

Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Assistant Director for Children's Services

Report to:	Mrs P A Bradwell, Executive Councillor for Children's Services including Post 16 Education
Date:	08 August 2011
Subject:	Proposal to publish a Statutory Notice regarding changes at The Glead Girls' CAL and Technology College and the Glead Boys School in Spalding
Decision Reference:	01906
Key decision?	No

Summary:

The Glead Girls' CAL and Technology College and the Glead Boys' School are secondary schools in Spalding operating within a selective education system. The girls' college is a popular school which also has a vocational sixth form with a total number on roll of 889 as at the May 2011 census (capacity 893). The boys' school does not have a sixth form and has a total number on roll of 637 (capacity 718).

Schools of this size and nature are facing increasing educational challenges operating as stand alone schools. They are experiencing the following difficulties which are further detailed later in this report:-

Falling numbers on roll
Standards of pupil attainment
Breadth of curriculum
Recruitment of teaching and leadership staff
Financial sustainability

This proposal is being made in order to provide the best quality of education for children and young people in the Spalding area, as well as finding a solution to these problems. Enabling the formation of a co-educational school is the next logical step to ensure appropriate sustainable educational provision in Spalding which will fully meet the needs of the children and parents in the area but which will also be economically viable. The LA has a duty to balance the raising of standards with the maintenance of diversity of provision, parental choice and a focus on local communities. The proposal will create the conditions for the co-educational school to achieve this and enable children and young people in the community to access strong educational opportunities.

The proposal comprises the following 3 elements, which are related. One cannot go ahead without the others and all are to be effective from 1 November 2011:

- (a) to expand The Glead Girls' CAL and Technology College
- (b) to change from single sex to co-education at The Glead Girls' CAL and

- Technology College
(c) to close Glead Boys' School

This proposal will slightly reduce the number of school places in the secondary sector in line with projected numbers whilst, at the same time, it will improve educational standards and opportunities for young people in the area. The idea for a co-educational establishment was put forward initially by the governing bodies and Headteachers of the two schools as the potential to provide a new, forward-looking and first class educational opportunity and has the full support of the Local Authority (LA).

This consultation process is being carried out by the LA and the governing bodies of the two schools. If this proposal goes ahead it will assist the governors with their intention to convert to a co-educational Academy during 2012 and this will be independently consulted on through a separate process which will be led by a sponsor, likely to be the CfBT Education Trust.

The process commenced on this proposal with a six week period of consultation which closed on 21 July 2011 and is further referred to in the Consultation section later in this report. A summary of the responses is also attached as Appendix B.

This report advises the Executive Councillor on making a decision regarding the publication of a Statutory Notice, as required by law, to propose the related proposals of expansion and change to co-education at the girls' school and the closure of the boys' school. If the Executive Councillor gives approval to the publication of the Statutory Notice there will follow a further 6 weeks representation period giving another opportunity for people and organisations to express their views and ensure that they are taken into account when the final decision is taken by the Executive on 1 November 2011.

Recommendation(s):

Following the completion of the consultation period, the first phase of the statutory process, the Executive Councillor is recommended to take the next step of publishing a Statutory Notice. This notice will confirm the 3 related proposals effective from 1 November 2011 as follows:-

- (a) to expand The Glead Girls' CAL and Technology College
- (b) to change from single sex to co-education at The Glead Girls' CAL and Technology College
- (c) to close Glead Boys' School

Alternatives Considered:

1. That the Statutory Notice is not published and the consultation process is stopped. This would mean that both the girls' college and the boys' school will remain open as they are currently constituted so that pupils would continue with their education on the same site and at the school at which they are currently on

roll.

However, this alternative would have the following disadvantages:

As stand alone schools they would continue to experience the difficulties highlighted in this report with regard to number on roll, standards, curriculum, staff recruitment and financial sustainability. This would in turn lead to the inability to deliver an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum thus limiting the range of opportunities available for students.

As stand alone schools it is likely that both schools will enter a deficit budget in the near future.

This alternative would make it more difficult to provide a wider range of services and facilities to the local community.

This alternative is unlikely to provide enriched provision and integrated services for children and young people in the area.

2. That the Statutory Notice is not published and the consultation process is stopped with both schools continuing in their current form but with consideration given to other federation or collaboration possibilities.

However, there are no other appropriate schools within Spalding with the nearest secondary school being in Holbeach where the LA has already consulted on and commenced a reorganisation resulting in the formation of a new Academy there sponsored by the University of Lincoln.

Reasons for Recommendation:

- The Council would not be actively participating in this process if it did not see significant advantages for children and young people, their parents/carers and the local communities in Spalding. The appropriate educational provision in Spalding has been on the Council's agenda for a number of years and this proposal will both sustain provision and enhance the quality of provision as detailed in the reasons for the recommendation below. The LA has a statutory obligation under the Education Act 1996 to raise standards, promote educational opportunities for all, maintain diversity of provision, promote choice for parents and have a focus on local communities. This proposal will assist the Council in fulfilling these obligations as it creates a sustainable solution to enable educational opportunities for all which reflects community needs.
- The proposal will enable better and more effective use of resources so that all pupils can have access to the facilities available at both schools.
- The new co-educational school will be able to provide a full range of courses to meet students' academic and vocational needs. This greater curriculum choice, including access to specialist vocational facilities, will provide the opportunity for young people in Spalding to achieve their maximum potential.

- The proposal recognises the strengths and experience of both schools in that the intention is that Key Stage 3 classes will be taught in single sex groups and option groups at Key Stage 4 will be mixed to allow for a greater breadth of opportunity for students. It is likely that core subjects at Key Stage 4 will continue to be taught in single sex classes. This will enable the co-educational school to maximise new opportunities whilst maintaining the positive traditions of the separate boys' and girls' schools.
- Access to a comprehensive menu of study support activities throughout the year will also be provided as an integral part of this wider curriculum.
- The LA believes that the formation of a co-educational school will provide the opportunity for standards and results to improve.
- The new co-educational school will provide significant stability to the education of young people in the local area and will ensure that secondary provision remains sustainable for the future.
- The revised staffing structure and other economies of scale that will follow the reorganisation as one school will enable better management of costs and assist in avoiding entering into a budget deficit.
- The proposal will enable wider access to a range of extended services and improved opportunities for community and family learning supporting the LA's Children's Services vision and the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).
- The new co-educational school will benefit from the significant expertise and leadership of the senior management teams from both schools.
- The proposal will offer wider development opportunities for all staff, which will help maintain stability and provision of high quality teaching and learning whilst enhancing recruitment and securing the quality of staffing. It will also enable a greater focus on the development for senior and middle leadership models so increasing leadership capacity.
- This will enable the process to continue to the next stage and allow a further opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposals and ensure that they will be taken into account by the Executive.
- This will enable the statutory and legal processes to proceed.

1. Background

Schools of this size and nature operating as stand alone schools are facing increasing educational challenges, as further detailed below, and this is particularly so for the boys' school.

Number on roll

At the boys' school the Published Admission Number (PAN) is 134 which, if all places were full, would give a potential number on roll of 670. However, the school is consistently undersubscribed and received only 98 first preference applications for the Year 7 intake in September 2011. Subsequently 106 offers of places were made for the Year 7 intake in September which are expected to be taken up. The projection figures detailed in the consultation document (Appendix A) indicate that the total number on roll is likely to fall below 600 in 2013/2014 and remain so in following years. Under Department for Education (DfE) guidance the recommended number on roll for a secondary school to be educationally and financially viable is 600 as a minimum with preferably over 1000. Based on the October 2010 school census return over 30% of pupils living in the natural catchment area do not attend the school but choose to take up a place at an alternative school.

The girls' school received 112 first preference applications with a PAN of 162. Subsequently 121 offers of places were made for the Year 7 intake in September which are expected to be taken up. The projection figures detailed in the consultation document (Appendix A) indicate a similar fall in the total number on roll figures for the girls' school over the next 7 years and, although well above the DfE minimum figure of 600, these will still be significantly below the DfE preferred figure of 1000 for total number on roll for a viable secondary school. Based on the October 2010 school census return over 20% of pupils living in the natural catchment area do not attend the school but choose to take up a place at an alternative school.

Standards of pupil attainment

DfE Number	Centre Name	Pupil Count		% of Pupils achieving 5+ A*-C including English and Maths		% of Pupils achieving 5+ A*-C		% of Pupils achieving 5+ A*-G		% of Pupils achieving 5+ A*-A	
		2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009
-	England	-	-	53.0%	50.0%	75.0%	70.0%	93.0%	92.0%	-	-
925	Lincolnshire (All)	8,737	8092	59.0%	57.0%	80.0%	75.0%	95.0%	95.0%	21.0%	18.0%
925	Lincolnshire (Academy)	1,142	741	53.0%	54.0%	84.0%	79.0%	96.0%	96.0%	19.0%	16.0%
925	Lincolnshire (Maintained)	7,595	7351	59.0%	57.0%	79.0%	75.0%	95.0%	95.0%	21.0%	18.0%
9254025	Spalding Gleed Boys' School	126	134	26.0%	31.0%	44.0%	43.0%	98.0%	95.0%	-	-
9255416	Spalding The Gleed Girls' CAL and Technology College	154	149	49.0%	41.0%	64.0%	50.0%	97.0%	97.0%	-	-
9254603	Spalding Grammar School	118	141	99.0%	98.0%	100.0%	99.0%	100.0%	100.0%	44.0%	34.0%
9254027	Spalding High School	150	150	95.0%	99.0%	100.0%	99.0%	100.0%	100.0%	53.0%	43.0%
9254029	Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College	140	137	46.0%	46.0%	85.0%	72.0%	99.0%	98.0%	-	-
9254030	Long Sutton The Peele Community College	134	123	58.0%	46.0%	70.0%	58.0%	98.0%	86.0%	-	-
9254032	Crowland The St. Guthlac School	80	77	43.0%	40.0%	80.0%	62.0%	98.0%	96.0%	-	-
9254010	The Deepings School	230	230	61.0%	63.0%	88.0%	81.0%	97.0%	98.0%	-	-

The comparative results of the two schools at Key stage 4 in 2010 using the measure of the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C including English and maths (5ACEM) show the girls achieving a significantly higher score which also represents an improvement from the 2009 results. The percentage result

achieved by the boys is not only lower but also represents a decline from their 2009 results using the 5ACEM measure. These results for both the boys and girls schools remain below the average for all Lincolnshire Schools and the LA believes that the advantages detailed in this document that will come with the formation of a co-educational school will provide the opportunity for the results to improve.

Breadth of curriculum

The PAN proposed for the co-educational school is 270 (the current combined PAN for the two separate schools is 296), giving an expected 1350 on roll for ages 11 – 16 and 300 in the sixth form. These pupil numbers will enable the school to provide a wide range of curriculum options to meet pupil aspirations and provide viable group sizes to stimulate learning through social interaction to promote the sharing of ideas, information and experiences as well as enabling pupils to participate meaningfully in team games, sports and other community activities.

The secondary curriculum is increasingly broad and complex, and is largely structured around subject families, making it difficult to compare schools offering different subjects and different number of options. The introduction of the new English Baccalaureate (EBac) qualification will place further pressures on schools in delivering the appropriate curriculum and this is particularly so for smaller schools. The recent DfE White Paper encourages schools to offer a broader set of academic subjects to age 16 and this proposal will enable exactly that.

Recruitment of teaching staff

Most secondary schools near to Lincolnshire's east coast experience difficulties from time to time in recruiting qualified teaching staff with appropriate subject specialisms. The recruitment of staff will be enhanced by this proposal as a larger school will offer teaching and non-teaching staff greater stability and greater promotional opportunities.

Financial sustainability

The school budgets for both schools operating as two separate entities are currently under pressure especially as rolls fall. A revised staffing structure and other economies of scale made possible under the reorganisation as part of the formation of one school will provide the basis for the better management of revenue costs and assist in avoiding any budget deficit.

2. Conclusion

It is recommended that the proposal is implemented to ensure the best educational opportunities for the children and young people of Spalding. The advantages of implementing this proposal are detailed in sections 2 and 4 of the consultation document (Appendix A). The proposal was initiated by the two Headteachers and the governing bodies of the two schools and has the full support of the LA.

This proposal presents the children and young people of Spalding with the best opportunity to reach their full potential. Publishing a Statutory Notice to confirm this proposal will allow the process to continue and a decision is required from the

Executive Councillor as to whether to proceed. The factors to consider in making this decision are within this report and all responses made during consultation must be considered (summarised in Appendix B).

3. Legal Comments:

The paper sets out the proposal of the combine The Gleed Girls' CAL and Technology College and The Gleed Boys School to form a co-educational school. The procedure to do so is covered by The Education and Inspection Act 2006 and Guidance from the Department of Education. The next step in the process is the publication of the Statutory Notice. The Equality Act 2010 is also relevant and in particular cognisance has to be taken of the change from single sex education to co-educational status. The Equality Impact Assessment addresses the points and in any event will become more pertinent at the Decision making Stage if the matter continues to progress. This is a decision within the remit of the Executive Councillor.

4. Resource Comments:

Keeping open both Gleed Girls' and Gleed Boys' as separate schools is unlikely to be able to provide the breadth of curriculum, reach Government minimum standards and remain financially viable. Approval of the three part recommendation in this report will allow the solution to be implemented.

5. Consultation

In order for the two schools to merge to enable the formation of one co-educational school, the LA must follow the necessary statutory legal processes as required by the Secretary of State in accordance with the Education and Inspection Act (EIA) 2006 and the guidance of the DfE regarding closure (Appendix C), expansion (Appendix D) and change of gender (Appendix E)

Under these guidelines the LA must ensure that sufficient time and information are provided for people to understand and form a view on the proposal and make a response. The consultation document must set out the problem that is being addressed and invite comment on one or more solutions. The LA must take all reasonable steps to draw the consultation to the attention of all those who might be interested and take into account their views.

The Education Act 2002 states the requirement for current pupils to be consulted and this was further extended by subsequent legislation to also include all pre-school children over the age of 3. The Education & Inspections Act 2006 specifically includes as interested parties the registered parents of registered pupils at the school and also the appropriate District and Parish Councils for the area. The Headteachers have actively consulted with the students currently attending the two schools, and will continue to do so during this process to explaining the proposal being consulted on. Pupils were all given the opportunity to feedback

through School Council representatives and summaries of their responses are attached. (Appendix F)

A letter (Appendix G) was sent out to interested parties (listed in Appendix H) on 9 June 2011 to commence a six week period of consultation. A public meeting was held on 22 June 2011 which was attended by representatives of the LA and the two schools together with parents/carers and other interested parties. All attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions and notes were taken which were published on the County Council website under the webpage Current Consultations on www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/provisionplanning and are also attached here as Appendix I. Following discussion at the public meeting a revised consultation document was issued to clarify that the proposal to merge the two schools to form a co-educational school is completely separate to the potential later conversion to Academy status and each must be consulted on as independent processes. Copies of the letter commencing consultation and the consultation document were also published on the County Council website. There was the opportunity to provide a response to the consultation by letter, email or by returning the response form (Appendix J) attached to the consultation document by 21 July 2011.

The written responses received during consultation have been provided to the Executive Councillor for consideration and are also summarised in this report in Appendix B. In total there were 120 valid responses with 56 supporting the proposal, 50 against and 14 expressing views neither in favour nor against the proposal. 52% (63) of all the consultation responses were from parents with 38 in favour, 17 against and 8 neither for nor against. 43% (52) of responses were from teachers and non-teaching staff members of the two schools and other local schools. Of these responses 16 were for the proposal, 32 against and 4 neither for nor against. 2 responses were received on behalf of organisations, these being Norfolk County Council (in favour) and the governing body of a local secondary school (neither for nor against), with all other responses being received from individuals.

If the Executive Councillor decides to proceed to Statutory Notice, this would initiate a 6 week Representation Period giving a further opportunity for people and organisations to express their views and ensure that they are taken into account when the final decision is taken at the meeting of the Executive on 1 November 2011. The LA, as decision maker, must be able to show that all relevant issues raised are taken into consideration in the decision making process. Points raised can be considered unpersuasive but must not be ignored altogether. The last stage of the statutory process would be the implementation of the proposal on 2 November 2011 if it is decided to proceed.

If this proposal goes ahead it will assist the governors with their intention to convert to a co-educational Academy from 1 January 2012. This however will be the subject of a completely separate process and will be carried out independently and be led by the sponsor and the governing bodies of both schools and will run alongside the consultation process being carried out by the LA.

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

Yes

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

n/a

c) Scrutiny Comments

n/a

d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and is attached as an appendix to this report (Appendix K) (Appendix K)

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Consultation Document
Appendix B	Summary of written responses
Appendix C	DCSF Guide "Closing a Maintained Mainstream School"
Appendix D	DCSF Guide "Expanding a Maintained Mainstream School"
Appendix E	DCSF Guide "Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School"
Appendix F	Summary of Students' Consultation Responses
Appendix G	Letters to commence consultation
Appendix H	List of Interested Parties
Appendix I	Notes of public meetings
Appendix J	Consultation response form
Appendix K	Equality Impact Assessment form

7. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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