



REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: 22 June 2010

SUBJECT: Outcome of the consultation on the proposals for the West Leeds SILC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

In December 2009 the Executive Board approved formal public consultation on the relocation of the West SILC modular building at Farnley Park Maths and Computing College to Bruntcliffe High School as part of the BSF project for Farnley Park

This report details the outcome of these consultations, and outlines an alternative proposal formulated in response to the feedback received.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The West SILC is one of five community special schools in Leeds. It provides for a range of complex special educational needs for children on whom the local authority maintains a statement of special educational needs (Education Act 1996) either on one of two main sites or in mainstream partnership bases. One of the main sites is a modular building co-located with the Farnley Park Maths and Computing College.

2.2 Farnley Park Maths and Computing College is in the process of receiving a major extension and refurbishment of its buildings as part of the BSF programme that is due to commence works on site in October 2010. This will provide a state of the art 21st century learning environment that includes specialist facilities for young people with complex needs in a high care partnership base.

2.4 **An alternative proposal was developed in response to the consultation. This is to transfer the pupils from the West SILC Farnley Park building to the other main West SILC site at Milestone.**

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:

(i) note the outcome of formal public consultation on the relocation of the West SILC modular building at Farnley park Maths and Computing College to Bruntcliffe High School; and

3.2 to note the alternative proposal formulated in response to the public consultation to make provision for the pupils currently educated on the Farnley Park site at the West SILC Milestone site.

ITEM No:

Originator: Stuart Gosney

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Electoral Wards Affected:

Morley North, Morley South, Farnley,
Armley, Bramley & Stanningley

Specific Implications For:

Equality & Diversity x

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call-in

Not Eligible for Call-in

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 In December 2009 the Executive Board approved formal public consultation on the relocation of the West SILC modular building at Farnley Park Maths and Computing College to Bruntcliffe High School as part of the BSF project for Farnley Park.
- 1.2 This report details the outcome of these consultations, and suggests an alternative proposal formulated in response to the feedback received.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The West SILC is one of five community special schools in Leeds. It provides for a range of complex special educational needs for children on whom the local authority maintains a statement of special educational needs (Education Act 1996) either on one of two main sites or in mainstream partnership bases. One of the main sites is a modular building co-located with the Farnley Park Maths and Computing College.
- 2.2 Farnley Park Maths and Computing College is in the process of receiving a major extension and refurbishment of its buildings as part of the BSF programme. Work is due to commence on site in October 2010. This will provide a state of the art 21st century learning environment that includes specialist facilities for young people with complex needs in a high care partnership base. As such potentially disruptive building work commences vulnerable young people at the West SILC need to be educated in an alternative safe and secure learning environment.
- 2.3 Improvement of the West SILC is part of the vision within the Leeds Inclusive Learning Strategy. The vision for the West wedge includes the following new BSF facilities that are collocated on mainstream sites:

- Swallow Hill Community College. Integrated resource for 30 pupils with learning and communication difficulties. Opened in September 2009. These pupils are not on the roll of the West SILC.
- Priesthorpe School. Integrated resource for 30 pupils with learning difficulties. Fully open in April 2011. Pupils will remain on the roll of the West SILC.
- Farnley Park Maths and Computing College. High care partnership base for 30 pupils with complex needs. Open in September 2012. Pupils will remain on the roll of the West SILC.

3.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 At its meeting on 9 December 2009 the Board agreed to consult on the proposal that the West SILC Farnley Park modular provision move permanently to Bruntcliffe High School in Morley. The consultation for the Bruntcliffe High School proposal ran from 4th January to 12th February 2010. The consultation document set out:
- what the consultation was about
 - why the West SILC provision at Farnley Park had to move
 - why the proposal to move to Bruntcliffe High was preferred
 - how people could comment
- 3.2 The document was made available to parents through the schools and local libraries, and via the Education Leeds website. It was distributed to all members, the Church of England and Catholic dioceses, trade unions, and neighbouring authorities. All Ward Members in the West have been offered the opportunity to meet to discuss the proposal.
- 3.3 In addition to informal discussions with the relevant schools public meetings were held at both the West SILC and Bruntcliffe High schools. Ward members were also briefed and consulted with on these proposals through the South Area Committee meeting. Individual briefings have taken place with Farnley Ward members. A consultation meeting was held for all West SILC staff.
- 3.4 The document gave details of how to respond, and the subsequent processes that would be followed and further opportunities to comment or influence decisions prior to a final determination. These issues were also explained at the public meetings. It was made clear that views were being sought prior to any decisions being taken and these would be reported back to the Executive Board.
- 3.5 Full details of the responses received can be found in Appendix 1. A summary of the issues raised is provided below.

3.6 Summary of Issues Raised

- 3.6.1 A total of 206 written responses were received during the public consultation of which 6 were in support of the proposal, 4 expressed no preference and 196 were against. The objections of those against came mainly from the parents of current Bruntcliffe pupils and included:
- there is no benefit to Bruntcliffe High and it could adversely affect standards there
 - it could increase behavioural issues
 - it could create traffic and highway problems
 - other options should be considered
 - Bruntcliffe should be for local children
 - SILC provision is becoming too fragmented
 - provision should remain in the West
 - co-location on a mainstream site is not appropriate for all of the SILC pupils
 - medical services will be affected by a new location
 - travel distances and journey times would be too long for children living in the west wedge.

3.6.2 West SILC Governing Body

3.6.3 The Governing Body discussed this at its meeting on 10 December 2009. On balance the governors felt that the proposal offered a suitable alternative for the pupils. It would be co-located with a mainstream high school that had an inclusive reputation and had the potential to develop shared practices that could become a beacon of good practice.

3.6.4 Concerns were expressed about travel distances and journey times, the location of facilities outside the West wedge and the long term viability of SILC provision in both the South and West. Governors agreed to work with Education Leeds to resolve these concerns for the good of the pupils

3.6.5 Bruntcliffe High School Governing Body

3.6.6 The Governing Body discussed this at its meeting on 21 January 2010.

3.6.7 The governors were sympathetic to the needs of the West SILC. However, they felt that at this time the co-location of a SILC unit on the site would distract the school from its main aim of improving standards for its own pupils. There were also concerns about alternative uses for the land on which the SILC building would be sited.

3.6.8 Outer South Management Committee

3.6.9 Members stated that they were in support of the Bruntcliffe High School Governing Body views. Concern was expressed that the proposal could be a distraction to Bruntcliffe High School and there would be an increase in transport times and cost.

3.6.10 Farnley Ward Members

3.6.11 Local Members raised reservations about the already congested Farnley Park site if the modular buildings remained on the site of the school. Concerns centred on the increase in pupil numbers at the school and the problems associated with overspill parking for both residents and the local primary school, the grounds of which adjoin the high school grounds.

3.6.12 West SILC Public Meeting

3.6.13 There were approximately 30 attendees, mainly parents of West SILC pupils. The response to the proposal was generally positive on the basis that:

- the pupils remained with their current staff and friends
- they would move to an inclusive welcoming school
- the unit would be separate and secure

However, concerns were voiced on the following main issues:

- it would increase travelling times for the majority of pupils and current transport arrangements would need to be reviewed and amended
- preference for alternative provision to remain in the West wedge
- dispersed provision over a number of sites
- parental choice rather than having to accept a transfer to Bruntcliffe

3.6.14 West SILC Staff Meeting

Amongst the staff there was an acceptance that the Bruntcliffe High School proposal offered good opportunities for the pupils and for that reason staff would work with Education Leeds to ensure that quality provision was maintained. Staff were assured that there were no plans to close the SILC.

Other issues causing concern were:

- not enough notice given to plan the new provision
- travel distances and times
- Bruntcliffe is not local for most pupils and is not in the West wedge

- the amount of space available at Bruntcliffe
- some staff being unable to make reasonable travel arrangements
- the possibility that there might be in future a merger of the West and South SILCs

3.6.15 Bruntcliffe High School Public Meeting

3.6.16 16 members of the public were present. The main issues that were raised were:

- the proposal and the public meeting have not been sufficiently advertised in the local area
- there is insufficient space on site
- there are concerns about co-location with a SILC
- potential for behaviour in school to deteriorate

6.6.17 In response to some of the concerns raised the Governors of Bruntcliffe High School held another parents meeting but there is no record of the discussion.

3.7 Alternative Proposal in Response to the Consultation

3.7.1 Consideration has been given to some of the concerns raised during the consultation. An alternative proposal has been developed for pupils from the West SILC Farnley Park building to be transferred to the other main West SILC site at Milestone.

3.7.2 This proposal depends upon the temporary provision of specialist accommodation on the Milestone site to deliver art, science, food and design technology and other ancillary facilities. These do not exist on the site at the moment. It will require some reconfiguration of existing teaching spaces to make best use of available rooms and to form a link to the new facilities. The new facilities will be provided in modular accommodation that will be specifically designed to be flexible so that it can be re-used in the future.

3.7.3 The new modular accommodation will be procured through the Strategic Partnering Agreement with the Local Education Partnership as part of the BSF programme. It is estimated that the cost of the provision of accommodation on the Milestone site will be approximately £0.5m. This is in line with a new modular accommodation framework contract that has been negotiated by Education Leeds .

3.7.4 Planning applications will be required

3.9 Benefits of the Proposal

3.9.1 Although this proposal does not offer co-location with a mainstream secondary school it does have a number of other advantages, namely:

- the majority of the pupil and staff group could remain together if parents prefer this provision
- it consolidates the West SILC on the Milestone site and creates economies of scale
- it provides specialist facilities on the Milestone site that benefit all of the young people not just those from the Farnley Park unit.

the existing modular unit at Farnley Park could be used to benefit the BSF project at that school.

3.9.2 Interim reviews will be held with the parents of all pupils affected by the transitional arrangements. The outcome of these will be an agreed placement that is appropriate for the needs of each individual child.

3.10 The Legal Implications

3.10.1 There are no legal implications of expanding the Milestone site..

3.11 Implementation

- 3.11.1 A detailed plan for the Milestone site has been worked up with the senior staff of the West SILC in consultation with stakeholders, including governors, local members and planners. It has been submitted for planning approval and is currently going through the statutory planning process. The agreed solution will be developed and delivered by Education Leeds and Leeds City Council through their established project management procedures as part of the BSF programme for Farnley Park. The LEP has undertaken to deliver the new provision on the Milestone site.

4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The capital cost of this proposal is estimated to be £0.5m for the modular accommodation to provide specialist facilities and £0.25 for the work to connect the accommodation to the existing building and adapt the site to secure planning permission. These costs will be resourced through the Leeds BSF Programme budget. The revenue will be met from the existing West SILC budget.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:
- (i) note the outcome of formal public consultation on the relocation of the West SILC modular building at Farnley Park Maths and Computing College to Bruntcliffe High School; and
 - 5.2 (ii) note the alternative proposal formulated in response to the public consultation to make provision for the pupils currently educated on the Farnley Park site at the West SILC Milestone site.

6.0 BACKGROUND REPORTS

- (1) 9 December 2009 Executive Board. Proposal to relocate the West SILC from the Farnley Park site under Building Schools for the Future.
- (2) Public consultation document. Proposal to relocate West SILC (Victoria Park) provision.

7.0 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1-List of consultees

APPENDIX 1

List of consultees

The following persons or bodies were consulted:

Consultee	Consultation method
Parents of West SILC pupils	Letter to each plus booklet distributed via school, posters advertising public meetings
Parents of Bruntcliffe pupils	Letter to each distributed via school booklets in school, posters advertising public meeting. School arranged second letter plus booklet and held a second meeting
LCC Councillors	Explanatory letter plus booklet
MPs	electronic link to document. Those directly affected also received a hard copy
Education Leeds board	documents
Education Leeds Heads of Service	electronic link to document and request to cascade to colleagues
LCC Leadership Team	electronic link to document
Neighbouring LAs	electronic link to document
Locality Enablers	electronic link to document
Area Managers	electronic link to document
Leeds Racial Equality Council	electronic link to document
Leeds Chamber of Commerce	electronic link to document
Trades Unions	electronic link to document
Catholic diocese	electronic link to document and hard copy
C of E diocese	electronic link to document and hard copy
Other SILC principals	Electronic link to document
Children's Services Leadership Team	Electronic link to document
All libraries in West Leeds and those within 2 miles of Bruntcliffe	documents and posters
Bruntcliffe family of schools and all schools in West wedge	Booklets, response forms, letter to head requesting promotion of consultation to school community
Learning and Skills Council	Electronic link to document
Public	2 meetings, 1 additional at Bruntcliffe. Education Leeds and LCC websites, media and local libraries
Outer South Area Management	meeting
Staff & Governing body of West SILC Governing Body of Bruntcliffe	meeting

Summary of written responses

	Respondent					
School	Parent	Local Resident	Member of staff	Governor	Other	Total
West SILC	1				1	2
Bruntcliffe	177	2	11	3	11	204
Total	178	2	11	3	12	206

The minutes from both of the Public consultation meetings are available at www.educationleeds/schoolorganisation