

Cabinet: 12 March 2009

Report on the revised proposals for Building Schools for the Future for secondary schools in North Kirklees in light of the key messages from the consultation

Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes, this report will have an impact on more than 2 wards and will result in investment of over £200M when the decisions on the pattern of schools are implemented
Is it in the Council's Forward Plan?	Yes
Is it eligible for "call in" by Scrutiny?	Yes
Cabinet member Portfolio	Children and Young People

Electoral wards affected and ward councillors to be consulted: Batley East, Batley West, Birstall and Birkenshaw, Cleckheaton, Dewsbury East, Dewsbury South, Dewsbury West, Heckmondwike, Liversedge and Gomersal, Mirfield.

Public or private: Public

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:

- a). To present revised proposals for secondary provision in North Kirklees in the light of the key messages from the consultation which took place between 16 September 2008 and 14 November 2008
- b). To seek Cabinet approval of the proposed next steps and timescales to make changes to the pattern of secondary school and post 16 provision in North Kirklees through the Kirklees Building Schools for the Future Programme.

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2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In November 2007 the Council launched the Kirklees Schools for the Future Vision for Learning which can be found on the Council's website at:

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/education-learning/brighter/vision.shtml>

The Building Schools for the Future programme in North Kirklees is an opportunity to achieve our vision for: *an inspirational "step change" improvement in learner aspirations and achievements through a new flexible pattern of centres for learning, fit for the 21st century, that provide inviting, inclusive, state-of-the-art learning environments with excellent facilities and high quality resources for all learners to benefit from.*

2.2 Consultations on proposals prepared by the previous Administration took place in 2007 and 2008. Subsequent alternative proposals led to a change of Administration and were therefore not pursued. This paper sets out the thinking and consequent revised proposals from the current Administration

2.3 Standards

The current levels of attainment reached by children and young people are far from acceptable. This is having a serious effect on the lives and opportunities of far too many people. We need to significantly improve them with a step change in the educational provision.

Our aim is to create high schools which offer very high standards, offer a broad curriculum, have financial stability and are welcoming and comfortable for all.

Our ambition is to ensure that in due course Kirklees will be in the top performance quartile for pupils' attainment and progress. The connections between the opportunities offered by the Building Schools for the Future programme and the ambition to raise educational attainment are set out more fully in **Appendix A**.

A summary of current attainment and achievement can be found in **Appendix B**.

2.4 Community cohesion

The intensity of parental, and community, interest in the development of children is universal and a powerful unifying force in the context of the complex communities of North Kirklees. The pattern of provision can do much to build on the common commitment and to create stronger, shared, ground between communities.

The 'Building Schools for the Future' programme and the 'Every Child Matters' agenda support the development of the duty on all schools to promote community cohesion. The new learning environments will provide opportunities for all pupils, staff and governors to widen their engagement with the diversity of populations and communities within and beyond Kirklees, to develop a greater awareness and understanding of those communities and consequently to the nurturing of mutual respect. The nature of school organisation, an exciting curriculum and learning opportunities and the development of a sense of belonging will contribute to and complement the skills and attitudes necessary for life in the 21st Century.

The manner in which these opportunities are seized is crucial. We must be sensitive to all elements in the community in designing the pattern of provision so that we carry their confidence through a challenging period of change.

2.5 There are three areas where we can make a difference in what we provide: quality and standards, diversity and choice, viability and flexibility. We want high quality facilities with excellent teaching to raise aspirations and the standards of achievement. We want parents to be confident that every local school is a good school, supporting high levels of attainment and be welcoming and attractive for their children. In addition our ambition is to:

- place the five outcomes of Every Child Matters at the heart of learning: to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to the community and society and achieve economic well-being
- increase the number of 17 and 18 year olds staying on and achieving in education and training
- promote collaboration and partnership working between schools, colleges and other providers to ensure that all young people's entitlements are met
- ensure each school has a strong ethos and its own sense of purpose, acting as a centre of excellence or specialist provision
- ensure community and social cohesion is enhanced, with gender, disability and race equality clearly promoted in all our schools
- have schools as hubs for a wide range of extended community learning and other activities meeting the needs of their communities
- reduce the number of inefficient surplus school places and invest in sustainable, adaptable, cost-effective schools to best meet the changing needs of learners in the 21st century
- ensure new building and refurbishment works associated with the programme achieve the highest affordable standards of carbon efficiency

2.6 One of the challenges for the Council is to ensure that the investment plans developed through Building Schools for the Future and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP) are affordable, deliverable and that the capital grant is targeted cost-effectively.

These factors, together with the need for schools to offer a full curriculum and be financially viable in the future, are the main drivers which determine the size and location of the future schools.

The full rationale for school size is contained in **Appendix C**. The numbers of pupils in a school need to be sufficient to ensure breadth of curriculum and viability but not so large as to create too large a catchment area. This leads to high schools with a minimum number of 1200 places and a maximum of 1500 places.

A detailed examination of all existing and potential locations, together with comparative costs for new build and refurbishment, show that completely new school buildings on new sites are simply not affordable. This means that the proposed schools will be a well designed mixture of some new buildings with significantly upgraded and refurbished current buildings on existing sites.

3. KEY MESSAGES FROM CONSULTATION SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2008

A summary of the key messages under each of the objectives that underpinned the consultation proposals are set out in **Appendix D**.

3.1 Consultation Conclusions and Direction for the Future

The key messages from the consultation responses are informing the next stages of the planning and procurement process for Building Schools for the Future. A large proportion of the responses, quite properly, raise the concerns of current stakeholders about the impact of any changes on their children and their communities. This feedback will be taken into account when working with Headteachers, staff and governors to develop the detailed, school specific transition plans to manage the changes in every institution. The intention is not to destabilise or undermine confidence in current provision and the anxieties raised by parents and young people will be addressed by constructive dialogue in the implementation stages of the development process.

The consultation feedback is informing the difficult strategic decisions for the best investment of resources in the system that will benefit and continue to improve life chances for current and future generations of young people. This means that the issues raised are being acknowledged and addressed but within the framework provided by the transformational vision for learning in North Kirklees and the strategic overview of provision across all North Kirklees.

Significant conclusions from the consultation are set out below

1. Transformational vision

- The vision remains sound and should continue to be reiterated and reinforced as a core value in all Building Schools for the Future documentation and subsequent proposals

2. Strategic overview of provision in all North Kirklees

- The strategic overview should continue to be reinforced as the essential context for Building Schools for the Future, with investment creating parity of provision across North Kirklees
- The overall approach to improve the whole school estate, with value for money investment of the available capital allocation, is right and will form a major part of the evaluation of the "Strategy For Change" submissions to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in order to access the funds

3. Co-education

- Co-educational provision should be developed to serve families in the Batley area, but the opportunity for single sex education for boys and girls should also be retained to meet the expressed wishes of part of the community. See **Appendix E**.

4. Re-organisation of the Whitcliffe Mount pyramid

- Proceed with the re-organisation programme with further careful development of transitional plans that have the confidence of schools and parents
- Review the proposal for provision serving the St Luke's area

Note : Revised Proposals and the schedule for statutory processes for Whitcliffe Mount First Schools will be brought forward to cabinet shortly.

5. Size of 11-16 schools for curriculum breadth and sustainable funding

- Consider an optimum range of 1200-1500 places for 11-16 year olds to provide curriculum breadth with financial sustainability but not to create schools with 1650 places for 11-16 year olds.
- Parents and pupils need to be reassured that secondary schools of 1200-1500 places can meet the pastoral, social and emotional development needs of 11-16 year olds
- The strong rationale for schools of 1200-1500 places which clearly links raising standards to a broad curriculum and the effective use of sustainable revenue funding needs to be highlighted at the heart of the strategic intent of Kirklees Schools For The Future.

6. Location – schools in the right places, matching projected pupil numbers and reflecting community identity, optimising travel and transport demands

- Review proposal for location of Birkenshaw, Birstall and Gomersal school
- Travel Impact Assessments are required for the next stages of statutory process. These should highlight areas for further work to mitigate the impact, through road improvements, provision of new school buses etc. Increased use of ICT may also reduce carbon impact

7. Parental choice and surplus places

- Review primary and proposed secondary PAAs
- Consider alternative models for secondary PAAs

8. Promoting equalities and social and community cohesion

- Review and update initial Equalities and Community Cohesion Impact Assessments
- Maximise opportunities for bringing communities together and encourage schools to demonstrate a commitment to further work with their communities
- Work with schools to support their legal duty to promote community cohesion and develop strategies, such as a federation and collaboration between schools, to minimise some of the family and community perceptions that can reinforce separation and polarisation

9. Targeting capital resources to raise attainment and target deprivation

- The prioritisation and targeting of developments to raise attainment, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas, will be in the “Strategy For Change” submissions to the DCSF

10. Change management and transition plans

- Work with Headteachers, staff and governors to develop detailed, school specific transition plans to manage the changes in every institution whilst maintaining confidence in the current provision as it evolves and to address the anxieties of parents, young people and staff during the implementation stages of the development process

11. Consolidate 6th form provision to provide curriculum breadth and viability

- Consider developing 6th form provision in Dewsbury

- Review proposals for Heckmondwike Grammar School and Mirfield Free Grammar
- Continue dialogue with governors of Whitcliffe Mount SBEC and St John Fisher CHS to encourage active engagement with the process of improving 6th form provision in North Kirklees to maximise opportunities and outcomes for young people in North Kirklees
- Continue dialogue with Mirfield Free Grammar and Heckmondwike Grammar regarding the development of the proposals for post 16 provision

4. REVISED PROPOSALS

4.1 The issues raised during the main consultation period, and in the alternative proposals received (See **Consultation Outcome Report to Cabinet 12th March 2009 - Annex 1: Appendix 5, and Annex 6**), have led to considerable further discussion over appropriate amendments to the pattern of school provision which should now be taken forward as a basis for further consultation and then fuller development as a set of firm proposals. The discussions have involved Cabinet, other Councillors on a cross-party basis, together with inputs from the wider education community.

4.2 Revised proposals for 11 - 16 provision: Overview

- Move one of the schools to a different location,
- Change pupil numbers at another 5 schools within a new fixed range of 1200 to 1500 places, and
- Re-address issues of single-sex and co-educational provision in Batley.

4.2.1 Map of proposals

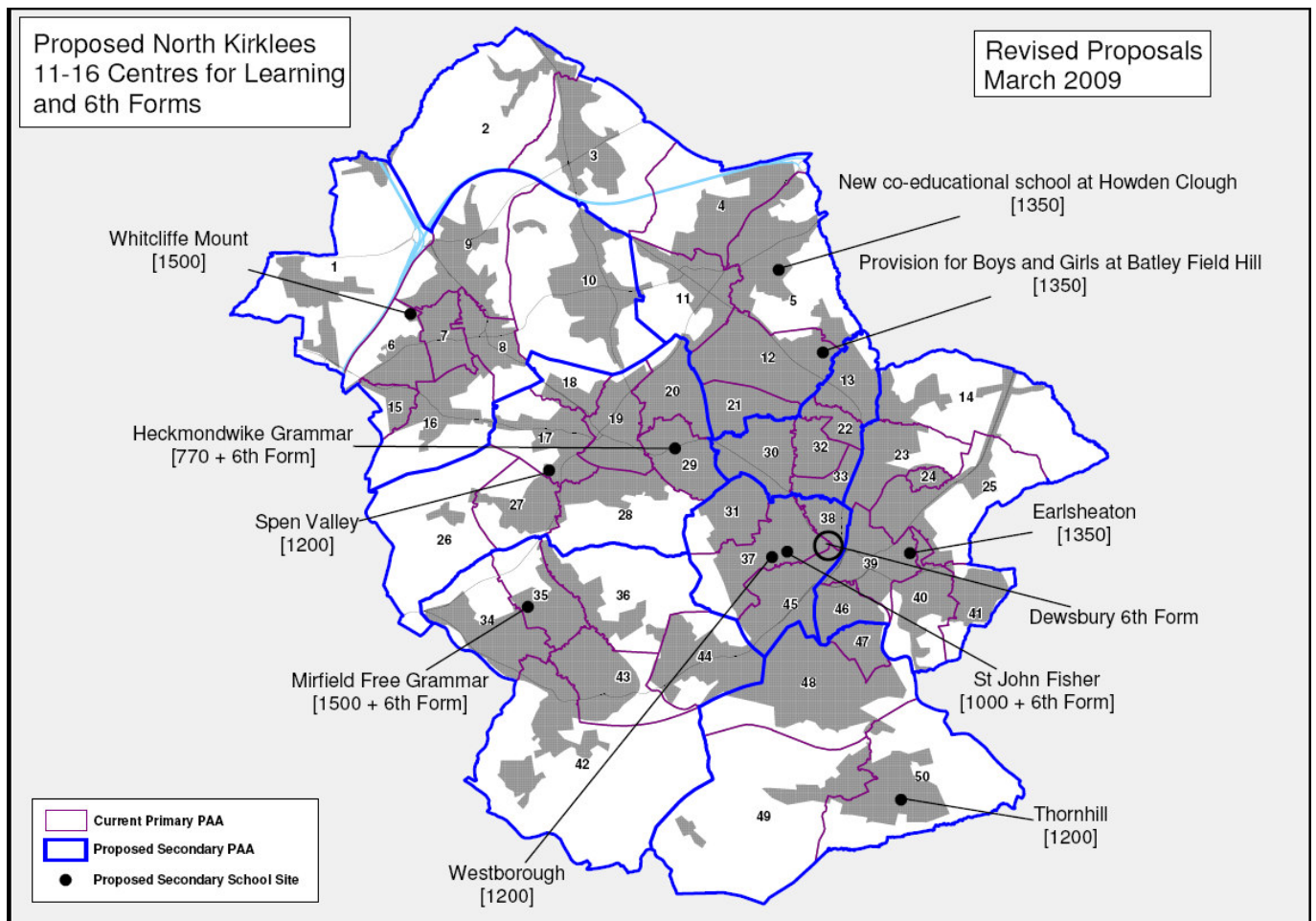


Table 1 shows details of the revised proposals with supporting reasons.

TABLE 1: REVISED PROPOSALS 11-16 PROVISION			
School	Original 11-16 Consultation Proposals	Revised 11-16 Proposals	Reasons for change
Batley Girls' High School (at Howden Clough) Batley Business & Enterprise College - BBEC (at Batley Field Hill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close both schools. Establish a new co-educational school for 1650 pupils on the BBEC site. Linked closure of Birkenshaw and Gomersal Middle Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close Birkenshaw Middle School and consider retaining site for educational purposes Establish a new co-educational school for 1350 pupils on the Howden Clough site to serve Birkenshaw, Birstall and Batley Explore a possible federation with other provision in the locality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong support from Stage 1 consultation for co-educational provision to serve the area.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore further options to meet the demand for single-sex education in North Kirklees through provision for 1350 places for boys and girls on the Batley Field Hill site. Explore a possible federation with other provision in the locality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong support from a significant proportion of the community for separate provision for boys and girls to serve the Batley area Equalities legislation requires equal opportunities for boys and girls
Birkenshaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New build school for 1200 pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No new provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High capital cost of new provision with no compelling educational argument compared to the Howden Clough site Insufficient support for proposal from Birstall area
Whitcliffe Mount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remodel to 1200 pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge to 1500 places for 11-16 year old pupils to serve Cleckheaton and Gomersal Linked to closure of Gomersal, West End and Whitechapel Middle Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarged school accommodates pupils from proposed enlarged secondary PAA which includes pupils from the Gomersal area
Spenn Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 900 to 1200 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 900 to 1200 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change – Kirklees LA requires 1200 places to serve proposed PAA
The Mirfield Free Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 1090 to 1500 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 1090 to 1500 places for 11-16 year olds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to the proposals Kirklees LA requires 1500 places to serve the Mirfield and Ravensthorpe area
Castle Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closure. Develop a short term collaborative transition plan to maintain the quality of provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to the proposals Castle Hall does not fit the proposal for strategic investment in schools of the right size in the communities they serve.
Thornhill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 900 to 1200 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 900 to 1200 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change – Kirklees LA requires 1200 places to serve proposed PAA
Earsheaton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 947 to 1200 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 947 to 1350 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge to serve a larger area of Dewsbury
Westborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close and establish new academy for 1650 pupils on the Westborough site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge from 900 to 1200 and develop as a Trust school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformation can be achieved through Trust arrangement. Residents, Westborough and St John Fisher concerns about the scale of enlargement
Birkdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close and establish new academy for 1650 pupils on the Westborough site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close. Develop a short term collaborative transition plan to maintain the quality of provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birkdale does not fit the proposal for strategic investment in schools of the right size in the communities they serve
Heckmondwike GS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 770 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 770 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to the proposals to retain current pattern of provision
St John Fisher CHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 1000 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 1000 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to the proposals to retain current pattern of provision

4.3 Key changes and issues arising from the proposed revised proposals

- (i) The revised location for the school serving the Birstall, Birkenshaw and Gomersal area, with Gomersal remaining in the Whitcliffe Mount PAA
- (ii) Further options for boys and girls to meet the diverse needs of parents and pupils from all of the Batley communities
- (iii) The proposal that academy status should not be pursued for a 1650 pupil Dewsbury West School and that Westborough High School is now developed as a National Challenge Trust of 1200 pupils.
- (iv) Limit school sizes to a minimum of 1200 places and a maximum of 1500. Change the proposed number of pupil places at 5 schools
- (v) Equalities and Community Cohesion Impact Assessment

4.3 (i) The revised location for the school serving Birkenshaw and Birstall

- The consultation responses indicate strong support from Birkenshaw parents for the proposal to site a new 11-16 school on the Birkenshaw Middle school site. There was much less response over this proposal from Gomersal and Birstall parents and those associated with the current Batley Girls School have argued for its retention.
- The limited support from parents in the Birstall area would suggest that a school on the Birkenshaw Middle School site would not significantly reduce the outflow of pupils to schools in Leeds. In this case, the reduced numbers of pupils likely to travel to the Birkenshaw site would question the viability of a 1200 place school serving the Birkenshaw, Gomersal and Birstall area on the Birkenshaw site which could in turn destabilise neighbouring schools.
- In the long term, there is no compelling educational argument to choose one site over the other. In the short term, transitional arrangements would favour the Batley Girls' site with its existing infrastructure, its currently high and improving standards, its reputation and extensive community services. The confidence of staff, parents and community and the high quality experience of pupils would be maintained by developing provision on the existing Batley Girls' site.
- A number of different analyses have been put forward as to the overall effect of the alternative sites on the cohesion of communities. They are based on assumptions over the assumed patterns of parental choice, both in the Birkenshaw and Birstall areas and in Batley, and over the implications for cross-border flows of pupils. In practice the pattern of parental choice over the long-term is more likely to be affected by the strengths of the school and its approach to the communities it serves rather than its location.
- The difference in the capital cost of providing a high quality 11-16 school on each of the alternative sites is significant.

At current estimates, it is likely to cost at least £30m to build a completely new school on the Birkenshaw site whereas remodelling and refurbishing the existing school building on the Howden Clough site to modern standards would cost approximately £18m. A further consideration is that the overall North Kirklees project has to be achieved within a finite funding allocation. As it is not possible to significantly reduce the cost of a complete new build, the only way to fit within the overall funding envelope would be to tailor the extent of remodelling and refurbishment of the existing buildings in the proposals.

The re-use of the current school building on the Howden Clough site would therefore require at least £12m less than the development of a new school on the

Birkenshaw site. This reduced cost would allow increased expenditure in areas of North Kirklees with more intense educational challenges, significantly enhancing the scope of improvements in all the other existing buildings.

- The primary PAA for Gomersal would be included in the proposed secondary PAA for Whitcliffe Mount which would increase in size and stability to 1500 pupils.

4.3 (ii) Further options for boys and girls to meet the diverse needs of parents and pupils from all of the Batley communities

Since the closure of the formal consultation period in November 2008 there has been a number of discussions with representatives of Muslim parents from the Batley community. Their representatives have set out a case for single sex education and argued strongly for its retention in the town. Their submission is included in the Consultation Outcome Report to Cabinet, 12th March 2009, which sets out alternative proposals received during and after the consultation period. The submission follows receipt of a 7300 signature petition from the community. (see **Consultation Outcome Report to Cabinet, 12th March 2009, Annex 1 Appendix 5, and Annex 6**).

Revised proposals for 11-16 schooling in the town should reflect the needs and wishes of both the Muslim and the non-Muslim Batley communities by recognising the support for single-sex provision and acknowledging the rationale for co-education provision, set out in **Appendix E**.

In developing new proposals we will need to find a combination of single-sex and co-education provision for the area which:

- Raises educational aspirations and attainment
- Advances cohesion
- Makes good use of resources: investment, specialist facilities and expert staff
- Carries the confidence of all elements of the community
- Reflects the legal obligation to treat boys and girls fairly
- Avoids distortions in the balance of admissions in other neighbouring schools in north Kirklees.

The proposals are therefore to

- Enlarge the proposed co-educational provision on the Howden Clough site (set out in the previous section) to 1350 places to serve Batley as well as Birkenshaw and Birstall.
- Continue and conclude the recent discussions which have identified several broad possibilities for providing 1350 pupil places on the Batley Field Hill site (with the possibility of a federation with the school on the Howden Clough site). It is proposed that possibilities should be explored more fully with all communities in Batley to formulate the detailed proposals for a separate 6-week statutory consultation, if possible before the end of the Summer term 2009.

4.3 (iii) Revised proposals for Dewsbury West

- In the Brighter Futures consultation, Academy status was proposed for the secondary school to be located on the Westborough site, as Birkdale and Westborough met the DCSF criteria for Academies. The status was seen as providing a strong basis for a new approach and an opportunity to re-brand the education provided in areas where there is a need to transform standards.
- However, we now consider that a better approach to achieve a transformational re-launch of secondary provision in Dewsbury West, as part of a Dewsbury wide development, would be a 1200 place school on the Westborough site. Where a school is at risk of not achieving the floor target for GCSE results a possible solution is to develop the school as a “National Challenge Trust” School. This would be a foundation school with a foundation composed of agreed Trust members, including strong education partners, which will appoint the majority of governors of the school. The school would have clear and specific plans for raising attainment which will be agreed with the DCSF. This status has the potential to attract significant additional revenue funding for the school.
- In response to concerns raised about the size of the school (1650) in the original proposals it is proposed that this is reduced to 1200.

4.3 (iv) Changes in proposed pupil numbers

The proposed number of places at the 5 schools listed below have been changed to match the projected numbers of 11-16 pupils in the revised PAAs and to take into account the consultation responses:-

- Whitcliffe Mount increased to 1500
- Provision on the Howden Clough site increased to 1350
- Batley provision reduced to 1350
- Westborough reduced to 1200
- Earlsheaton increased to 1350

4.3 (v) Equalities and Community Cohesion Impact Assessment

- An initial Equalities and Community Cohesion Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposals that were consulted on in Autumn 2008 (see **Annex 2 : Consultation Outcome Report to Cabinet 12th March 2009**). The following is a short initial analysis of the likely changes to the impact assessment arising from the revised proposals. The full EIA will continue to be revised in the light of any decision taken by Cabinet re the preferred option, the development of that option and then again following consultation.
- There are no significant changes to the EIAs for the following schools: Birkdale High School, Spen Valley Sports College, The Community Science College@Thornhill, Westborough High School (significant reduction in proposed PAA will be perceived by stakeholders as a positive impact), St John Fisher, and Heckmondwike Grammar School.
- **Earlsheaton** : The revised proposal to increase the number of pupil places at the school by including parts of Savile Town in the PAA is seen as positive in terms of ensuring a more socially and ethnically diverse school population. However, some

Savile Town parents may feel the severance of the area's ties with Westborough and Birkdale High Schools is a negative impact.

- **Whitcliffe Mount** : The revised proposal to increase the number of 11-16 pupil places and to retain Gomersal within the PAA is seen as a positive impact for most stakeholders. A small number of consultees were concerned about existing traffic congestion however the overall change in total pupil places should not impact on traffic congestion. Indeed there will be a reduction of pupils travelling to the school from the furthest away areas i.e. from Birkenshaw, therefore reducing congestion on the area surrounding the school.
- **Mirfield Free Grammar** : The proposed increase in number of pupils is the same as that put forward in the original proposals. The original EIA did not anticipate any positive or negative impact from the proposed increase in size. However, consultation feedback has highlighted that this proposed increase in size is perceived by a number of stakeholders as having a negative impact on site congestion, carbon emissions and a reduction in education standards.
- The revised proposal to create a co-educational school to serve the Birstall, Birkenshaw and Batley communities will have positive impacts in terms of ethnicity, community and social cohesion, SEN, inclusion and disability and remain 'neutral' in terms of religion/belief, age and sexual orientation. For some individuals/groups there could be a negative impact in terms of daily travel, but for others it will be positive.
- The EIA for Batley will be updated as detailed proposals emerge from discussions with the Batley communities.

5. REVISED POST 16 PROPOSALS

Given the responses received and the key messages highlighted above in section 4 it is suggested that the proposals which were contained in the Brighter Futures consultation are revised and consideration is given to the following.

5.1 Table 2 below shows details of the revised proposals for post 16 provision with supporting reasons for amending current proposals contained in the Brighter Futures consultation.

Table 2: Revised Post 16 Proposals			
Post 16 Provision	Consultation Proposal Post 16	Revised Proposals for Post 16 Provision	Reasons for change
Batley Girls' High School and sixth form	Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure • Explore possible outreach provision in the Batley area from the proposed Dewsbury 6th Form College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change in proposed closure • Strong support to retain some provision
Dewsbury	No proposal included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish new provision for a minimum of 400 young people in Dewsbury • Develop the potential to enlarge to 1000+ places • Establish strong collaborative arrangements with other post 16 providers • Establish strong partnerships with 11-16 providers • Develop enhanced post 16 curriculum guidance and support for pupils in North Kirklees linked to 11-16 schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support for North Kirklees post 16 provision located in Dewsbury • An important part of the ambition for the town is the presence of effective post 16 education and training
Heckmondwike Grammar School	Enlarge from 500 to 900 places. Link to MFG through 14-19 Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current planned growth to 500 places in September 2009. • Establish strong collaborative arrangements with other post 16 providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about increase in size, traffic pressures and travel from areas of North Kirklees.
St John Fisher Catholic High School	Explore closure with Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to current provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire by the Diocese and Catholic community to maintain a Catholic faith post 16 provision
The Mirfield Free Grammar and sixth form	Enlarge from 270 to 500 places. Link to HGS through 14-19 Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing Body proposal to enlarge from 270 to 400 places in September 2009. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about increase in size, traffic pressures and travel from areas of North Kirklees. Lack of support for 11 – 16 growth from MFG.
Whitcliffe Mount	Explore closure with Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore closure with Governors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to proposal

5.2 The revival and regeneration of Dewsbury depends on a range of initiatives including infrastructure investment, commercial development and the social regeneration of disadvantaged communities. Underpinning all of these is our investment in young people across North Kirklees. To ensure we provide the very best possible opportunities for our 14 to 19 year olds it is important that we fully understand the varied aspirations of our young people. We will then know how the curriculum and courses of study are to be developed, within an excellent, highly flexible provision available for all. Such provision

within Dewsbury, developed and managed in partnership with the existing post 16 centres of excellence will help lift the ambitions of both young people and the town.

- 5.3** The revised proposals for post 16 provision follow widespread objections to the consultation proposals and a strong argument for a new 6th Form College in Dewsbury. Assuming the continuation of sixth form provision at Heckmondwike Grammar, Mirfield Free Grammar and St John Fisher schools plus the ambitious development and re-launch of Kirklees College in Dewsbury, the largest number of immediately available students would be 400 - 500. This is too few pupils to sustain a stand-alone sixth form college providing a combination of 'A' level study and diploma courses.
- 5.4** The next step in the process of developing post 16 provision in Dewsbury will be to undertake an intensive research and consultation exercise to understand the likely choices of future pupils. The current assessment of the key attributes of what is required suggests a collaborative approach to 14-19 provision. In addition, a key factor is the leadership available as the provision is developed which must be of high quality. Prior to developing the consultation material it is proposed that detailed discussions are undertaken with feeder schools and existing post 16 providers.
- 5.5** The advice and support to young people progressing through this age range must help them to understand their choices, lift their aspirations for career options and show how they can best access training, FE and HE opportunities. There will be strong collaborative relationships with feeder and partner institutions, including all other post 16 providers and 11 to 16 schools in North Kirklees, as well as employers and universities.
- 5.6** Forming formal collaborative arrangements with the existing North Kirklees institutions would help facilitate access to staff and leadership support. This incremental approach will be an important part of developing the reputation of post 16 provision in Dewsbury, so attracting experienced high quality staff and ambitious young people. The potential role of a 400 - 500 unit in Dewsbury, possibly on the Wheelwright site, will be further explored.
- 5.7** **Equality and Community Cohesion Impact Assessment:**

Access to the Dewsbury 6th Form college will draw upon the whole of North Kirklees as its catchment area. The initial research and support to prospective pupils will include a continuous equality impact assessment. This will be undertaken in conjunction with other establishments to ensure the post 16 provision – North Kirklees does not discriminate against any young people. The scope of the 14 to 19 curriculum and training available through the post 16 provision in North Kirklees will help to ensure all young people will be actively engaged in education or training.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL

6.1 Ambition

Young Ambition: The approximately £200M capital funding from DCSF will make a significant contribution towards progressing our Every Child Matters outcomes and addressing issues in the Children and Young People Plan.

Green Ambition: The capital funding will also progress our Green ambition, enabling us to have more sustainable school buildings which will be green in design and operation.

Strong Economy: The proposals for change is aimed to extend and improve 14 to 19 and post 16 provision and create stronger links to local economies

Diversity: Centres for Learning will be at the hearts of their communities and aim to reflect the communities they serve and offer extended and improved facilities for sports, leisure, culture and recreation.

6.2 Human Resources implications

The consultation process and subsequent discussions with groups of staff, and ongoing negotiations with the trade unions has contributed to developing the following approach:

- recognition that all parts of the school community should participate in both the staffing implementation exercise plus the change and leadership programmes
- a database to be developed that holds all the relevant details around staff skills and experience along with each persons career and personal aspirations
- an HR framework to be used across the borough, recognising individuals at risk, ensuring processes are fair, and supporting individuals in terms of their career ambitions and personal aspirations
- these proposals will be put to governing bodies in the Summer term, seeking agreement to fully participate in the HR framework. It is clearly important that the vast majority, if not all, schools participate – so enabling all employment opportunities to be utilised
- following agreement by schools a memorandum of understanding will be drawn up between the Council and the schools community. The terms of the memorandum will provide mechanisms which will facilitate the support to individuals and schools with regard to the very practical implications of the changes

It is recognised that the size and complexity of the change will bring a range of tensions and stress to individuals. Discussions with other neighbouring Councils have shown the pros and cons of various approaches to the implementation of changes in schools. The approach set out above takes lessons from others experience and draws upon the very best of existing arrangements.

6.3 Financial Implications

The major part of the capital funding for the BSF programme comes from Central Government in the form of so-called 'PFI credits' and direct capital grants. In addition, a revenue grant is paid by the government over the life of the contract to meet the capital element of the fee paid by the Council to the PFI provider. A scheme which ultimately costs the same figure as the government approvals should therefore be self financing so far as the improvements to the stock of schools is concerned.

Members should note that BSF funding cannot be used for either site acquisition costs or costs which relate to the provision of another service e.g. highways work outside a school perimeter.

Current estimates suggest that whilst the cost of the revised proposals is likely to be around £14m above the Government allocation, there is provision in the Capital Plan to meet this cost. Any additional costs will need to be met from additional borrowing and the borrowing costs funded from future years' budgets.

7. CONSULTEES AND THEIR OPINIONS

The issues raised during the main consultation period, and in the alternative proposals received (see **Consultation Outcome Report to Cabinet 12th March 2009**), have led to considerable further discussion over appropriate amendments to the pattern of school provision which should now be taken forward as a basis for further consultation and then fuller development as a set of firm proposals. The discussions have involved Cabinet, other Councillors on a cross-party basis, together with some inputs from the wider education community.

8. NEXT STEPS AND INDICATIVE TIMESCALE

Subject to decisions made by Cabinet, the indicative timeline for the next stages of the statutory processes are set out in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3: INDICATIVE TIMELINE FOR STATUTORY PROCESSES	
Date – week commencing	Activity
9 March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek Cabinet approval to re-consult and / or issue relevant statutory notices
20 April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 weeks (including 1 week school holiday) consultation on revised proposals
13 July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report outcomes of the consultation on revised proposals to Cabinet
10 August 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish 1st Competition Notice for new schools and submission of proposals – this is an invitation to interested parties to bring forward proposals for setting up the new schools (4 months allowed)
7 September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish statutory notices for schools where prescribed alterations are proposed that Members have determined can proceed for 6 week representation period
19 October 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-week representation period ends. School Organisation Advisory Group (SOAG) and then Cabinet have to meet and decide proposals within 2 months of this date i.e. before w/c 19 December
End of December (to 1 February 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of 2nd Competition Notice – to publish all the proposals submitted to the LA for presentation to the community (with relevant public meeting/s)
February / March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report outcome of the 2nd competition notice and decide proposals (where the LA is not the proposer or it does not have an interest in a Trust school bid) Local authority refers proposals to the schools adjudicator for a decision, if it is the proposer or has an interest in a Trust school bid
To be determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement proposals - which may involve in publishing a statutory notice regarding changes/closures of schools - subject to any modifications agreed by the local authority or schools adjudicator appointed by DCSF

These dates are subject to change and will be revisited after the Cabinet decision is made.

9. OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 9.1 Consider the key messages, conclusions and direction for the future arising from the Autumn 2008 'Brighter futures' consultation as set out in section 3.
- 9.2 Agree and proceed with the revised 11-16 proposals following the next stages of the statutory process set out in Table 4 below:

TABLE 4: REVISED PROPOSALS for 11-16 PROVISION : Next Steps		
Proposed 11-16 Provision	11 to 16 pupil numbers	Statutory Processes and Next Steps
New co-ed school on Howden Clough site	1350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-consult on the revised proposal to establish a new school by competition, with the specification to include the suggestion that the new school would federate with the provision at Field Hill, Batley. Re-consult on the linked proposal to close Birkenshaw Middle School [These proposals take account of the proposed move or closure of Batley Girls' High School – Visual Arts College]
Provision for boys and girls at Field Hill, Batley	1350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue discussions to develop a detailed proposal for 1350 pupils on the Batley, Field Hill site, to be followed by statutory consultation Suggestion that the provision would join a federation with the new co-educational school at Howden Clough.
Whitcliffe Mount	1500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-consult on the revised proposal to increase the size of the school to 1500 11-16 places. Re-consult on the linked proposals to close Gomersal, West End and Whitechapel Middle Schools
Spenn Valley	1200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to statutory notice to increase the size of Spenn Valley to 1200 places
Mirfield Free Grammar	1500 + 6 th form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA not required to re-consult on proposal to increase number of 11-16 places to 1500. Proceed to statutory notice. Governing Body need to carry out statutory consultation on proposed increase from 270 to 400 places in the 6th form.
Castle Hall	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to statutory notice for closure Develop short term collaborative arrangements to maintain the quality of provision
Thornhill	1200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to statutory notice to increase the size of Thornhill to 1200 places
Earlsheaton	1350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-consult on the proposal to increase the size of Earlsheaton to 1350 places
Westborough	1200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on the proposal to enlarge the school to 1200 places Work with the Governing Body to establish Trust status
Birkdale	none	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-consult on proposal for closure Develop short term collaborative arrangements to maintain the quality of provision
St John Fisher	1000 +6 th form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No proposed change to current provision. No re-consultation necessary
Heckmondwike Grammar	770 + 6 th form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No proposed change to current provision. No re-consultation necessary

- 9.3** Proceed with the revised post-16 proposals following the next stages and the statutory processes set out in Table 5 below:

Table 5: REVISED PROPOSALS for Post 16 PROVISION : Next Steps	
Post 16 Provision	Next Steps and Statutory Processes
Batley Girls High School - Visual Arts College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring forward proposals to close the sixth form • Explore possible outreach provision from new Dewsbury 6th Form College
North Kirklees Post 16 Provision in Dewsbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop plans for new Dewsbury 6th Form College for a minimum of 400 young people and bring forward detailed plans for statutory consultation in Autumn 2009 • Establish strong collaborative arrangements with other post 16 providers • Establish strong partnerships with 11-16 providers • Develop enhanced post 16 curriculum guidance and support for pupils in North Kirklees linked to 11-16 schools.
Heckmondwike Grammar School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current planned growth to 500 places in September 2009. • Develop collaborative arrangements with other post-16 providers
St John Fisher Catholic High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to the current planned sixth form provision
The Mirfield Free Grammar and Sixth Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory consultation by the Governing Body regarding their proposal to enlarge to establish 400 places in September 2009.
Whitcliffe Mount – Specialist Business & Enterprise College (VC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the governing body to propose the closure of sixth form provision at Whitcliffe Mount – Specialist Business & Enterprise College (VC)

- 9.4** Bring forward revised proposals for the primary provision in the Whitcliffe Mount pyramid as soon as possible.
- 9.5** Authorise officers to develop implementation proposals for those elements of the Brighter futures proposals that are confirmed by their preferred options
- 9.6** Delegate authority to the Cabinet Portfolio leads and the Director for Children and Young People to
- develop further consultation materials on the basis of the revised proposals, where the proposals differ significantly from those set out in the 'Brighter futures' materials
 - organise and carry out statutory consultation on the revised proposals commencing at the beginning of the school summer term 2009 and following the schedule set out in table 3 on page 18.
 - report the outcomes of the consultation to Cabinet by July 2009 for further consideration of the next steps.
- 9.7** Request that the continuing discussions in the Batley area pay particular regard to issues relating to the balance of single sex and co-education provisions, that the discussions allow full exploration of alternative ways forward and that the consultations include all parts of the community

10. RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, Cllr J Smithson and Cllr K Smith

We, the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, support the recommendations set out by officers in the previous section of this report.

We set out below the considerations which have led to our arriving at this position. We will consider any further material matters that are brought to our attention in advance of, and during, the Cabinet meeting on 12 March and will make our final, oral, recommendations at the end of the discussion of this item at the meeting.

The Purpose of the BSF Programme in North Kirklees

There is a serious, and urgent, need to significantly improve and enhance the overall educational opportunities and achievements of all children and students in North Kirklees. We give full credit to the management and governance of our existing High Schools who have achieved some impressive advances in recent years but despite this effort standards are not improving fast enough.

Overall Strategy

The current pattern of school provision and resourcing is not adequate for purpose and the step change that is required to the much-needed higher achievement cannot be made without radical change. This is where the Building Schools for the Future programme offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to address this situation effectively, on a strategic basis.

We are committed to ensuring that all the future high schools will:

- a. offer high quality education to all
- b. provide a full broad curriculum
- c. be financially viable and therefore have future security
- d. have high quality facilities
- e. be welcoming and comfortable for all students and community users
- f. strengthen community cohesion
- g. enhance carbon efficiency as much as possible

We believe that the approximately £200 million offered by the government (plus an additional contribution of £14 million from Kirklees) coupled with a continuation of the able and committed management and governance shown by the existing schools, will ensure that this opportunity is grasped and developed in the most effective way possible.

Sixth Form Education

A key improvement is required in post 16 education and provision. Far too many North Kirklees' students have to travel daily out of the area and, even worse, far too many opt out of further and higher education altogether. We are minded to recommend that the way to address this situation is through a 6th form college based in Dewsbury, in partnership with the existing post 16 provision in colleges and schools in north and south Kirklees. We also want to engage Huddersfield University in this enterprise and through all these partners ensure that post-16 education in North Kirklees has the quality and status it most definitely needs.

We are proposing a 6th Form College in Dewsbury with an initial intake of some 400 to 500 students, expanding as rapidly as possible to 1,000 plus.

High School Re-organisation

Changes to the pattern of provision for 11-16 year olds are required. Too many of our high schools struggle to achieve financial stability, which can seriously restrict the range of curriculum provision and student support. We need to have High Schools that are financially viable, offer a full and broad curriculum and feel welcoming and comfortable to all students.

Our first consideration was the optimum size of future high schools. Given our objectives and the educational advice and experience, together with the overall resources available, we feel that an average size of 1,350 school places with a range from a minimum of 1,200 to a maximum of 1,500 is the right approach. This equates to 8 high schools plus Heckmondwike Grammar School and St John Fisher Catholic High School.

We next considered the catchment areas (planned admission areas or PAAs) for high schools, taking into account, as far as possible, local geography and parental preferences.

We also looked at the finance available and believe that it would not be possible, or necessary, to create completely new schools on alternative sites. There were in any case very few new sites potentially available. This means that we are proposing that any new high school buildings would be located on existing high school sites.

High Schools and Sites Requiring Further Consultation

The locations and school place numbers we recommend for consultation are the sites of the following existing High Schools:

Existing School / Site	Proposed number of 11-16 places
Earlsheaton, Dewsbury	1,350
New school at Howden Clough (current site of Batley Girls' HS)	1,350
Provision at Field Hill, Batley (current site of Batley BEC)	1,350
Westborough, Dewsbury	1,200
Whitcliffe Mount, Cleckheaton	1,500

As promised, we give an explanation of each of our proposals:

Earlsheaton, Dewsbury

This is one of the better sites we have and there is enough space to create a larger school than the initial proposal of 1200 places. We are therefore proposing to increase it to 1350 places. This would also have the advantage of enabling the catchment area to be widened, and create a more ethnically balanced intake.

New School at Howden Clough (currently Batley Girls' High School):

We propose that this would become a new 1350 place co-educational school. We have considered carefully the desire of many parents from Birkenshaw to have their own local High School but have not felt able to support this suggestion. Our considerations were based on:

- a. **The Need:** We do not accept that there is any real need. Howden Clough is less than 3 miles from Birkenshaw, which is not an unreasonable distance for high school students to travel.
- b. **The Cost:** A new high school in Birkenshaw would cost at least an extra £12 million without any extra educational benefit and could be seen to be an extravagance and an ineffective use of scarce resources.

- c. **The Catchment Area:** The most suitable catchment area for a school in this area includes Birstall, Birkenshaw and parts of Batley. The population distribution is weighted more to the Birstall end rather than the Birkenshaw end.

Provision at Field Hill, Batley (currently Batley Business & Enterprise College):

We are exploring options to provide a total of 1350 places with a configuration that would embrace separate provision for boys and girls. We are well aware of the very strong desire within parts of the community to retain single sex education. We have also had a number of broad suggestions from within the community, which require further consideration during the consultation period.

Westborough, Dewsbury

Westborough and Birkdale High Schools currently operate in central Dewsbury. However, numbers show that only one school is required. While neither site is ideal, Birkdale is too small and in any case we may be proposing the new Dewsbury 6th Form College to be adjacent to this site. We are therefore proposing a 1200 place High School on the Westborough site. This is a significant reduction from the 1650 in the initial consultation document which takes into account the constraints of having two high schools on the same site.

Whitcliffe Mount:

We propose increasing the size to 1500 places for 11-16 year olds, but otherwise there is no change from the initial proposal put out to consultation. The increase is due to student numbers within the proposed catchment area and is also supported by the school. There would be an expectation that the 6th form would close and the students transfer to the new Dewsbury 6th Form College.

High Schools and Sites Ready to Proceed to Statutory Notices

We recommend proceeding to statutory notices to increase the size of the following existing High Schools:

Existing School / Site	Proposed number of 11-16 places
Mirfield Free Grammar School	1,500
Spen Valley	1,200
Thornhill, Dewsbury	1,200

Mirfield Free Grammar

Currently there are two high schools in Mirfield, but the collective intakes contain over 50% of students from outside the area. This shows that only one high school is needed and as the Castle Hall site is too small to accommodate a larger school, it is proposed for closure thus retaining Mirfield Free Grammar School. Our proposal is for a school of 1500 places as in the original proposal.

Given the high quality of Mirfield Free Grammar School’s governance and management, as demonstrated by the very impressive progress over the last few years, we have no doubts about their ability to accommodate this growth while still retaining the high quality of the education offered.

We are also aware of the parental pressure to keep Castle Hall High School open. This is understandable but unrealistic in strategic and future viability terms and we are confident that the quality of education provided in Mirfield would be maintained.

Spen Valley

This school is suitably located for its proposed catchment area and we support the previous proposal to retain this site with a 1200 place High School.

Thornhill, Dewsbury

We do not propose any changes from the proposal in the original consultation document. The site, while not ideal, is suitable for a school of 1200 places, which is the number required in this area. An alternative suggestion to construct new high school buildings adjacent to Ravenshall Special School has been considered but ruled out because there is no compelling educational argument compared to the existing site and the high capital cost would have a negative impact on all the other schools in the programme.

Summary Conclusion

Our proposals would mean a radical change to the structure of education at secondary and post 16 across the whole of North Kirklees. We make no apology for this: indeed, we believe that it is long overdue, and the Building Schools for the Future has at last provided the opportunity to carry out these much-needed changes.

Additionally, we anticipate that the proposed re-organisation will, in due course, release significant revenue funding to schools to strengthen their educational offer.

Despite the noble efforts of those engaged in education, the overall picture in North Kirklees is one of insufficient progress. There are exceptions, but inadequate buildings and resources and a poor pattern of provision have limited the improvements in quality and level needed to raise the aspirations and achievements of the vast majority of our young people.

We are seeking to address this strategically and with the continued support and effort of those involved, we are confident that these proposals will succeed in raising standards and achievement for all students.

For the above reasons we recommend that the officers recommendations are supported.

Signed:

John Smithson

Ken Smith

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Schools for the Future Vision for Learning
2. Cabinet 28/11/07: Detailed Report on the outcome of the first stage formal consultation on issues and school organisation strategies related to the future pattern of secondary schools in Batley and Dewsbury
3. Cabinet 16/1/08: Detailed Report on the outcome of the first stage formal consultation on a review of schools in the Whitcliffe Mount Pyramid.
4. Cabinet Report, September 16th 2008 - "Schools for the Future consultation: 'Brighter futures – for our children and young people' – proposals for secondary centres for learning in north Kirklees and primary centres for learning in the Whitcliffe Mount pyramid
5. Cabinet Report, March 12th 2009 – Report on the Outcomes of the Schools for the Future Consultation: Brighter futures – for our children and young people"
6. Brighter Futures Consultation Documents:
 - Overview document: "**Brighter futures for our children and young people**"
 - Brighter futures - **Batley and Birkenshaw, Birstall & Gomersal**. A consultation document on the future of secondary education.
 - Brighter futures - **Birkenshaw, Birstall & Gomersal**. A consultation document on the future of primary and secondary education
 - Brighter futures - **Cleckheaton**. A consultation document on the future of primary and secondary education
 - Brighter futures - **Dewsbury**. A consultation document on the future of secondary education.
 - Brighter futures - **Heckmondwike, Liversedge, Mirfield and Ravensthorpe**. A consultation document on the future of secondary education.