



Report of the Chief Democratic Services Officer

North East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 16th October 2006

Subject: Primary Review: Alwoodley Primary Planning Area Consultation

Electoral Wards Affected:

Alwoodley
Moortown

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

At its meeting on 20th September 2006, the Executive Board granted permission for public consultation to be undertaken on a proposal to close Fir Tree and Archbishop Cranmer CE (VA) primary schools in August 2007 and establish a 1.5 FE school on the Archbishop Cranmer site in September 2007. Education Leeds is currently undertaking public consultation on this proposal for a period of six weeks from 29th September until 10th November 2006 and seeks the views of the Inner North East Area Committee.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

The purpose of this report is to seek views from the Inner North East Area Committee as part of the public consultation process on the potential impact on the community, and the implications for Leeds City Council, of the proposals for the Alwoodley Primary Planning Area

2.0 Background Information

2.1 There are concerns about the number of surplus places across the Alwoodley Planning Area, and in particular, the low number on roll at Fir Tree Primary School, and Archbishop Cranmer Primary School in relation to the size of the school building. This was a trigger for Education Leeds to undertake a review of provision in the Alwoodley Primary Area that reflects the principles set out in the School Organisation Plan 2003-2008.

2.2 The Alwoodley Planning Area comprises two community schools; Alwoodley and Fir Tree primary schools, and three faith schools; Archbishop Cranmer (VA) Church of

England Primary School, St Paul's Catholic Primary School and the Jewish Primary School, Brodetsky.

- 2.3** A report was submitted to the Executive Board in November 2005 summarising a consultation that had taken place in Autumn 2005 on a proposal to close Fir Tree Primary School. In light of some of the representations received during that consultation, Education Leeds were asked to undertake further work in the area. This proposal is a consequence of exploring other options.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1** A number of the schools in the Alwoodley Planning Area have felt the effects of the falling primary aged population to a greater or lesser extent. With only 102 pupils on roll, Fir Tree Primary School is the smallest in the area having suffered falling rolls over several years. Archbishop Cranmer Primary School has also suffered falling rolls and currently has 151 on roll. Intakes in the two schools have been significantly lower than their admission limits. In September 2006, out of a possible 30 pupils, Fir Tree Primary School admitted 16 into the Reception class and Archbishop Cranmer admitted 8 pupils out of a possible 45. The surplus capacity in each of the two schools is 35% and 36% respectively. Information on the other three schools in the area can be found in Table 1 on page 7 of the attached consultation document.
- 3.2** The latest data on standards shows all the schools in the area above or at the level of the Leeds average in English, Maths and Science (2005 results). Fir Tree and St Paul's Catholic Primary Schools fall just below the average in English and Maths respectively. Results in recent years for Fir Tree and Archbishop CE fluctuate around the City average. Fir Tree, Archbishop Cranmer and Alwoodley have similar levels of BME pupils and the highest levels of free school meals in the area.
- 3.3** There is concern over the viability of the current pattern of provision in the area, given that the impact of the falling primary population is not felt evenly across all schools. Current intakes into the five schools and future projections suggest that 180 places per year across the schools would be more than sufficient to meet demand, whereas the current combined admission limit is 210. In September 2006 there were 140 pupils in Reception in the five schools, compared to 170 in January 2002.

4.0 Recommendations

For the Area Committee to make their views known on the proposals for primary school provision in the Alwoodley Planning Area, and in particular, to comment on any impact on provision within the community, and identify any opportunities the proposal might present.