

Open Report on behalf of Peter Duxbury, Executive Director Adults and Children's

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	13 May 2011
Subject:	Review and Reconfiguration of Special Schools – Lincoln City proposals

Summary:

This report sets out the proposals for the reconfiguration of special schools in the City of Lincoln.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider, comment and support the proposals for meeting the needs of children and young people with more complex learning difficulties in Lincoln City.

1. Background

As part of the wider review of Special School and Mainstream Unit Provision (approved 1st March 2011) particular focus was given to the City of Lincoln as a vehicle for informing the detail of the review and the implementation of the subsequent recommendations. This was identified in the commissioning document:

“.....deliver a detailed delivery plan for the reconfiguration of provision for Lincoln City, being responsive to the time frame for the redevelopment of the Priory Witham and Priory City Academy sites....and the Designated Specialist Units (DSUs) as defined by the Academies Division”.

Three schools have been the focus of a year long review undertaken by a working group made up of officers, headteachers, governors, parents and members, the schools being:

St Francis Special School – Physical and Medical Difficulties

St Christopher's Special School – More Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Autism

Queen's Park Special School – Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)

It is proposed that small scale reconfiguration takes place on the St Francis and St Christopher's sites to accommodate SLD and PMLD pupils (between the ages of 2 and 13) respectively. These modifications will create up to 30 additional

places on each site, ensuring that the necessary bespoke provision is available to meet the needs of the children and young people. For those children and young people aged 14 -19 who currently attend Queen's Park School they are accommodated in an "annex" some 200 metres from the main building. The "annex" will be retained to accommodate older pupils and will become part of St Christopher's School following the formal closure of Queen's Park School on August 2013, although it is anticipated that all pupils will have transferred to their new site by April 2013. It is expected that from September 2013 the age range of the PMLD and SLD children and young people accommodated by St Francis and St Christopher's schools will rise to 16, with the "annex" offering Post 16 education for young people with more complex needs registered at St Christopher's School and from the surrounding area.

This proposal will be undertaken in conjunction with the opening of the two Designated Specialist Units (DSUs) at the Priory Witham and Priory City of Lincoln Academies, which will work in partnership with the three special schools to provide inclusion opportunities as well as admitting children and young people to their units who would historically have been admitted to St Francis and St Christopher's Special Schools. This strategy will over time reduce the pupil numbers at the two special schools and allow them to use their accommodation and resources to provide for children and young people with the greatest complexity of need.

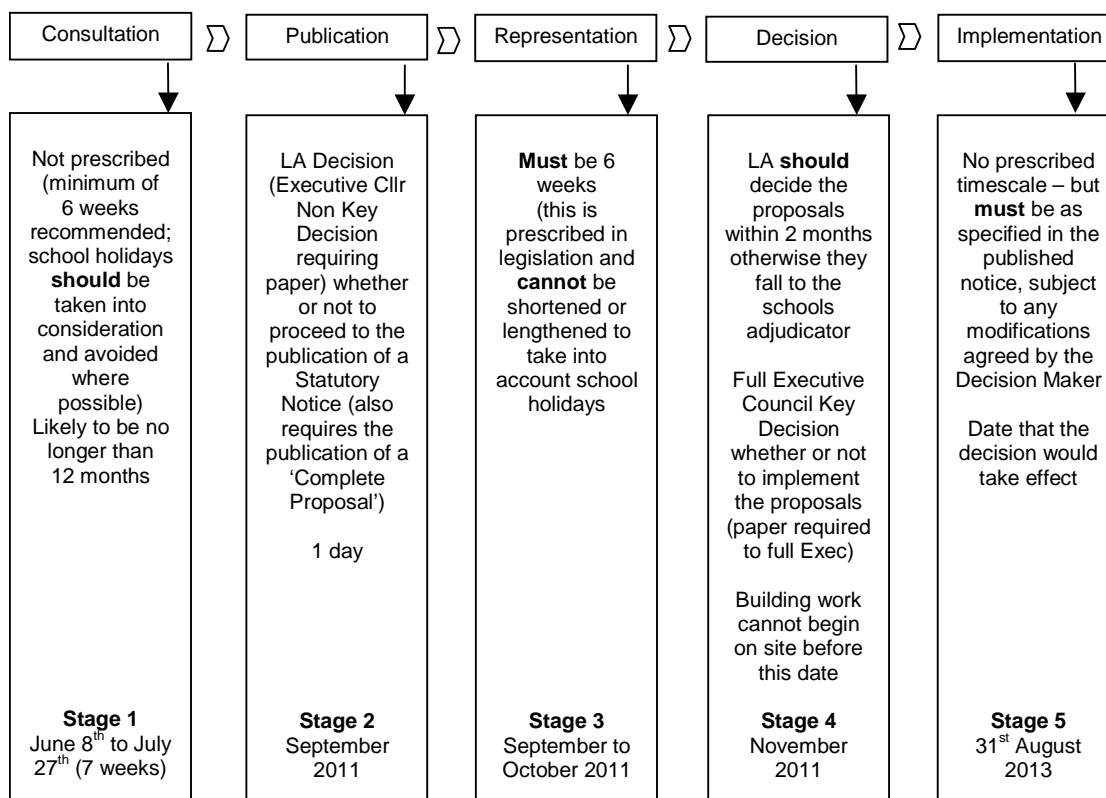
Funding has been identified in principle from the capital programme to undertake the necessary modifications on the school sites subject to the outcome of the statutory process set out below.

Attached at Appendix A is the draft review paper "Review of Special School and Mainstream Unit Provision – Lincoln City".

2. Conclusion

This proposal has been subject to extensive debate over the past 12 months, it has the support of the three headteachers who are committed to seeing it being successfully delivered so that children and young people with complex learning needs in the city can both now and in the future, have their needs met in the best possible provision.

This report recommends that support be given to commence the statutory process necessary to implement the proposals, beginning with public consultation with all interested parties. This would be the first part of the statutory process required to be undertaken in determining the future of special school provision in Lincoln city. At the end of the consultation phase, following analysis of feedback, a further decision will be required to decide whether or not to publish a Statutory Notice. If the process continues through to the end then a final Executive decision will be made when all representations have been received and a full report presented with an appropriate recommendation. The following flow chart sets out the process and proposed time line.



3. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

N/A

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Review of Special School and Mainstream Unit Provision – Lincoln City

5. Background Papers

Review of Special School and Mainstream Unit Provision – Lincoln City Report Appendices	A copy of the appendices is available from Sara Gregory (sgregory@cfbt.com)
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