Allerton Hall Primary School with Allerton Grange School as a through-school and to expand primary school provision within the through-school took place from 12 October to 29 November 2017 to seek the views of stakeholders. During the consultation many responses highlighted concerns about the swiftness of the process and the size of the proposed Primary phase of 4FE. In light of these and other issues raised during the consultation a decision was taken to report the outcomes of the consultation to Executive Board in February 2018 rather than December 2017 as originally planned to give council officers more time to fully consider the consultation responses. A revised proposal that takes account of the consultation responses has been developed and is now recommended to Executive Board.

It should be noted that after ongoing efforts on behalf of both Leeds City Council and the Department for Education to find a suitable site for the Roundhay Park Primary free school, the Fair Access Trust decided to withdraw the project in January 2018.

## **Recommendations**

Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice on related proposals to amalgamate Moor Allerton Hall Primary School with Allerton Grange School to create a through-school from 1 September 2019 and to expand primary provision by:

Lowering the age-range of Allerton Grange School from 11-19 year olds to 3-19 year olds;

Expanding primary provision at the new through-school from a capacity of 420 to 630 pupils with an increase in the admission number in reception from 60 to 90; and

Altering the SEN provision for deaf and hearing impaired children by continuing to deliver it as part of a through-school rather than provision being offered separately by both school;

- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Systems.

- 1.1 This report contains details of proposals that were consulted on in order to meet the Local Authority's (LA) duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places, which support the achievement of the Best Council priority to improve educational achievement and close achievement gaps. This report describes the outcome of the consultation regarding proposals to join together Moor Allerton Hall Primary School with Allerton Grange School as a through-school and to expand primary school provision within the through-school.
- 1.2 This report seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of revised proposals following the large number of responses made during the consultation period.

## 2 **Background information**

- 2.1 Since 2012 several schools within the Roundhay ward and surrounding wards have either permanently expanded or have had additional accommodation added to their sites as temporary/bulge increases. Leeds City Council (LCC) has created an additional 630 permanent primary school places (90 places per year group) in the Roundhay area to address an ongoing demand for places. Much of this increase can be attributed to factors such as a city wide rise in births, Roundhay being an area that young families tend to move into ahead of their children starting primary school which is also coupled with small pockets of new housing. Demographic analysis based on NHS data sets indicate that the demand for school places is going to continue in a similar trend to previous years with an additional 60 places per year group required, the equivalent of a new two form entry primary school, as a permanent solution to manage the need going forward.
- 2.2 The Council has a statutory duty to provide a sufficiency of school places to meet demand however the Education Act 2011 changed the arrangements for establishing new schools and introduced section 6A, the 'free school presumption' to the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Where a LA thinks there is a need for a new school in its area it must seek proposals to establish an academy (free school). Where LAs have identified a need for new places and are considering ways to address this, they can liaise with groups that are or are thinking about applying for a free school via the Department for Education (DfE) route as part of their review of how best to meet that need.
- 2.3 In September 2015 a stakeholder event was held involving local schools, parents, councillors and officers from the LA to discuss the pressure on primary school places and to consider potential solutions. A parent group 'The Fair Access Group' was formed after a number of parents said they had missed out on places at all of their preferred local schools in 2015. Following the stakeholder event, this group worked closely with the LA to discuss the issues and seek a resolution to the pressure on primary places. Some of the parents involved, along with other stakeholders, decided to bid for a free school as the 'Fair Access Schools Trust' to provide a long-term solution to address the lack of places in the Talbot area of Roundhay. Following a successful bid the Roundhay Park Primary Free School was granted approval to move to the 'pre-opening' stage with a view to opening in 2017 with 60 pupils in each year group.

2.4 Following this approval, the ESFA and LA were involved in lengthy discussions to find a potential site for delivery of the free school, an issue that proved challenging. As a result the LA, Trust applicants and the ESFA agreed to undertake a joint public consultation regarding four potential sites which the ESFA had identified as having some potential for a free school. The sites consulted on were:

1. Tree Tops Community Centre;
2. Roundhay Park Lane East;
3. Roundhay Golf Driving Range; and
4. Elmete Wood former specialist school site

2.5 That consultation took place from 31 March to 12 May 2017 to consider public opinion on the suitability of each site, for a scheme to be delivered by the ESFA and run by the Trust. The conclusion and recommendation from that consultation was that 'whilst challenging and providing significant issues for delivering a school, should the ESFA wish to pursue a site that responds to the local consultation and which might anticipate fewer objections through the planning process, Site 2 - Roundhay Park Lane East would seem the more appropriate option for the ESFA to pursue to planning application stage'.

2.6 It is worth noting that the ESFA commissioned Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) to conduct a planning appraisal on three sites in the area including the Roundhay Park Lane East site and the Golf Driving Range site. In June 2016 JLL reported their findings and in their report concerning the Golf Driving Range site the following conclusions were drawn:

'Based on the contents of this appraisal, it is considered that the development of a school on this site would be contradictory to adopted and emerging policy and likely to be resisted by the council, unless very special circumstances can be justified'...'should a planning application for the delivery of a new Free School on the site be progressed, we would consider this to be high risk. In considering the planning risk we have been asked to have regard to the relative merits of this site against the other sites considered at Roundhay Park Lane and Park Wardens Area. Based upon the appraisals undertaken it is considered that all three sites would be classed as high risk given the planning policy constraints, and the need for all three sites to have to demonstrate very special circumstances'...'In our opinion as Roundhay Park Lane is not designated as a heritage asset and does not have an existing sports use, this would be the lowest risk option in planning terms of the three sites being considered, however it is important to recognise that all three sites are considered to be high risk'.

2.7 In the summer of 2017 following Government announcements about changes to the free school budget nationally the RSC asked the council to self-deliver the free school project. A lack of clarity around what 'self-delivery' meant and a major shortfall in funding for the scheme from the ESFA alongside significant planning issues made it unlikely that the Trust would be in a position to provide the required places in Roundhay for September 2018. In light of these issues the council has sought creative and innovative solutions to provide good school places within walking distance of the families who need them.

2.8 For these reasons, a consultation on proposals to join together Moor Allerton Hall Primary School with Allerton Grange School as a through-school and to expand primary school provision within the through-school took place from 12 October to 29 November 2017 to seek the views of stakeholders.

2.9 It should be noted that after ongoing efforts on behalf of both Leeds City Council and the Department for Education to find a suitable site for the Roundhay Park Primary free school, the Fair Access Trust decided to withdraw the project in January 2018.

### 3 **Main issues**

3.1 To address the longer term need for additional places in the local area, Leeds City Council consulted on a proposal to join together Allerton Grange School and Moor Allerton Hall Primary School to form a through-school for children aged 3-19 years. The proposal would require Moor Allerton Hall Primary School and its associated SEN provision for deaf and hearing impaired children to cease operating as a separate school/provision and amalgamate with Allerton Grange School, the lowering of the age-range of Allerton Grange School from its current 11-19 to 3-19 year olds and the expansion of the school to create an additional 30 reception places per year. Both schools currently provide resourced Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision for children who are deaf and hearing impaired. In practical terms there would be no changes save for the fact that the provision would be delivered as part of a through-school as highlighted in the consultation document rather than in a separate primary provision.

3.2 It was anticipated that use of the current primary school site, the North East Learning Centre (CLC) site and the existing high school site would be needed to facilitate the amalgamation and expansion. One option was for key stage one children to be located on the existing primary site, for key stage 2 children to be located in the CLC and for high school children to remain in the secondary building. Using the whole site could present a range of design options with opportunities for shared use of facilities across the whole site including sports facilities and some access to other facilities in the high school. As these sites are immediately adjacent to each other any changes needed to the existing facilities, with additional accommodation or the remodelling of existing buildings would form part of the design and planning process.

3.3 The proposal as consulted on would mean that there would be one school operating on a campus with three buildings as mentioned above, with one Head Teacher, one Governing Body, with primary and secondary phase leads. The LA would work with the Governing Bodies to ensure that a process is in place to facilitate the transition of staff from Moor Allerton Hall Primary School to the through-school. Children on roll of the primary school in September 2018 would have automatically stayed on roll through to the secondary school provision, unless they chose to apply for a place at an alternative high school to start in year 7.

3.4 A good quality school place contributes towards delivery of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as Leeds City Council's obsession to

improve attainment, attendance and achievement. By creating good quality local school places we can support the priority aim of improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps. Through-schools enable children and young people to experience the same core values, culture and ethos across their entire education journey. They also provide:

- Developed pastoral support;
- Physical flexibility over use of accommodation to reflect the different sizes of cohorts and ages of children;
- Access to a broader curriculum with specialist teaching;
- Benefits to children and young people from leadership and mentoring by older children;
- Earlier support to pupils to reduce the 'dip' in achievement when pupils transition from a primary to a high school setting;
- A similar educational approach that provides consistency of teaching and learning;
- Ability to manage a bigger overall budget and staff, bringing flexibility and potentially enhancing stability in overall staffing levels;
- Support for children with increased social, emotional and mental health needs as there is less disruption and change;
- A longer amount of time to develop and nurture relationships with teachers, staff and pupils;
- Improved access to specialist facilities and resources, especially for younger children, such as sporting areas, music rooms and scientific equipment;
- Improved transition arrangements and the ability to personalise learning further by having greater flexibility to support gifted and talented pupils as well as those needing additional support;
- Continued wrap around care for vulnerable families, who would have continuity of staff when moving through year groups;
- Removes the need for parents to apply for a place in Year 7 as the children are already on roll, however parents retain the option to apply elsewhere if preferred;
- Greater range of staff to provide wider expertise and broader professional development;

Carr Manor and Roundhay through schools are examples of successful through-schools that have implemented strong educational provision within a nurturing environment.

- 3.5 It should be noted that the Published Admission Number of Allerton Grange School which is currently 240, would not change as part of the proposal. Additional secondary capacity is being created across Roundhay, as well as the Inner North East and Inner East areas to ensure children coming through the primary sector have more options for secondary school places. We have already created an additional 50 places at Roundhay School, and Dixons Trinity Chapeltown Free School will be providing up to 120 year 7 places located just off Roundhay Road. Secondary schools also have more flexibility for increasing Y7 places than primary schools, due to the way they deliver the curriculum, and this is something we will

continue to investigate with Headteachers, governing bodies and Academy Trusts to ensure sufficient places.

- 3.6 A large range of options have been explored over the years to provide the additional places needed in this area. We consulted on this proposal because we believe that the leadership of the schools involved could make the proposal work with the support of the LA. The obstacles to creating a 2FE single school solution had proven to be insurmountable with barriers outside the control of the LA and the use of the combined Allerton Grange/Moor Allerton Hall 'site' rather than as individual schools would allow for greater flexibility and opportunity to create a successful through-school model using the larger site to accommodate the necessary learning provision.
- 3.7 At the start of the consultation the Governing Bodies of both schools indicated in a joint letter to parents that they welcomed the opportunity for a consultation on the proposals to take place. As part of the consultation, the Governing Bodies of both schools were consulted and their formal responses to the consultation are included below.
- 3.8 Moor Allerton Hall Primary School was judged by Ofsted in its report published in June 2017 to be 'Requires Improvement'. Although there are some improvements to be made, Ofsted noted that one of the strengths of the school was that 'The senior leadership team, governors and dedicated staff have determinedly made many changes that are improving the school'. Allerton Grange School was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' in its report published in October 2012 but was re-inspected during the consultation period. The outcome of the report, published on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, judged Allerton Grange to be 'Requires Improvement'. Ofsted noted that 'leaders know what needs to happen to improve weaker areas in the school'. How the Requires Improvement status of the schools affects the proposal is addressed at 3.10.3.
- 3.9 During the consultation there were 308 responses received via paper form, email and on-line survey. 66 respondents supported the proposal (21%), 2 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal (1%) and 240 respondents disagreed with the proposal (78%). A total of 1502 comments were made by the 308 respondents about various considerations including location/sufficiency of places, highways and environment, site considerations, school related issues, general comments, and comments in relation to the consultation itself. There were also a number of suggestions made. A summary table of the comments received is attached as an appendix to this report. A copy of the anonymised responses received can be requested from the Sufficiency and Participation Team at [educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk).
- 3.10 A summary of the main themes/comments (where 10 or more comments in relation to each were made) and a response to each is below.
- 3.10.1 **Location/Sufficiency:** Proposed timescales are unrealistic/too rushed. Concerned Leeds City Council will not be able to deliver by Sept 2018; Proposal does not create places in the area of need; Concerns that parents living in the area of need will not preference Moor Allerton Hall, the school will fill with children

from outside of the area leading to increases in traffic and a displacement of children thus perpetuating the issues; Proposal does not provide a reasonable and safe walking route for children who live in the area of need; More longer term evidence and strategic thinking is required to provide a long term solution to the lack of primary places; Recognition that the proposal will deliver the additional school places required; If preferences for Moor Allerton Hall increase in the future due to the school gaining in popularity, it may fill with other children rather than those in the area of need; If families living nearest to Talbot were to preference Moor Allerton Hall there wouldn't be an issue.

**Response:** Leeds City Council has a duty to provide a sufficiency of places and the walking distance for a child under 8 years of age is judged to be up to 2 miles. Both the original and revised proposals would provide an accessible school place for the majority of children within the 'area of need' nearest to Talbot Primary School within 2 miles. Parents are encouraged to positively preference their nearest schools to ensure that they receive the highest priority they can for local places. If parents within the area of need were to positively preference Moor Allerton Hall Primary School along with preferencing the school for which they have a priority, it is likely that they would be offered a place. The impact of this would be that fewer children living outside of the Moortown/Roundhay area would be offered a place at this school. During the consultation there were many considered responses highlighting concern about the swiftness of the process and the potential outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Allerton Grange School which took place during the consultation. In light of these and other issues raised during the consultation a decision was taken to communicate the outcomes of the consultation to Executive Board in February 2018 rather than December 2017 as originally planned and to recommend the publication of a Statutory Notice on a revised proposal. This means that additional bulge places will be required in September 2018. A revised proposal that takes account of the consultation responses has been developed and is now recommended to Executive Board.

3.10.2 **Site considerations** - Concerns about the logistics of a split site e.g. during school pick up/drop off, pupil movement between buildings, safeguarding; Questioning suitability and feasibility of current site and North East Learning Centre (CLC) as a safe, secure primary orientated location for a split site; Concerns about disruption caused by building work - potential delays - as per Sept 2017.

**Response:** As noted above, as a result of the consultation feedback a revised proposal and recommendation is being made to Executive Board. The revised proposal which includes expansion of primary provision to 3FE instead of 4FE will help mitigate the concerns raised in relation to use of the CLC building and around movement between the sites and associated safeguarding concerns. A full viability report has been commissioned to establish options for delivery of the additional accommodation needed, and at this stage it is the view of the Built Environment Team that an expansion on the existing primary site is possible. The expansion of the new through-school would involve building work and wherever possible disruptive work would be carried out in school holidays or out of hours. Delivery times would be managed to avoid conflict at the beginning and end of the

school day and we would seek to ensure that work was phased to minimise impact on staff, pupils, parents and local residents.

- 3.10.3 **School related** - Concerns about child safety/safeguarding of children if schools merged. Lack of detail provided to show how this would be managed; Moor Allerton Hall is currently judged Required Improvement by Ofsted. Concerns that proposal will have a negative impact on both schools in terms of performance/teaching standards/school improvement; Concerned 4FE school is too big. No evidence provided to show 4FE would be a child friendly environment. Child becomes a number not an individual; Concerns about primary age children sharing site and facilities with secondary age children-may impact on child's learning / potential bullying / exposed to inappropriate language & behaviour; Existing friendly and nurturing atmosphere (including pastoral care) of Moor Allerton Hall will be compromised if expanded; Proposal will cause unnecessary disruption to Moor Allerton Hall staff/children/parents; Proposal does not prioritise the well-being and development of current Moor Allerton Hall staff & students; No clear leadership/staffing structure provided; Concerned about impact on Deaf and Hearing Impaired/SEN students. Their profile, support and experience will be diluted in a larger school.

**Response:** As noted above, as a result of the consultation feedback a revised proposal and recommendation is being made to Executive Board. That proposal which retains the amalgamation of both schools but which reduces the proposed expansion to 3FE rather than expanding to 4FE as per the original proposal, will help to mitigate the concerns raised in relation to the size of the school, impact of sharing facilities and the disruption to Deaf and Hearing Impaired students. We accept that any expansion will cause some amount of disruption however we would work with both schools to manage this appropriately. Both Moor Allerton Hall and Allerton Grange School have Requires Improvement Ofsted judgements; concerns were expressed during the consultation that neither school would have the capacity to support the other to create a good and improving school if the establishments merged. In both cases, however, the governance and leadership of the schools were seen as strong and positively contributing to the improvement of their respective schools. Leeds City Council has maintained a strong Learning Improvement service which, if the revised proposals were to progress, would continue to work with the schools to ensure that children make progress and have successful outcomes; the revised proposals have been put forward based on this level of support. We are confident that collectively and in partnership the revised proposal could be taken forward successfully.

- 3.10.4 **Highways and Environment** - Concerns about increase in traffic during peak times; Concerns about road safety and an increase in inconsiderate parking during peak times; Concerns about an increase in air pollution; Drainage concerns.

**Response:** If the revised proposals were taken forward a full traffic survey and transport statement would be produced for any planning application which would need to demonstrate how the increases to traffic could be mitigated. This would include a consideration of any potential solutions for helping to manage the increases to traffic and congestion. Parents, local residents and other

stakeholders would have the opportunity to formally comment on any planning applications. The revised proposal which includes expansion of primary places, would mean that there would be 210 less children attending the school once it reached its capacity (630 primary children in total), rather than 840 children as per the original proposal. This will reduce the impact on the local infrastructure.

- 3.10.5 **Consultation related** - Not enough detail/solutions provided during consultation so unable to make an informed decision; LCC have not been able to provide answers to specific queries/concerns and information provided has been unclear/misleading; LCC seemed unprepared for consultation; Consultation document was not translated; Need to be open and honest; Lack of communication.

**Response:** The DfE's statutory guidance sets out the statutory process that must be followed where proposals include closure of a maintained school. That includes an informal/pre-consultation which it recommends should last for a minimum of 6 weeks. The consultation that was held constituted pre-consultation which is the first in a number of stages. If the proposals were to progress, the next stages of the statutory process would be followed. The purpose of the consultation was to seek views on the principle of the proposals being put forward. At the pre-consultation stage there are no set design plans as issues raised in the consultation are intended to inform next steps. It is our view that the consultation was thorough and included engagement with a wide cross-section of the local community as set out at 4.1 of this report. In response to requests made during the consultation, a Frequently Asked Questions document and a document outlining the consultation process were produced and emailed to both Governing Bodies which were shared with parents and made available on the Leeds City Council website and school websites. A summary version of the consultation document and flyer detailing the dates of the consultation were translated and distributed in both Urdu and Punjabi which the school noted were the main heritage languages.

- 3.10.6 **General Comments** - Lack of evidence/research provided to show 4FE model will work; Proposal is a sensible and innovative solution; Proposal is an ill-considered solution.

**Response:** As noted above, as a result of the consultation feedback a revised proposal and recommendation is being made to Executive Board. The revised proposal will help to mitigate the concerns raised in relation to the solution consulted on. It is our view that a 3FE primary model as part of a through-school would work well with the right level of support given to the school by our experienced Learning Improvement Team, and nationally there are a number of very large schools. The revised solution for an additional 30 children per year group to expand the school to 3FE in what would be the primary phase is one which a number of existing primary schools across Leeds are successfully managing.

- 3.11 **As part of the consultation, council officers met with the Governing Bodies (GB) of Allerton Grange School and Moor Allerton Hall Primary School. Formal responses to the consultation have been received from both GBs.**

- 3.12 **The GB of Allerton Grange School provided a formal response to the proposals that were consulted on. This is summarised below.**
- 3.12.1 **Timescales:** Timescales for implementation by September 2018 are not achievable due to issues around planning and construction; governance arrangements including reconstitution of the GB; engagement with Moor Allerton Hall stakeholders; joint approach with both schools' senior leaders to ensure that standards and ethos are embedded. A more realistic timescale would be implementation from September 2019.
- 3.12.2 **Use of the CLC building:** Use of the CLC for primary provision should include dining facilities, and space for PE and assemblies etc; Use of the secondary building for dining or other essential facilities is not supported; Adequate outdoor space at the CLC must be provided for PE but if any current facilities such as tennis courts at the secondary building were impacted these should be replicated elsewhere within the grounds; A covered walkway from the primary building to the CLC building would be favoured to facilitate movement of children and staff between sites. This would also assist parents who may need to drop children off at two buildings.
- 3.12.3 **Increased traffic:** Traffic measures would need to be introduced and the GB envisages that this should include such measures as the provision of light controlled pedestrian crossings on Lidgett Lane, investigation into enhancing current drop off points, investigation into remodelling some of the current road junctions to improve traffic flow, investigation into adding laybys at the bus stops on Lidgett lane to aid traffic flow; The GB would support the provision of a school bus and would like to see investment to promote other methods of travelling to school safely, such as a cycle track or enhanced crossings further away from the schools if required; Investigation into additional pedestrian entrances into the primary site should be undertaken.
- 3.12.4 **Impact on school improvement:** The GB feels that the input required from the leadership of both schools to manage the proposals could be detrimental to the ongoing improvement work which is key in both schools; The GB has faith in its school leadership team but recognises that additional work will be the inevitable short term consequence if the proposals went ahead; The GB believes that this can be mitigated by allowing a longer lead in time and suggests implementation from September 2019 at the earliest; It would support the provision of a second bulge cohort at Moor Allerton Hall in 2018 which will eventually become one of the forms of the new through school; It believes that this would be in the best interests of both schools and would also allow more time for essential planning and preparation.
- 3.12.5 **Sixth Form:** Over the last year the GB has been investigating whether the existing CLC building could be made available to the school to enhance its sixth form provision; This is something that the GB would like to continue to discuss.
- 3.12.6 **Conclusion:** The GB is in favour of the proposals as consulted on but have a number of points which they would like taking into consideration in order to ensure that a good long-term positive solution is reached.

3.13 **The GB of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School provided a formal response to the proposals that were consulted on. This is summarised below.**

3.13.1 **Need to provide additional places:** The GB recognises the importance of providing high quality school places for the children of North Leeds and has supported LCC in finding solutions to this issue.

3.13.2 **Consultation process:** The GB has felt engaged in the process and acknowledges Leeds City Council's work in providing ongoing dialogue throughout the consultation.

3.13.3 **The Governing Body's considerations when considering the proposals:** That it carries out its duty to ensure clarity in the vision and strategic direction of its school; That it has an obligation to make decisions in the best interests of the children within the school; That good decision making is well informed by both available evidence of what works or is likely to be effective; The views and needs of key stakeholders, particularly parents and children.

3.13.4 **Considerations of risk:** In taking robust decisions the GB feels that it must take proper account of risk, in particular the risks associated with its strategic development and improvement plans.

3.13.5 **Consultation:** The GB is aware of the importance of the words 'in principle' and it fully understands that at this stage, LCC has not done the significant work required to craft a fully detailed proposal of how the school would operate if the proposal were to be confirmed; The GB has some concerns around the consultation itself including lack of clarity about the purpose/status of the consultation, lack of prior engagement with key stakeholders, failure to adopt an inclusive approach from the outset e.g. interpreters not present at consultation meetings, translation of the documents had to be requested, there seemed to be a lack of preparation or planning about key details making it impossible to make a decision about something 'in principle', information was issued in a piecemeal manner making it difficult to digest or understand the overall picture, mixed messages from Leeds City Council staff about key issues at the consultations, release of information to newspapers before we could inform Moor Allerton Hall parents, LCC did not 'sell' the idea in a positive way at the beginning or make any efforts to get people on board at the outset, leaflets regarding the merger don't appear to have been delivered widely enough in the local area and didn't set out the full implications of the proposal, the banners outside the school referred to 'consultation on school places' which gives no real details of the full proposal.

3.13.6 **Conclusion:** The GB does not feel it can agree with the proposal as set out in the consultation document; Whilst additional detail from various members of LCC has come to light during the consultation, it does not feel that the concerns it outlined during the consultation process have been answered sufficiently for it to have full confidence that the proposal would be in the strategic interests of the school and its continued journey to improvement. The main reasons are outlined as follows:

It does not have enough compelling evidence that the 4 form entry through school plan would be effective or child friendly. It does not feel that Carr Manor and

Roundhay Through schools are similar enough to justify the proposed Allerton Grange model would work;

Significant concerns about the timescale of the proposal and feel it would take a minimum of 2 years to merge the two schools effectively;

Disruption caused by the merger, expansion and building work to create a split site would cause significant disruption to its plans to improve its OFSTED judgement and pupil outcomes;

In response to parental safeguarding concerns, LCC officers are making plans to isolate the proposed key stage 2 site around the CLC building. This will require building remodelling, extension and changes to the PFI contracts. It believes if such changes are possible to the CLC site, then a 2 form entry primary facility could be created in this space allowing Allerton Grange to create a 2 form entry primary through school without it affecting Moor Allerton Hall at all or indeed being disruptive to Allerton Grange itself. This would still meet the need to provide an extra 60 places without having to undergo such massive changes to both of the two schools;

It believes a significant portion of current and prospective parents are not in favour of a 4 form entry primary. It recognises that it is not currently the school of choice in the area, and although it has been working hard to change this, feels that becoming 4 form entry will make the problem greater;

Its children have raised some significant concerns through school council about having a large school on a split site and about mixing more closely with older children on a regular basis;

Although LCC has tried to answer some of its concerns over the last few weeks it does not believe there has been enough reassurance that this proposal could be successfully achieved by September 2018.

- 3.14 **The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of Allerton Grange School submitted a formal response to the consultation which is summarised below.**
- 3.14.1 **Support for proposals:** SLT supports the concept of the proposals consulted on.
- 3.14.2 **Use of CLC building:** There is support for use of the CLC building as part of use of three separate buildings to ensure clear demarcation between key stages to keep students of a similar age and development together; The remodelling of the CLC would need full involvement of both schools to ensure facilities were fit for purpose which should include hall, library, ICT and dining facilities.
- 3.14.3 **Funding:** Reassurances around funding for a building that would be under capacity whilst the school grew in size would need to be provided.
- 3.14.4 **Increases in traffic:** Traffic congestion is a concern and parking facilities would need to be reviewed.

- 3.14.5 **Access between buildings:** Consideration will need to be given to staff, pupils and parents who may need to drop off in separate buildings or transition between buildings during the day.
- 3.14.6 **Timescales:** SLT believes that implementation in September 2018 gives too short a lead in time to ensure proper planning can take place from staffing structures through to building work.
- 3.15 **The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School submitted a formal response to the consultation which is summarised below.**
- 3.15.1 **Support for proposals:** SLT does not support the proposals as consulted on as although it does recognise that additional primary places are needed, it does not believe that the proposals provide the best quality solution at this time.
- 3.15.2 **Timescales:** Proposed timescales would not allow the required planning to take place. There would be implications for school leadership, management and practical organisation and if the proposals as consulted on went ahead in time for September 2018, SLT believes it would be rushed, inadequately prepared, poor quality and potentially dangerous if appropriate systems were not in place.
- 3.15.3 **Impact on raising standards and safety of children:** SLT feels that as leaders in a school which has just moved out of the coasting bracket and which has only recently been judged as Requires Improvement by OFSTED, that it needs to focus on the issues which will raise standards for current children in school. SLT has concerns that such a significant reorganisation would impede progress and make the school vulnerable to being judged as RI for a second time and possibly lead to being forced to become an academy. Despite the reassurances of LCC officers about safeguarding SLT still has concerns about the practicalities which need to be in place to achieve a large through school spread on a large campus. It believes it would be essential to have the key stage 2 site isolated from the rest of the high school which means acquiring PFI land and a redesign of the CLC building to include all of the facilities to meet daily basic need including a hall facility and separate play and PE space. It is yet to be assured that this would absolutely be possible.
- 3.15.4 **Traffic concerns:** SLT have major concerns about traffic due to existing dangers a Lidgett Lane-a child was knocked over leaving school only a few weeks ago. Increasing the number of families who will need to travel from a distance from the area of need will only make this worse. The split site will also increase the parking time needed for families as they walk further to deliver children to class which will exacerbate the traffic problem. Staggered opening times do not help if a family has children across the age range. Drop off points and turning circles are not practical for primary families as parents need to physically take their child to the class door both for safety and to encourage good communication between families and school staff - a key support for both school and families and a measure which prevents the escalation of any issues.
- 3.15.5 **Concerns about ethos and approach:** SLT believes the doubling of its intake and the physical separation of key stage 1 and 2 would have a profound impact

on the nature of the school because of the concentration of large numbers of a limited age range on each site. Key features of the nurturing organisation of our school such as 'family service' in the dining hall for younger children and upper school playground monitors in the key stage 1 playground will be lost.

- 3.15.6 **Pupil voice:** This plays a significant role in the school community, and school council, made up of 6-11 year olds has its youngest representatives in year 2 and is led by its Year 6 pupils. Older children collect the opinions of year 1 classes to feed into the council's decisions. The role of older children in modelling behaviour, academic achievement and leadership of activities on a daily basis forms a key part of the school's expectations. SLT believes this would be significantly eroded by the physical separation of the key stages. Realistically time pressures in the curriculum and logistical factors would reduce the number of occasions older and younger children got to see one another to share experiences and this certainly could not be on a daily basis.
- 3.15.7 **Meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils:** SLT notes that Moor Allerton Hall is an inclusive school with a school population with a wide range of needs. It has a significant number of very vulnerable children including its deaf and hearing impaired children. It currently has 20 children on Education Health Care Plans and others for whom it is in the process of making applications (this is significantly higher than many primaries). These children manage within mainstream at Moor Allerton Hall because of the very personalised, nurturing approach it has developed within its setting. It is not possible simply to double the space and adults to maintain this in a bigger school. It is actually how well these children and their families are known by the range of staff involved in their care, including school leaders, which makes this work. The close team work and good communication supports the most vulnerable children to be successful.
- 3.15.8 **Concerns about 4FE and split site proposal:** SLT notes that from parent feedback during consultation meetings and from concerns voiced in the playground that there are a significant number of families who are unhappy with the proposal - some have said they will move their children out of school if it goes ahead. The school also conducted a survey of families who visited open days for reception children 2018. Over half of those 23 families who responded said they would not, or be less likely to, preference us if the proposal for 4 form entry went ahead. SLT is concerned that the school will be significantly and irreversibly altered to provide extra places which will then not be fully taken up, or which parents are resentful at having being allocated and currently believes that the proposal as consulted on would make the school less popular.
- 3.15.9 **Concerns about lack of alternative solutions:** The suggestion in the most recent FAQs from LCC that the CLC site could be isolated and self-sufficient as a four form key stage 2 provision makes SLT question the need for a merger of schools at all. If the CLC can be altered to provide a facility big enough for 4 forms of key stage 2, it could equally well be a 2 form primary facility from reception to Year 6. This would allow Allerton Grange to build up an independent 2 form entry primary through school, in a similar way to Carr Manor and Roundhay. This would prevent the need for a merger of schools or the creation of a huge primary provision on two sites. Such a through school could still have more than one access point. Moor Allerton Hall would be willing to support Allerton Grange to

develop a quality 2 form primary facility. Such an alternative would have less impact upon the core strategic purpose of both schools at this time when it has vulnerable data and needs to focus on improvement.

- 3.15.10 **Consultation:** Some of the information put out during the consultation was useful- the translated documents were welcomed by our parents as were the FAQs. The overall process was not clarified at the beginning in terms of the nature and purpose of a 'pre' consultation. This only became clear towards the end. There are so many unknowns about this idea that it has been hard for all concerned to see it objectively and make a decision in principle without any detail to base a decision upon. The family of schools should have been formally consulted.
- 3.16 **As part of the consultation council officers met with the School Councils of both schools to discuss the proposals and listen to students views.**
- 3.17 **The School Council of Allerton Grange School submitted five responses on behalf of students (not included in the tally of responses at 3.9). Four responses were in support and one response was not in support. Themes were raised in four of the responses. Themes raised and numbers of responses raising each theme were as follows:**
- 3.17.1 Concerned about overcrowding – 1  
Good idea as transition will be easier for students – 1  
Good as it will offer more places for students – 1  
It will offer more opportunities for leadership activities and social events – 1
- 3.18 **The School Council of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School submitted 20 responses on behalf of students (not included in the tally of responses at 3.9). Five responses were in support, three responses were not sure and 12 responses were not in support. Themes raised and numbers of responses raising each theme were as follows:**
- 3.18.1 Older children might help younger children – 2  
Excited for more children/making new friends – 5  
More space to play & eat in – 5  
Excited at the idea of a new uniform – 2  
Do not want a new uniform – 2  
Concerned will impact on learning – 1  
Concerned about losing current teacher / friends if schools merged – 3  
Concerned school will not be big enough to fit all children – 1  
Will we have to pay for lunch? – 1  
Unsure where children will eat – 1  
An exciting and good idea – 1  
Poorly thought out proposal – 2  
Proposal too rushed - not enough time to complete work – 1  
Process is wasting valuable time – 1  
Allerton Grange students are rude/threatening – 2  
Concerned about sharing facilities with older children – dangerous – 5  
Questioning start/finish times if schools merged – 1  
Concerned about being bullied – 5

Concerned about overcrowding – 2  
Won't feel as safe – 2  
Concerned about lack of space for additional parking – 2  
Concerned about KS1 + KS2 being separated – 2  
Concerned about lack of space (PE/Playground/assembly hall) – 5  
Questioning the size of CLC – 1  
Would change schools if merge went ahead – 1

3.19 During the consultation LCC received feedback from stakeholders at both the public drop-in meetings and via formal feedback submitted by paper form, email and on-line survey. It is clear from the volume of consultation responses and in particular the concerns raised about the timescales for implementation of the proposals, the size of the proposed primary provision, issues around use of the CLC building and the views of both the Governing Bodies and Senior Leadership in both schools, that it would not be appropriate for a recommendation to be made to Executive Board that follows the proposal on which the consultation was based. In response to the concerns raised it is our view that a revised proposal to be implemented in September 2019 should be taken to the next stage and that additional bulge places be provided for September 2018 to allow time for the revised proposal to be agreed in detail with both schools. **That proposal is to expand primary provision from a capacity of 420 pupils to 630 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 60 to 90 with effect from September 2019 as part of a through-school. The recommendation at the start and end of this report notes the specific changes that would need to be made in order for this to happen.**

3.20 The proposal on which the consultation was based was for an additional 60 places to be created each year. The revised proposal to create 30 additional places for September 2019 would seem to be a more acceptable proposal given some of the consultation responses which expressed concerns about the rushed timescales, logistics of a split-site operation using the CLC, safeguarding, learning improvement, proposed size of the primary increase and increases in traffic. As the revised proposals are intrinsically linked to the proposals on which the consultation was based and the position with regard to a sufficiency of school places has not changed, it is our view that a fresh consultation would not be needed. If Executive Board gives permission to move to the next stage which would involve publishing a Statutory Notice, the publication of the Notice would mark the start of a four week formal consultation period also known as a representation period, during which time anyone may comment on or object to the proposals. We would ensure that the details of the revised proposal were communicated widely within the community to enable formal responses to be submitted and considered further prior to making a decision about next steps.

## 4 Corporate Considerations

### 4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The process in respect of all the proposals has been managed in accordance with the relevant legislation and with local good practice.

- 4.1.2 The consultation was carried out over a seven week period and included use of the WordPress on-line forum and the Council's on-line survey system. Five separate public drop-in sessions were held at different times of the day including a Saturday morning session, across Moor Allerton Hall Primary School and the North East Learning Centre. The sessions were supported by officers from Highways, Children and Families Service and the Built Environment Teams, to discuss the proposals. These were attended in the main by existing parents and carers at both schools, school staff, local residents and families whose children would be starting school in the coming years. Information was distributed widely, including via the school websites, text, to other local schools, via local Early Years providers, on the Leeds City Council website, the Family Information Service website, Twitter and Facebook. Meetings were held with the governors, staff and school council of both schools. Banners were placed at the entrance and near to both schools to advertise the consultation. Leaflets highlighting the consultation and the timings of the consultation drop-in meetings were distributed to over 6000 local dwellings.
- 4.1.3 In response to requests made during the consultation, a Frequently Asked Questions document and a document outlining the consultation process were produced and emailed to both Governing Bodies which were shared with parents and made available on the Leeds City Council website and school websites.
- 4.1.4 During the consultation, requests were made on behalf of some of the harder to reach communities within the school for various documents to be translated into alternative languages and for interpreters to be made available at the public drop-ins. A summary version of the consultation document was translated into Urdu and Punjabi and sent to both schools with a request to make the information available to parents as appropriate. This was also made available on the Leeds City Council website and school websites and copies placed on both school reception desks for parents to access. It is our understanding from both schools that few copies of these documents were requested. We also arranged for the flyer on which the public drop-in sessions was advertised to be translated into Urdu and Punjabi and again these were made available to parents via both schools. These flyers, and the translated summary consultation document also noted the two public drop-in sessions where an interpreter had been booked to interpret both Urdu and Punjabi, the two main heritage languages spoken by families of children attending the schools. At one of the drop-ins the interpreter was accompanied by a council officer in the school playground and the hall. At the second session the interpreter was located in the drop in room with signs clearly indicating in both Urdu and Punjabi that he was available. In addition a British Sign Language Interpreter was provided on request at one of the drop-in sessions.
- 4.1.5 As part of the consultation a letter was sent to parents/carers of pupils accessing the deaf and hearing impaired resource within Allerton Grange School to inform them that there would be no material change to the existing provision and to invite parents to contact Leeds City Council if they required further information at this stage. In addition, a meeting was held with parents/carers of pupils accessing the deaf and hearing impaired resource within Moor Allerton Hall Primary School to discuss the proposal, since the change could potentially impact on them to a

greater degree than secondary aged children. Information about the consultation was also shared with the 'National Deaf Children's Society'.

- 4.1.6 As part of the consultation, parents/carers of children due to start school in September 2018 with a nearest school in the Roundhay Primary Planning Area were sent details of the consultation with their 'invitation to apply for a primary school place' letters. Parents/carers were informed that council staff from the school admissions team would be available to talk through any concerns at the drop-in session on Saturday 18 November 2017. A number of these parents subsequently attended.
- 4.1.7 During this consultation many responses highlighted concerns about the swiftness of the process and the size of the proposed Primary phase of 4FE. In light of these and other issues raised during the consultation a decision was taken to report the outcomes of the consultation to Executive Board in February 2018 rather than December 2017 as originally planned to give council officers more time to fully consider the consultation responses. A revised proposal that takes account of the consultation responses has been developed and is now recommended to Executive Board.
- 4.1.8 The Moortown and Roundhay ward members support these proposals.
- 4.1.9 The consultation document for this proposal can be found at: <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Currentconsultation.aspx> or requested from the Sufficiency and Participation Team at: [educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk).

## 4.2 **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 EDCI screening forms for both the consultation and the next stage of the proposals have been completed and are attached as appendices to this report.

## 4.3 **Council policies and Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 The revised proposal offers good value for money through its capacity to support achievement of the Best Council outcome to give everyone the chance to do well at every level of learning, gaining the skills they need for life.
- 4.3.2 This proposal is being brought forward to meet the LA's statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places for all the children in Leeds. Providing places close to where children live allows improved accessibility to local and desirable school places, is an efficient use of resources and reduces the risk of non-attendance.
- 4.3.3 This proposal contributes to the city's aspiration to be the best council, the best city in which to grow up and a child friendly city. The delivery of pupil places through the Learning Places Programme is one of the baseline entitlements of a child friendly city. By creating good quality local school places we can support the priority aim of improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps. In turn, by providing young people with the skills they need for life, these proposals provide underlying support for the council's ambition to produce a

strong economy by compassionate means. A good quality school place also contributes towards delivery of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to improve behaviour, attendance and achievement. It is important when bringing any proposal forward that there is a degree of certainty that any change would not have a negative impact on teaching and learning.

Although both schools have been judged by Ofsted to be 'Requires Improvement' and there are clearly some improvements to be made, Leeds City Council has maintained a strong Learning Improvement service which if the revised proposals were to progress, would continue to work with the schools to ensure children make progress and have successful outcomes. The revised proposal has been put forward based on this level of support, coupled with strong governing bodies and school leaders and as a local authority, we are confident that collectively in partnership the revised proposal could be taken forward successfully.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 A viability study has been commissioned to determine options and ensure we proceed with the most effective solution, financially and educationally. Any scheme would be subject to relevant consultation at the appropriate juncture as informed by the key stakeholders and local ward members. Planning permission would be required prior to the commencement of any construction.

4.4.2 This expansion would be funded from the Learning Places Programme through Basic Need Allocations. The precise funding packages would be confirmed at the design freeze stage, and detailed in the relevant Design and Cost reports.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 The processes that have been and will be followed are in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 as set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007, and amended by School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

4.5.2 This report is subject to call in.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 The proposal to increase primary provision in the Roundhay area has been brought forward in time to allow places to be delivered for 2019. Bulge places will be required to ensure a sufficiency of places in 2018 and a decision not to proceed with regard to this revised proposal may result in a fresh consultation on new proposals, and there is a high risk that places will not be delivered in time. The LA's ability to meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of school places in the short and longer term may be at risk.

4.6.2 There is also a corporate risk associated with failing to provide sufficient school places in good quality buildings that meet the needs of local communities.

### **5 Conclusions**

5.1 Our ambition is to be the best city in the country. As a vibrant and successful city we will attract new families to Leeds, and making sure that we have enough school places for children is one of our priorities. The original proposal as consulted on, followed by the revised proposal on which a decision is sought have been brought forward to meet that need, and following the appropriate consultation we now seek to move them to the next stage. They would ensure that children in Leeds would have the best possible start to their learning, and so deliver our vision of Leeds as a child friendly city.

5.2 Having taken the consultation responses into account, in particular the concerns raised about the timescales for implementation of the proposals, the size of the proposed primary provision, issues around use of the CLC building and the views of both the Governing Bodies and Senior Leadership in both schools, it would not be appropriate for a recommendation to be made to Executive Board that follows the proposal on which the consultation was based. It is our view that a revised proposal to be implemented in September 2019 that takes into account the consultation responses, should be taken to the next stage and that additional bulge places be provided for September 2018 to allow time for the revised proposal to be agreed in detail with both schools. The risk of not providing additional places in an area of such high need outweighs some of the concerns shared during the consultation bearing in mind the mitigations outlined in this report. On balance the revised proposals therefore are strong and address the LA's statutory duty to provide sufficient primary places and to provide places close to where children live, allow improved accessibility to local and desirable school places, manage resources effectively and to reduce the risk of non-attendance.

## 6 **Recommendations**

6.1 Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice on related proposals to amalgamate Moor Allerton Hall Primary School with Allerton Grange School to create a through-school from 1 September 2019 and to expand primary provision by:

Lowering the age-range of Allerton Grange School from 11-19 year olds to 3-19 year olds;

Expanding primary provision at the new through-school from a capacity of 420 to 630 pupils with an increase in the admission number in reception from 60 to 90 with effect from September 2019; and

Altering the SEN provision for deaf and hearing impaired children by continuing to deliver it as part of a through-school rather than provision being offered separately by both schools;

- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Systems.

7 **Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.