

Name of meeting: Cabinet

Date: 29th May 2019

Title of report: Future options for Almondbury Community School – Outcome Report

Purpose of report: The report presents Cabinet with the outcomes from the non-statutory consultation ‘Future options for Almondbury Community School: The basic need for school places across Huddersfield South & East and South West’ and seeks approval to formally propose alterations to the school by reducing the age range from 3 to 16 years to 3 to 11 years; and to change the planned admission number of the school.

Key Decision - 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
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Yes
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Mel Meggs Date 20th May 2019
Is it also signed off by the Service Director (Finance)?	Eamonn Croston Date 20th May 2019
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft (John Chapman) Date 20th May 2019
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Masood Ahmed – Schools and Aspiration Cllr Viv Kendrick – Children’s Services

Electoral wards affected: Almondbury

Ward councillors consulted: Yes

Public or private: Public

Kirklees Council’s absolute priority in bringing forward these proposals is to help children and young people fulfil their potential. It wants all children to have the best start in life and to benefit from excellent standards of care and education, both now and in the future.

The Council recognises there is uncertainty for many families and its aim is to reach a final decision on these proposals as quickly as possible. If the changes are eventually approved, all affected families will continue to be offered personal support so that transitions are smooth and any disruption is minimal.

Almondbury Community School is, like all of Kirklees schools, a vital part of the local community in which it resides. The Council recognises this and the passion its staff, pupils and parents have for it. It has taken this into consideration in the proposals presented within this paper and wants to extend its thanks to all who have taken the time to participate in the consultation it has undertaken.

It is vitally important for local children to experience a broad curriculum in a setting which is secure and sustainable for the long term. The Council knows this can have a major impact on young people achieving their desired outcomes, enhancing their opportunities in life. This has been its intention from the start of this process. It wants what is best for Kirklees’ children so they are guaranteed the best start in life. Sometimes this entails taking tough decisions that some may not approve of. The following paper details the Council’s proposals to deliver this start.

1. Summary

1.1. Meeting of Kirklees Council Cabinet – 19th March 2019

On 19 March 2019 (and following an Ofsted inspection at the school) Kirklees Council Cabinet authorised officers to undertake a non-statutory consultation about future options for Almondbury Community School in the context of the wider basic need for school places across Huddersfield South East and South West. The rationale for undertaking the non-statutory consultation are set out in the report in March, but briefly this was because;

- Numbers on roll at Almondbury Community School have been for a number of years, consistently lower than the number of available places, currently in most year groups Almondbury Community School is undersubscribed between 40-60%.
- As the funding for schools is predominantly driven by the numbers of pupils on roll, this has resulted in lower rates of income which has contributed to some significant challenges in balancing a budget. This in turn impacts on the breadth of curriculum and educational offer that can be provided in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the outcomes for pupil attainment.
- On the 11 February 2019, following an inspection in December 2018, Almondbury Community School was judged by Ofsted as requiring Special Measures. The Secretary of State for Education has a duty under Section 4(A1) of the Academies Act 2010, (as inserted by the Education and Adoption Act 2016), to intervene where a school is eligible for intervention and make an Academy order to allow it to become a sponsored academy as part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The Secretary of State's powers in this area are exercised by Regional School Commissioners (RSC).
- However, finding a Multi Academy Trust sponsor for Almondbury Community School in its current form would be very difficult when due diligence processes are undertaken due to low pupil numbers and the associated budget challenges enabling a sustainable educational offer both now, and into the future when taking into account the future child population requiring school places and the number of available places in the Huddersfield South East and South West area.
- There are opportunities to provide enough high quality, inclusive school places for children in a different way.

A number of issues were considered at the meeting and having considered that Cabinet agreed as follows;

- That Officers be authorised to develop plans for consultation to retain Almondbury Community School with the removal of the secondary phase (Key Stages 3 and 4), consolidate the school as a 210 place primary provision (with nursery) in the Key Stage 1 building at Fernside Avenue and seek an Academy Sponsor, in partnership with and approved by the RSC, in order to retain necessary Key Stage 1 and 2 places for Almondbury and the wider Huddersfield South East area.
- That authority be delegated to the Director for Children's Services, in consultation with Cabinet Portfolio Holders, to (i) develop consultation materials on the basis of the proposals and (ii) organise and carry out a non-statutory consultation about the proposals.
- That Officers be authorised to work with neighbouring schools (King James's School and Newsome High School) to explore their willingness for the realignment of the existing Almondbury Community School secondary Priority Admission Area in order that future children have priority for their secondary education in one of the neighbouring secondary schools.

- That Officers be authorised to work with King James’s Academy Trust to assess the level of capital investment that would be required to enable King James’s School to create 30 additional planned places from September 2020.
- That Officers be authorised to assess the level of investment that would be required to enable the existing Key Stage 1 building of Almondbury Community School on Fernside Avenue to be utilised by the revised age range.
- That the outcomes of the non-statutory consultation be submitted to Cabinet for further consideration of next steps.
- That it be noted that the school is a PFI school and to request that Officers provide a future report on the impact of changes upon the future use of the site and options for the use of the site/buildings.

1.2. The proposals that were the subject of the non-statutory consultation

In line with the decision taken at Cabinet on the 19th March, the following proposals were developed to enable a non-statutory consultation to take place. The proposals that were consulted upon were to;

- Change the age range of the school from age 3 –16 years to age 3 – 11 years (to be implemented from September 2020).
- Change the planned admission number of the primary phase from 60 (KS1) and 110 (KS2) to 30 (starting from September 2020) in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, thereby resulting in 210 places across Reception to Year 6 (to be phased in over time).
- Admit no new pupils into year 7 from September 2020.

The proposals acknowledged that this would also require the Council to;

- Work with neighbouring schools (King James’s School and Newsome High School) to realign the existing Almondbury Community School secondary Priority Admission Area (PAA) so that future children have priority for their secondary education in one of the neighbouring secondary schools by;
 - King James’s School changing their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission areas of Almondbury Community School and All Hallows’ CE(VA) Primary School
 - Newsome High School changing their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission area of Lowerhouses CE(VC) J, I and EY School.
- Explore the opportunity to work with King James’s School to create 30 additional planned places from September 2020 (so that over time there are an additional 150 secondary places at the school i.e. 5 year groups x 30 places). This modest increase in places would ensure sufficient local secondary school places are available for the future to serve the Almondbury area and recognise that significant numbers of pupils living in Almondbury already attend this school each year. To achieve this there would need to be capital investment in the school buildings.
- Work with the Regional Schools Commissioner who would secure an Academy sponsor for Almondbury Community School as a future primary school.
- Consolidate Almondbury Community School as a future primary school into the current KS1 building on Fernside Avenue.

This report details the methodology undertaken and the feedback received from the non-statutory consultation. The report provides information for Kirklees Council Cabinet in relation to the Academy order that has been issued by the Department for Education and makes recommendations about proposed next steps.

2. Information required to take a decision

2.1. The statutory process for school re-organisation

School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, require a statutory process be followed set out by law when making certain changes to a Local Authority Maintained school. The Department for Education (DfE) publish Guidance for such changes, '*Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools: Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers - October 2018*'. The regulations state that because Almondbury Community School is a Community school, Kirklees Council can propose these changes, and, as long as published proposals are determined within 2 months of the end of a statutory representation period, the Council is the decision maker.

The DfE Guidance explains that as the proposer the LA must follow the four stage statutory process set out below;

Stage	Description	Timescale	Comments
Stage 1	Publication (statutory proposal/notice)		
Stage 2	Representation (formal consultation)	Must be 4 weeks	As set out in the 'Prescribed Alterations' regulations
Stage 3	Decision	LA should decide a proposal within 2 months otherwise it will fall to the Schools Adjudicator	Any appeal to the adjudicator must be made within 4 weeks of the decision
Stage 4	Implementation	No prescribed timescale	It must be as specified in the published statutory notice, subject to any modifications agreed by the decision-maker

The DfE Guidance states that '*Although there is no longer a statutory 'pre-publication' consultation period for prescribed alteration changes, there is a strong expectation that schools and LAs will consult interested parties in developing their proposal prior to publication, to take into account all relevant considerations.*' (page 26)

2.1.1. It was agreed that a non-statutory consultation would take place with key stakeholders to enable them to have the opportunity to engage with and comment on the proposals. At the meeting on the 19 March 2019, members requested that officers report the outcomes of the non-statutory consultation to Kirklees Council Cabinet for further consideration of the next steps.

2.2. Non-statutory consultation - Consultation Strategy and Methodology

A four week non-statutory consultation about the proposals took place between 27 March 2019 and 23 April 2019, to seek the views of parents/carers, school staff, professionals, ward members, wider community stakeholders and other interested parties.

2.2.1. A consultation document was prepared to support the non-statutory consultation; '*Future options for Almondbury Community School: The basic need for school places across Huddersfield South & East and South West*'. The 'Digital

by Design' approach was adopted to bring processes into line with current council policies and the consultation document was published on the Council's website. Letters were sent to the families of pupils at Almondbury Community School, with a link to the web page where the document could be accessed. Letters with the link to the web page were also sent to school staff, neighbouring schools, ward members, MPs, the Church of England Diocese of Leeds, neighbouring Local Authorities and other key stakeholders. Paper copies were also made available at consultation events and upon request. Copies of the consultation document were sent to Trade Union representatives and libraries in the area. A brief outline and a link to the consultation was published on weekly Headteacher and Governors bulletin. A complete distribution list is attached at Appendix A.

2.2.2. A copy of the consultation document '*Future options for Almondbury Community School: The basic need for school places across Huddersfield South & East and South West*' can be found at Appendix B.

2.2.3. The consultation document outlined the proposals and a proposed timeline for developments. A comprehensive paper and online response sheet was available on the Council website. The response sheet asked for feedback using six questions relating to the proposal. The consultation document had a feedback form that was designed to enable qualitative and quantitative feedback by asking respondents to explain why they had selected a particular answer. In addition question were asked to ascertain the type of stakeholder responding. The questions that were in the consultation document were;

- **Q1.** Do you support or oppose the proposals to remove the secondary phase of Almondbury Community School by lowering the age range of the school from age 3 –16 years to age 3 – 11 years?
- **Q2.** Do you support or oppose the proposals to change the planned admission number of the Almondbury Community School primary phase from 60 (Key Stage 1) and 110 (Key Stage 2) to 30 in both Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 from September 2020?
- **Q3.** Do you support or oppose the proposals for King James's School to change their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission areas of Area 1, Almondbury Community School and Area 2, All Hallows CE (VA) Primary School?
- **Q4.** Do you support or oppose the proposals for Newsome High School to change their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission area of Area 3, Lowerhouses CE (VC) J, I and EY School?
- **Q5.** Which secondary school catchment area would you prefer Area 4, part of Moldgreen Community Primary School primary school catchment area, to join?
- **Q6.** Which secondary school catchment area would you prefer Area 5, part of Dalton School primary school catchment area, to join?

(NB. Areas 1-5 were illustrated on a map in the consultation document which is included in Appendix B)

2.2.4. Response forms could be completed electronically on the Council website. In addition, individuals were encouraged to feedback views either via email or letter.

A 'Freepost' address was available for returning paper forms and/or letters to maximise the opportunities for receiving feedback to the proposals.

2.2.5. The Council held a number of consultation meetings and engagement opportunities. These consisted of 'drop-in' sessions and bespoke one to one meetings for parents/carers who have children at the high school and parents/carers who had been allocated a year 7 place at Almondbury Community School for September 2019. This provided parents with a personalised opportunity to speak with officers about the proposals in more detail and in particular how they may be affected. Details of this engagement are provided in Appendix C.

2.2.6. A bespoke meeting for staff at Almondbury Community School was held on the 11th April 2019 with Council Officers. At the staff meeting there were approximately 55 attendees and 4 trade union representatives. Learning and Human Resources officers were in attendance to answer any questions about the proposal. Notes of this meeting can be found at Appendix D.

2.2.7. The Council received 358 responses, as well as a petition in relation to this consultation. All responses are included in full in Appendix E. The types of stakeholders responding to the consultation are detailed in the table below.

Summary of Consultation Responses	
Consultation Responses	Responses
Parent/Carers	240
Governor / Governing Bodies	4
Member of staff	34
Pupils	24
Local resident	33
Other	21
Not stated	2
TOTAL	358

2.2.8. The Council has formally accepted a petition 'Petition against closure of Almondbury Community School' / 'Save our school and jobs from closing'. The petition contains 1254 entries. 452 signatures can be registered on the Council's website as valid signatures under the [Council's Petitions Scheme](#) due to missing information on the other entries, however, the petition is indicative of the strength of feeling in support of Almondbury Community School and is taken into consideration as part of the consultation outcomes.

2.3. Summary of feedback received from the Consultation

All consultation responses received have been set out in full at Appendix E. The responses have been analysed to identify key themes and these have been summarised along with an officer commentary below.

Q1) Do you support or oppose the proposals to remove the secondary phase of Almondbury Community School by lowering the age range of the school from age 3 –16 years to age 3 – 11 years?							
Stakeholder	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know	Total
Parent/Carers	14	11	5	29	177	3	238
Governing Bodies			2		1		3
Member of staff	1	1	2	3	27		34
Pupils	1		1	6	14	1	23
Local resident	2	2	1	2	26		33
Other	1		2	1	16		20
Not stated				1			1
Total	19	14	13	42	261	4	353

Key Theme: High school phase unviable in the long term	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is recognition amongst some respondents that Almondbury Community School is unviable and unable to turn things around quickly enough. • A small number of respondents accept that the school is financially unviable with falling numbers. • A number of respondents agreed that due to the falling numbers on roll a broad range of curriculum could not be delivered at that school and this was disadvantaging the children at the school. However some respondents saw this as a positive as small numbers create a more nurtured environment and pupils have more support. • A few respondent questioned why the LA allowed and supported King James's School to increase its PAN which has led to the falling numbers at Almondbury Community School. • A large number of respondents asked about the timing of Ofsted inspecting the school so soon after another and why the school was not given more time to turn things around? • Some respondents believed that this proposal had led to pupils and staff 	<p>The last time King James's School increased their PAN was more than 10 years ago when the Local Authority was the admission authority. With the passing of time it is difficult to comment on the rationale which supported decision making at that time.</p> <p>The timing of an Ofsted visit is not something the Council can influence or provide insight into. Ofsted are able to inspect a school in circumstances as is outlined in the Ofsted inspection framework.</p> <p>There is evidence of relatively small numbers of pupils and staff leaving. Leadership arrangements are in place at the school to lead and manage stability.</p>

<p>leaving which is creating instability at the school.</p>	
<p>Key Theme: Creation of the all-through school</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of respondents feel disappointed as the all-through school was a proposal that many perceived was forced on them but respondents expressed that they had made it work and saw the benefit of the all-through school. Respondents with children at the all-through school stated that the system worked as all the children were in one school, this led to a better transition from each key stage as children were familiar with staff and the building. • Many respondents were unhappy with the Local Authority as they stated it did not intervene earlier to help the school. • Some respondents believe that the LA has invested in the school and should continue to do this. One suggestion was investment in better technology which would help students learn. • A number of respondents stated that children who live in the local area attend the school; if the LA remove the secondary phase then there would not be a local high school. • A small number of respondents believed that by having a stringent governing body and new leadership and staff then things could be improved. • A number of respondents questioned why the LA has not converted the school to an Academy or looked at 	<p>There many advantages for all through schools and it is regrettable that the number of pupils attending Almondbury Community School have not increased as expected when the previous proposals were made and decisions made. Pupil numbers are a significant factor which has led to Almondbury Community School being in a very difficult position.</p> <p>The Local Authority has invested School Improvement funding over a number of years and provided both significant challenge and support to secure the future of Almondbury Community School.</p> <p>The national schools funding formula which is primarily based upon pupil numbers provides limited flexibility for councils to support unviable schools. The investment in technology would not change Almondbury Community School being in a very difficult position.</p> <p>A distance of up to three miles is normally considered to be a reasonable distance for a secondary school place. If the proposal are agreed there would be one or more school(s) within this distance for all families living in the current secondary school catchment area of Almondbury Community School.</p> <p>The school is in a difficult position with a combination of not being educationally sustainable and financially viable and an Ofsted judgement which requires an Academy solution. Whilst leadership and governance has been strengthened to support existing pupils, this does not resolve the long term challenges which predominantly are attributed to low pupil numbers.</p> <p>It is the Regional Schools Commissioner, on behalf of the Secretary of State that issues Academy orders, not the council. As it is legally required to do so, the council</p>

<p>ways the school could work in partnership with King James's School as a co-operative model, King James's School to work on a split site.</p>	<p>engages with the Department for Education to discuss the characteristics of a school, including numbers on roll, the financial position of the school and longer term pupil forecasts. The viability of the school means that it would be very difficult to find an approved Academy sponsor in the school's current form.</p> <p>Whilst the council is not the decision maker for King James's School there is continuing dialogue with this and other neighbouring secondary schools about how transition could be well planned if the proposals are approved.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Impact on other schools</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many respondents had concerns about neighbouring schools being oversubscribed already, and in the case of King James's School that corridors and dining facilities are not suitable even for current pupil numbers. • Respondents asked what the LA would do to ensure that the quality of teaching is maintained at other local schools if they were to accept the pupils from Almondbury Community School. • A large number of respondents were concerned that a sudden influx of dispersed pupils could cause falling standards at the neighbouring schools. • Some respondents were concerned about how fast these proposals were moving without having secured the additional places at King James's School. • A number of respondents questioned why parents would send pupils to another struggling high school in the area. 	<p>There are opportunities to work with King James's to provide an additional 30 places per year group which would support future parental preferences for the school. It is recognised that any expansion would require capital investment to ensure the facilities would be fit for purpose for the size of the school.</p> <p>If the proposals are agreed, transitional support would be an important element to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the quality of teaching and educational standards.</p> <p>The decision timeline is intended to provide parents with certainty at the earliest opportunity. There are opportunities to work with King James's to provide an additional 30 places per year group which would support future parental preferences for the school. Proposed transitional arrangements are included for consideration should the decision be made to move to the next stage of the process.</p> <p>There are three neighbouring local high schools referred to in the consultation: King James's School and Netherhall Learning Campus High School are judged by Ofsted to be 'good'. Newsome High School has been judged by Ofsted to have serious weaknesses, however the Ofsted report recognises the improvement journey it has been on for some time since the appointment of a new Headteacher and has the capacity to improve. Newsome has a viable budget to offer a wide curriculum and continue the improvement journey.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents questioned why All Hallows' was allowed to become an all-through primary school as this has had a detrimental impact on Almondbury Community School in Key Stage 2. Respondents believed that if the pupils came in at Key Stage 2 then they would have continued to high school phase. • A small number of respondents highlighted that schools that they would like were in the 3 tier system which would be difficult to get a school place for year 7 and 8. • Some respondents argued that Almondbury Community School has physical capacity and did not want King James's School to build on green belt or for more money to be spent to create additional places. 	<p>This was not a decision supported by the council because of the likely detrimental impact on neighbouring schools like Almondbury Community School in terms of increasing the number of places available. The Council did not approve those proposals but following an appeal, the School's Adjudicator did not uphold the Council's decision. However, this is just one of a number of contributing factors which has led to Almondbury Community School being in a very difficult position.</p> <p>This would depend on the circumstances of the family e.g. where they live and the circumstances of the preferred school e.g. how full they were and their oversubscription criteria. Parents and carers would be supported to discuss all their options in securing alternative school places, as is the case now.</p> <p>Almondbury Community School is in a very difficult position in relation to sustainability, there is physical capacity at the school but there are insufficient numbers of pupils attending the school. Families are choosing other schools for their children's education. There are overall more school places available than there are children of school age across the wider Huddersfield south east and south west area. Building on green belt is subject to a planning process.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Location of other high schools</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several respondents stated the village needs a community, and the school currently provides this. • A number of respondents stated that removing the high school phase in the area would disadvantage parents who live close to the school as they would have to go to high school that is further way, this would result in reducing 	<p>The proposals recognise the importance of youngsters being able to be educated locally, which is why there are plans to retain primary provision. The retention of a 210 place primary school would complement existing primary school provision. King James's School is located in the Almondbury area, with other secondary schools available within a reasonable distance. A large number of young people who live in Almondbury (around 25%) are already attending King James's School.</p> <p>As part of the proposals, future arrangements for admissions have been considered which is why changes to the catchment areas for other secondary schools have been included. There are opportunities to work with King James's to</p>

<p>parental choice as there will be the same number of pupils but less school places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of respondents with children raised concern about which school would be allocated to their child and would siblings be allocated the same school. • A small number of respondents questioned that Newsome High School was rated inadequate by Ofsted so why was the LA not closing that school instead the LA are proposing to admit additional pupils to the school. 	<p>provide an additional 30 places per year group which would support future parental preferences for the school. This would ensure there are sufficient places within a reasonable distance.</p> <p>In the longer term, this would depend on the circumstances of the family e.g. where they live and the circumstances of the preferred school e.g. how full they were and their oversubscription criteria. However, siblings are often part of an oversubscription criteria. In the shorter term with any transitional arrangements, the council will do what it can to support families.</p> <p>Newsome High School was been judged by Ofsted to be 'inadequate' however the category was 'serious weakness'. The Newsome High School Ofsted report recognises the improvement journey the school has been on for some time since the appointment of a new Headteacher. Newsome also has a viable budget to offer a wide curriculum and continue the improvement journey and an Academy Order for the school has been issued by the Department for Education. A Multi Academy Trust sponsor that can continue to support improvement will be identified by the Regional School Commissioner as soon as is practicable.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Effect on pupils</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents wanted reassurance from the LA that this would not affect the children's education who are at the school especially for those students who are taking their GCSEs. • A large number of respondents felt that the pupils at that school have been subjected to unrest with the transition of the junior school and this proposal is creating more unrest, many respondents with children at Almondbury Community school stated that their child is settled and happy at the school and a move to another school could affect their mental health. 	<p>Governance and management arrangements within Almondbury Community School have been strengthened to help ensure stability for the children currently attending the school and in the best interests of their educational outcomes.</p> <p>If the proposals are agreed, detailed planning for transitional support with the aim of minimising disruption would be required, working closely with school leaders. The priority of these proposals is to help children and young people fulfil their potential. Children in the primary phase at the school would not need to move, however it is recognised that there are family groups across the school, and it would be important to offer a high level of personalised support.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of respondents stated that their child/children are happy at the school, have a good network of friends. If the proposal is implemented this could lead to pupils losing their friends as they may have been allocated a different school place from their friendship groups. • A large number of respondents stated that their child was thriving at the school and did not want to disrupt them, respondents wanted stability for their child's education. • A small number of respondents questioned whether to move their child now, causing less disruption to their education. • Pupils who responded highlighted that staff were leaving due to the uncertainty and the impact this was having on their work especially as this is their GCSE year which will result in them getting poor grades. Pupils felt unsettled at the school and concerned about what options to choose for their GCSE. • Some respondents whose children were allocated a place in year 7 at Almondbury Community School were unhappy about the uncertainty and the affect this was having on the child as they should be focused on their SATS. • A respondent raised concern about children who were looked after or were carers, and had built a good network of support at the school that would be lost if the proposal was implemented. • Many respondents were worried about children being bullied at another school. 	<p>It is recognised that many parents and children have expressed their satisfaction and happiness with Almondbury Community School.</p> <p>The council has been advising parents not to make hasty decisions until they are aware of their options. If the proposals are agreed and children need to move school as part of transitional arrangements, wherever possible this would recognise the preferences of parents and take into account friendship and wider support groups.</p> <p>A very small number of staff have successfully secured jobs elsewhere, but in line with teacher resignation requirements would stay for the rest of the academic year. Governance and management arrangements within Almondbury Community School have been strengthened to help ensure stability for the children currently attending the school and in the best interests of their educational outcomes. Students and their families are able to speak with school staff should they have any questions about GCSE options.</p> <p>The timeline is intended to provide parents and pupils with certainty at the earliest opportunity in order that they are able to be supported to make informed preferences. Working with families would be crucial to support well planned transition should the proposals move to a statutory process and be approved.</p> <p>Should the proposals be agreed, there would be tailored support for looked after children. Where other vulnerable pupils are identified support would be provided with any transitional arrangements. All school have strategies to successfully manage bullying. If the proposals are agreed and children need to move school as part of transitional arrangements, wherever possible this would recognise the preferences of parents and take into account friendship and wider support groups.</p>
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Key Theme: Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some respondents raised concern about children who have SEND needs and with Education Health and Care Plans, respondents wanted to know about the transition arrangements as this would need to be well managed, the school would need to have the relevant level of support good pastoral system with nurture groups. Concern about pupils with SEND finding transitioning hard and difficult to adjust to a new place. • Respondents stated that staff at the school offer a strong pastoral support for vulnerable pupils. The SEND staff at the school were highly praised for their work. • A respondent questioned if the LA had undertaken its legal duty under EIA for reasonable adjustment for children with SEND. 	<p>Should the proposals be agreed, there will be specific support for children with EHCP plans. Where other vulnerable pupils can be identified support will be provided with any transitional arrangements.</p> <p>It is recognised that many parents expressed their praise for staff at Almondbury Community School and value the support their children receive, particularly those who need additional support.</p> <p>The council has and will continue to support children with SEND and whilst doing so comply with its legal duty under EIA for reasonable adjustments.</p>
Key Theme: Additional cost	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some respondents raised concern about the cost of buying a new school uniform if their child moves to another school. • A number of respondents were concerned about the cost of transport, and if siblings were to attend a different school this could impact on parents reducing their working hours to pick up their children from school. 	<p>This is an important point which would need to be planned for and taken into account should the proposals go ahead as part of the consideration for any transitional arrangements.</p> <p>The council would work with families through the planning for any transitional arrangements to better understand individual needs and what can be done to support families. Many schools make arrangements for children to benefit from breakfast clubs and after school activities/clubs which supports working families.</p>
Key Theme: Staffing	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several respondents had very positive comments to make about Almondbury Community School, its staff, teaching, care of pupils and relationships. • Respondents raised concern about the mental health of staff at the school and job security in the long term. 	<p>It is recognised that many parents and children have expressed their satisfaction and happiness with Almondbury Community School and value the staff who work to educate and support their children.</p> <p>Where required, support is available to staff through the council's employee healthcare offer. There can be no guarantees with job security across all employment sectors. However if the proposals are approved and other local schools increase pupil numbers</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some respondents were unhappy with the appointment with the interim leadership arrangements suggesting that this could lead to instability. 	<p>there would be a need for additional staff. The council will work with staff, trade unions and other schools to do all it can to facilitate access to opportunities for staff.</p> <p>Governance and management arrangements within Almondbury Community School have been strengthened to help ensure stability and to improve the quality of teaching and learning for the children currently attending the school and in the best interests of their educational outcomes. Executive support is in place from experienced leaders from Carr Manor Community School, and through governance from an Interim Executive Board, approved by the Department for Education to bring about improvement.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Use of building</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were several suggestions by a number of respondents that Almondbury Community School and King James's School could come together in some way, perhaps operating a split site arrangement, meaning the facilities at Almondbury Community School would still be available for pupils, staff and the community. Some respondents questioned what would happen to the swimming pool as the facility is used by other schools and the community. What would happen to the building? Some respondents were unsure about what would happen to KS2 pupils in the building without the high school pupils. Respondents suggested that making this a small school with low numbers and utilising the building in other ways. To utilise the space for adult learning was one suggestion. Some respondents wanted to know what would happen to the after school support clubs and childcare that is currently based at the school. A respondent asked as the school is a PFI building does this affect viability also? 	<p>There are opportunities for split site arrangements for schools, however, without a significant number of additional pupil numbers this would not address the long term viability of operating 2 school sites. This is because it would not change the overall child population numbers and resolve the fact that there are more available school places than there are children in the area both now and in the future.</p> <p>It is too early to consider the future of the school buildings prior to any decision being made about the future of Almondbury Community School. However, it is recognised the important role the facilities offer to the local community and the swimming pool offers the wider schools swimming offer.</p> <p>The building is part of a PFI contract. This is not a significant factor in viability of the school as many other Kirklees schools with PFI buildings are viable.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few respondents felt that by changing the school name this would remove negative stigma. 	<p>The difficult position the school is in with a combination of a sustainable educational offer at Key Stage 3 and 4 and the overall financial viability, coupled with the Ofsted judgement that requires schools in this circumstance to become a sponsored academy would not resolve the challenges of low pupil numbers.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Community cohesion</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of respondents expressed concern about cohesion and rivalry, and that this may create tension and unrest within the existing pupils should the proposals be agreed. • Many respondents believed that due to the bad publicity that school had recently had the school would struggle to remain open as many parents would not send their children there because of the bad reputation. 	<p>If the proposals are agreed, transitional support would be an important element to limit any risk with cohesion. Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other. In the future there are positive opportunities for local primary and secondary schools to work together for the Almondbury Community.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Local plan</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of respondents questioned why the LA would remove the high school phase as there is significant house building in the area, this would mean that the places are needed. • Local plan projects a number of houses being built in Lepton this would have an effect in the long term on numbers. 	<p>The evidence available in the council's 'Securing sufficient learning places' document available on the Kirklees Council website illustrates a declining child population in the areas of Kirkheaton, Lepton and Grange Moor. The new houses planned for Lepton will be built over a number of years and are likely to help stabilise the child population rather than create significant additional demand for more school places.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Traffic</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents raised concern about traffic at King James's School • Respondents whose children were at Almondbury Community School currently walk to school. Respondents asked if the proposal was implemented would the LA provide transport. 	<p>If the proposals are agreed it is anticipated that the majority of additional pupils would live locally and be able to walk to school. King James's School site is around 0.6 miles from the Almondbury Community School site. However, the council would work with families through the planning for any transitional arrangements to better understand individual needs and what can be done to support families.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Consultation process</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of respondents felt that they were not given any answers at the consultations events, and that the consultation document did not give clear information. 	<p>The council has made every effort to provide answers to questions that have been raised as part of the non-statutory consultation, however, because no decisions have yet been made. Some questions raised are not able to be answered by the council, for example where these relate where Ofsted or the Department for Education are the decision makers.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small number of respondents were concerned that no other options were given as part of the proposal. 	<p>The difficult position the school is in with a combination of its opportunity to offer a sustainable educational offer, financial viability because of low pupil numbers, and the Ofsted judgement requiring an Academy solution means that there are limited options for the school. On 19 March 2019 Cabinet considered two options: full closure of Almondbury Community School; or, to retain a one form entry primary school. Cabinet agreed to consult on the second option.</p>
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Q2) Do you support or oppose the proposals to change the planned admission number of the Almondbury Community School primary phase from 60 (Key Stage 1) and 110 (Key Stage 2) to 30 in both Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 from September 2020?

Stakeholder	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know	Total
Parent/Carers	4	15	39	31	132	19	239
Governing Bodies	1				2		3
Member of staff	1	1	1	6	25		34
Pupils			2	3	15	3	23
Local resident	2	3	1	6	20	1	33
Other	1	2	1	2	12	3	21
Not stated				1			1
Total	9	20	44	49	206	26	355

Key Theme: Reducing PAN	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of respondents accepted that currently two form entry is not sustainable as pupil numbers have been undersubscribed for a number of years. Respondents stated that the primary phase of the school is doing well so should continue, the small class size would be positive as the school could better plan its budget and educational standards. Some recognised that it would be viable to keep the Key Stage 1 building as the primary school by reducing the PAN. Concern raised by a respondent about the speed of reducing in which the proposals may be implemented. Respondents wanted to know what would happen to pupils on roll in the primary school phase as the current 	<p>The proposed timeline is intended to provide parents and pupils with certainty at the earliest opportunity to enable stability and to support improvement in educational outcomes for pupils.</p> <p>No existing pupils would be displaced by this proposal as the changes would only apply to new entrants.</p>

<p>numbers on roll exceeds 30 pupils per year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some respondents raised concern that the school's PAN being reduced could lead to pupils in the area not getting a school place in their local school particularly where new housing was planned. A small number of respondents stated that reducing the PAN would put pressure on other schools in the area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some respondents stated that the LA allowed All Hallows' to increase its age range this has resulted in the numbers at the school dropping. 	<p>Evidence was published in the Cabinet Report from 19th March that illustrated that there would be sufficient primary places available should the proposals be agreed across the planning area. Further evidence is available in the council's 'Securing sufficient school places' assessment (available on the council's website). This shows that the numbers of children that will require a school place in future years is declining. Planned house building will be built over a number of years and would likely support the stabilisation of the child population rather than create additional demand for more school places.</p> <p>This was not a decision supported by the council because of the likely detrimental impact on neighbouring schools like Almondbury Community School in terms of increasing the number of places available. The Council did not approve those proposals but following an appeal, the School's Adjudicator did not uphold the Council's decision. However, this is just one of a number of contributing factors which has led to Almondbury Community School being in a very difficult position.</p>
<p>Key Theme: All-through school</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of respondents stated that the LA needs to promote the school not reduce the number of places. Respondents felt that there were sufficient numbers of primary school phase children resident in the area but due to the school's Ofsted report and reputation parents were choosing other schools. A number of respondents want the LA to support by introducing a new head and better manage the school. A large number of respondents were unhappy with the LA decision to create an all-through school and to then put forward further changes in 2019. Many respondents believe that the LA is not listening to the views of parents and that this would happen regardless. 	<p>The primary phase of Almondbury Community School has been undersubscribed for a number of years. The proposals are designed to strike a balance based on evidence of need and retaining a viable school in the community.</p> <p>There are many advantages for all through schools and it is regrettable that the number of pupils attending Almondbury Community School have not increased as anticipated when the previous proposals and decisions were made. The proposals for an all through school were intended to support overall viability and sustainability by consolidating provision into 2 rather than 3 buildings and improving educational outcomes when the</p>

	<p>predecessor Junior School was judged to require Special Measures.</p> <p>Pupil numbers have been, and continue to be a significant factor which has led to Almondbury Community School being in a very difficult position.</p>
Key Theme: Building	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents wanted to know more information about how and when the numbers will be reduced and when the move to the KS1 building will happen. • A small number of respondents questioned that the greenside building is for infants and were concerned whether the building would be adequate for junior age pupils. • A small number of respondents saw this proposal as a step to eventually close the school. • Some respondents questioned what would happen to the main building. • Some respondents asserted the amount of investment that was put into the building would be wasted if removing all the children to one site. 	<p>Should a statutory process begin and approved, the intention would be that the Published Admission Number for Reception would be reduced to 30 places from September 2020. Following this change, future Reception intakes would be consolidated at 30 places and the larger yeargroups would work through the school. Careful planning would be required to ensure that the building had suitable facilities for a primary school. It is envisaged that there would need to be some modest capital investment to enable this.</p> <p>By consolidating provision as a 210 place primary school, the intention would be to secure a school to have a long term future.</p> <p>It is too early to consider the future of the school buildings prior to any decision being made about the future of Almondbury Community School and therefore the judgement on previous investment decisions.</p>
Key Theme: Staffing	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of respondents highlighted that reducing the PAN would mean staff losing their jobs. • Many respondents stated that the LA should support the school, to improve staffing and leadership • Some respondents stated that staff morale at the school was low 	<p>If the proposals are agreed the changes would be introduced gradually. However, over time less staff are likely to be required.</p> <p>Leadership and management arrangements within Almondbury Community School have been strengthened to help ensure stability for the children currently attending the school and in the best interests of their educational outcomes. Wider school improvement support is already underway as part of these arrangements and this includes curriculum and staff development. Where required, support is available to staff through the council's healthcare offer.</p>
Key Theme: Finance	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents questioned whether a one form entry would not be viable 	<p>Financial modelling shows that a one form entry primary school would likely be viable in the longer term</p>

Key Theme: Impact on community	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small number of respondents expressed that the school is a community hub and want it to remain open 	It is too early to consider the future of the school buildings prior to any decision being made about the future of Almondbury Community School. However, it is recognised the important role the facilities offer to the local community
Key Theme: Impact on pupils	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many respondents stated that the proposals were having a negative impact on children. Respondents do not want to send their children to another school. 	<p>There will be minimal impact for most children in the primary phase although it is acknowledged that there is some uncertainty for current year six pupils. The proposed timeline is intended to provide parents and pupils with certainty at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>There are no plans to move primary phase children to another school. Families would continue to have a right to express a preference for a secondary school whilst their child is in Year 6 as is now. However, should a decision be taken to remove the secondary phase of Almondbury Community School, transition into the secondary phase would not be one of the future options available.</p>

Q3) Do you support or oppose the proposals for King James's School to change their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission areas of Area 1, Almondbury Community School and Area 2, All Hallows CE (VA) Primary School?							
Stakeholder	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know	Total
Parent/Carers	21	18	25	33	138	5	239
Governing Bodies	1			1	1		3
Member of staff	1	1	4	6	21	1	34
Pupils	5	3	2	1	10	2	23
Local resident	5		1	6	20	1	33
Other	2	2	2	1	12	2	21
Not stated				1			1
Total	35	24	34	49	202	11	355

Key Theme: Proximity of King James's School	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of respondents stated that King James's School is the closest school to these areas, and so they were in favour of this proposal. • Some felt that it makes sense for pupils resident in Almondbury to attend a high school in Almondbury. 	
Key Theme: Concern re size/infrastructure at King James's School	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many concerns were raised about the suitability of the King James's School building to take on additional pupils. • Several respondents stated that it would not simply be classrooms that would need to be created; there would need to be investment into circulation and dining facilities. A number of respondents expressed concerns about the health and safety of a growing number of students in an old building that cannot easily be altered due to being listed. • Some stakeholders expressed concern that the grounds of King James's School are not sufficient for expansion, with issues around any extension being on land designated as green belt, as well as the building being listed. • Concerns were expressed that building work and suddenly taking on several additional pupils would have a detrimental effect on standards and behaviour at King James's School. • Concerns were raised about traffic in the area, and how this is already gridlocked before and after school. Any increase in student numbers will only exacerbate this problem. 	<p>There are opportunities to work with King James's to provide an additional 30 places per year group which would support future parental preferences for the school. It is recognised that this expansion would require capital investment to ensure the facilities would be fit for purpose.</p> <p>Any expansion plans would be subject to a planning process.</p> <p>On a regular basis schools successfully invest in their physical space to improve facilities and to undertake condition work. Careful project planning would be required, and alongside strong leadership and management to ensure appropriate systems are in place would enable change to be implemented well. The council would work in partnership with King James's School should the school expand.</p> <p>King James's School is geographically located just outside its own catchment area, with some pupils having limited availability to walk to school. Should the catchment area of King James's change to include the All Hallows CE (VA) and Almondbury Community School primary phase catchment area, those living locally would have a higher priority for admission and would have the opportunity to walk.</p>

Key Theme: Sufficiency of places	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of respondents resident in the priority admission areas (PAA) for the feeder schools for King James's School were concerned that they would no longer have priority for a place at King James's School, as pupils resident in Almondbury would be of a higher priority due to their proximity to the school. • Several stakeholders were concerned about even siblings not securing a place at the school to join older brothers or sisters, making it impossible for parents/carers to get their children to 2 places at the same time. • Several stakeholders made reference to the local plan, and the sites earmarked for development in the area that will require additional school places for its residents. 	<p>Evidence was published in the cabinet report of the 19 March that illustrated that there would be sufficient places available should the proposals be agreed. Further evidence is available in the council's 'securing sufficient places' document which shows a declining child population in some areas. Planned house building will be built over a number of years and is likely to help stabilise the child population rather than create additional demand for more school places.</p> <p>King James's School oversubscription criteria recognises and gives a priority to siblings.</p> <p>There are opportunities to work with King James's to provide an additional 30 places per year group which would support future parental preferences for the school. It should be recognised that significant numbers of pupils living in Almondbury already attend the school.</p>
Key Theme: Concern over behaviour, standards and community cohesion issues	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several respondents expressed concern that existing rivalries between the high schools in Almondbury may be exacerbated by this proposal, with some also referring to animosity from some parents who have allegedly suggested that students currently attending Almondbury Community School would not be welcome. • King James's School is recognised as having strict standards and discipline, but many felt that taking on a significant number of students would be disruptive and would distract pupils from learning. • Some respondents felt that the proposal would result in Ofsted reducing the rating for King James's School. Many stakeholders noted that King James's School is already oversubscribed, and adding more pupils would likely have an impact on behaviour, and be detrimental to teachers and pupils. • Concerns were expressed that building work and suddenly taking on several 	<p>If the proposals are agreed, transitional support would be an important element to limit any risk with cohesion.</p> <p>Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other. In the future there are positive opportunities for local primary and secondary schools to work together for the Almondbury Community.</p> <p>There are opportunities to work with King James's to provide an additional 30 places per year group which would support future parental preferences for the school. It is recognised that this expansion would require capital investment to ensure the facilities would be fit for purpose. Capital building programmes on school sites require careful planning.</p>

additional pupils would have a detrimental effect on standards and behaviour at King James's School.

Q4) Do you support or oppose the proposals for Newsome High School to change their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission area of Area 3, Lowerhouses CE (VC) J, I and EY School?

Stakeholder	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know	Total
Parent/Carers	17	23	63	25	86	26	239
Governing Bodies	1		1		1		3
Member of staff		2	11	5	15	1	34
Pupils		3	5	2	10	3	23
Local resident	3	4	8	4	13	1	33
Other		4	3	1	9	4	21
Not stated							
Total	21	36	91	37	134	35	354

Key Theme: Concern over Newsome High School's performance.	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several respondents raised concern that Newsome High School is currently in an Ofsted category. There were some concerns noted that adding additional pupils at Newsome High School would likely add to the issues the school currently faces, and that behaviour could worsen. Many respondents supported the alignment of the current Lowerhouses CE (VC) Primary School catchment area to Newsome High School. 	Newsome High School has been judged by Ofsted to be have 'serious weaknesses' however the Ofsted report recognises the improvement journey it has been on for some time since the appointment of a new Headteacher and the capacity in leadership and management. Newsome has a viable budget to offer a wide curriculum and continue the improvement journey.
Key Theme: Concern over distance/location of Newsome High School	Officer commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many respondents raised concern over the distance to Newsome High School, and that there are no clear or safe walking routes, and that the current bus situation would mean a bus into Huddersfield, and then another back out to the school. There were several views expressed indicating that stakeholders wish to have a local school where transport is 	The furthest point in the Lowerhouses catchment area to Newsome High School is 1.6 miles, within the 3 miles considered to be a reasonable distance for a secondary school. Wood Lane is one of the routes which connects Lowerhouses to Newsome. This route has a footpath and streetlights. It is possible to use a local bus to cut down the walking distance to approximately 0.8 miles. In normal

<p>not an issue, and pupils are not expected to travel large distances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several respondents stated the village of Almondbury needs a centre, or focus, for the community – and that Almondbury Community School provides this. If pupils would be transferred to other schools, this sense of community would be lost. • Concern was raised over the increase in traffic in Almondbury village if pupils were to travel out to other high schools, as well as the effect on pollution levels and potential increased likelihood of accidents. 	<p>admission rounds parents have a right to preference schools outside their catchment area.</p> <p>The proposals are to retain a one form entry primary school in the village and secondary provision within a reasonable distance.</p> <p>If the proposals are agreed it is anticipated that the majority of pupils would be able to walk to school. King James’s School site is around 0.6 miles from the Almondbury Community School site.</p>
<p>Key Theme: Concern over behaviour, standards and community cohesion issues</p>	<p>Officer commentary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large numbers of those who responded state they do not wish for their child to attend Newsome, and some state they feel a lot of anger would be caused between pupils, both those already on roll at Newsome High School, as well as any who may transfer from Almondbury Community School. • Reference was made by a number of respondents to the stress, anxiety, and upheaval of changing schools. • There were concerns raised over pupils having to potentially go through upheaval and disruption after having done so only a relatively short time ago when the junior school was closed. • Reference was also made to the disruption that would be caused to the pupils already on roll at Newsome High School, should a large influx of pupils transfer to their school. 	<p>If the proposals are agreed, transitional support would be an important element to limit any risk with cohesion.</p> <p>Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other. In the future there are positive opportunities for local primary and secondary schools to work together for the Almondbury Community.</p>

Q5) Which secondary school catchment area would you prefer Area 4, part of Moldgreen Community Primary School primary school catchment area, to join?

Stakeholder	King James's School	Newsome High School	Netherhall Learning Campus High School	Other	Do not have a preference	Total
Parent/Carers	14	15	122	24	65	239
Governing Bodies			3			3
Member of staff			7	5	22	34
Pupils	4	1	7	2	8	22
Local resident	1	1	16	6	9	33
Other		1	4	6	10	21
Not stated						
Total	19	18	159	43	114	353

Key Theme: King James's School	Officer commentary
A small number stated that King James's School could not accommodate any more pupils.	The proposals include the opportunity to work with King James's School to increase the number of available places by 30 per year group over time.
Key Theme: Netherhall Learning Campus High School	Officer commentary
A large number of respondents stated that the school has a good Ofsted, it offers a good curriculum that this was the nearest school to the catchment and within walking distance, and pupils would not have to cross a main road, there were good bus route to the school	
Key Theme: Other	Officer commentary
A large number of respondents wanted Almondbury Community School to keep its catchment area	Many respondents who answered in this way did so because of their support for retaining a secondary phase at Almondbury Community School and therefore stated their preference for no change.
Key Theme: Do not have a preference	Officer commentary
Some respondents were unsure and stated that they did not have the geographic knowledge of the area.	

Q6) Which secondary school catchment area would you prefer Area 5, part of Dalton School primary school catchment area, to join?						
Stakeholder	King James's School	Newsome High School	Netherhall Learning Campus High School	Other	Do not have a preference	Total
Parent/Carers	19	7	128	20	66	239
Governing Bodies	1		2			3
Member of staff			6	4	23	33
Pupils	6		7	2	7	22
Local resident	1		19	5	8	33
Other			5	6	9	20
Not stated						
Total	27	7	167	37	113	351

Key Theme: King James's School	Officer commentary
A small number of respondents believed that King James's School is the closest school.	
Key Theme: Netherhall Learning Campus High School	Officer commentary
A large number of respondents stated that the school has a good Ofsted, it offers a good curriculum, that this was the nearest school to the catchment and within walking distance and pupils would not have to cross a main road, there were good bus route to the school	
Key Theme: Other	Officer commentary
A large number of respondents wanted Almondbury Community School to keep its catchment area.	Many respondents who answered in this way did so because of their support for retaining a secondary phase at Almondbury Community School and therefore stated their preference for no change.
Key Theme: Do not have a preference	Officer commentary
Some respondents were unsure and stated that they did not have the geographic knowledge of the area.	

2.4. Conclusions from the non-statutory consultation feedback

2.4.1. Parents and carers, staff and the community feel strongly about creating the best opportunities for local children. This has been demonstrated from the petition that the Council has received, the response forms and the conversations that have taken place between parents and carers with officers.

- 2.4.2.** The majority of those who responded to the consultation were parents and carers, and most opposed the changes proposed for Almondbury Community School. It is clear that from those who responded, that most parents and carers and pupils who attend the school, are passionate and care deeply about Almondbury Community School and are supportive of retaining secondary provision there. The impact that the proposals could have in terms of any transitional arrangements for existing pupils is understandably of concern for families and therefore need to be taken into account should the proposals progress to publication.
- 2.4.3.** However, the school remains in a very difficult position given the current number of pupils on roll, and, with the future pupil cohort sizes combined with the number of available places. The consultation process has not elicited additional factors that have not been thoroughly considered prior to making the proposals put forward for non-statutory consultation that could result in an alternative option that may secure the financial viability and educational sustainability of Almondbury Community School in its current form.
- 2.4.4.** The proposals for Almondbury Community School secondary catchment area to be split between King James's School and Newsome School received a more mixed response although the majority of respondents opposed the proposals. Taking account of the reasons provided for opposition it is clear that responses were linked to the strong opposition for any changes to Almondbury Community School and sought to retain a catchment area for the school as it currently exists.
- 2.4.5.** The consultation process did provide a clear consensus with regard to the options associated with parts of Moldgreen Community Primary School and Dalton School primary catchment areas (south of A642) that currently form part of the current Almondbury Community School secondary catchment areas. There was significant support for these areas to become part of the Netherhall High School catchment area.
- 2.4.6.** The one to one conversations with parents and carers were particularly valuable in identifying some of the individual circumstances and challenges children and their families may face. Should it be agreed to move to a statutory process, it is clear that being able to work with families would be crucial in securing the best possible transitional arrangements. The overall priority would be to minimise disruption and enable appropriate support and care to be put into place. Whilst the one to one conversations provided the opportunity to explore with parents and carers an indication of their preferences if the proposals moved to a statutory process and were agreed, it would be important to have further conversations with families about their preferences.
- 2.4.7.** The non- statutory consultation has provided valuable feedback which would help to shape the next steps if the proposals move to a statutory process.

3. Proposed way forward drawing on feedback from the non-statutory consultation

The non-statutory consultation has shown that there is support for retaining a secondary phase at Almondbury Community School.

However, the low number of pupils that are currently attending the school are resulting in limited curriculum breadth and educational opportunity is challenged due to the financial impact of being under occupied.

The following table represents an indication of future cohort sizes and overall pupils numbers based on existing pupil numbers (as at May 2019) if the proposal to remove the secondary phase from 2020/21 is agreed, and no pupil movement occurs:

Academic year	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Total
2018/19	40	69	54	64	51	278
2019/20	60 *	40	69	54	64	287
2020/21		60 *	40	69	54	223
2021/22			60 *	40	69	169
2022/23				60 *	40	100
2023/24					60 *	60

* Year 7 2019/20 is an indication based on typical intakes

This demonstrates that a planned approach to transition would be imperative to ensure that pupils are able to access the best educational opportunities and are able to have a wider experience in order to achieve their potential. Therefore it is recommended that the statutory proposal is published that;

3.1. Arrangements for secondary education for future Year 7 cohorts

- Changes the age range of the school from age 3 –16 years to age 3 – 11 years (to be implemented from September 2020).
- No new pupils are admitted into year 7 from September 2020, by varying admission arrangements so that parents and carers of current Year 5 pupils are able to make informed choices when applying to start secondary school in 2020.
- Implement new arrangements for Catchment Areas.

This would enable there to be sufficient secondary school places, now and into the future for local children across Huddersfield South & East and South West. Members are advised that, there are projected to be sufficient secondary school places to meet the likely pupil demand without the need for the permanent places at Almondbury Community School.

3.2. Secure carefully planned transitional arrangements for existing secondary age pupils at Almondbury Community School

Should a decision be taken, following a statutory process, it would be of significant importance to enable well planned and appropriately resourced transition arrangements. The feedback from parents from the non-statutory consultation would be a starting point, for this planning but would require ongoing engagement between families of pupils and the local partnership of schools. This would include;

- Securing the existing strong Leadership arrangements for Academic Year 2019-2020 by continuing to work with executive support from Carr Manor Community School and via the Interim Executive Board whilst carefully planning transition arrangements for Secondary age pupils in September 2020.
- Existing secondary phase pupils including year 7 starters in September 2019 would be supported to remain on the existing site for a period of time. This would require sufficient resources to ensure the highest possible educational opportunities and quality is available to pupils.
- Other places could be made available for some year groups at one or more local secondary schools for groups of children (to sustain friendship groups and wider support networks) in a managed way, subject to parental/carer agreement. This

would require wider support with transition, particularly for families in challenging circumstances such as where children have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and for other important matters, such as considerations for siblings and working families.

- Creative opportunities could be explored for staff, which could, for example include securing a job at another local school but remaining with pupils on the existing site for a period of time.

3.2.1. Transitional arrangements proposed for September 2019 are;

- Parents and Carers of Year 6 pupils would complete an online application for secondary school in 2020, Almondbury Community School would not be available to preference. New Priority Admission Areas (PAAs) would be in place and (subject to the agreement of King James's School as the Admission Authority) an additional 30 places could be available (for Y7 starters in 2020).
- There would be an admission of **11 year old (Year 7)** pupils to Almondbury Community School – For parents and carers who wish to express a preference for place at an alternative school, individual discussions within an agreed timeframe would be offered to explore options in line with published admissions arrangements. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to consolidate their Year 7 learning and finish their Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 studies at another local school. [**60 pupils**]
- **Year 11** pupils (current Year 10) would remain on the Fernside Avenue site to finish their GCSE courses with their GCSE course staff wherever possible. [**64 pupils**]
- **Year 10** pupils (current Year 9) would be given the opportunity to express a preference for transfer to another school with places. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to finish their GCSE courses at another local school [**54 pupils**]
- **Year 9** pupils (current Year 8) would be given the opportunity to express a preference for transfer to another school with places. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to finish their Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 studies at another local school. [**69 pupils**]
- **Year 8** pupils (current Year 7) would be given the opportunity to express a preference for transfer to another school with places. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to finish their Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 studies at another local school. [**40 pupils**]

[The projected numbers of pupils are shown in brackets and are based on actual number on roll as at May 2019, an estimate has been made about next year's Y7 numbers and this may be subject to change as some families who have been allocated a place at the school are appealing for alternative places]

3.2.2. Proposed transitional arrangements from 31st August 2020 are;

Following carefully planned transitional arrangements, all pupils (Y7 to Y10) would transfer from the roll of Almondbury Community School to another local secondary school.

3.3. Engagement and the opportunity to work in partnership with other local secondary schools

Dialogue is taking place with local partner secondary schools to explore support for young people both through any transitional phase, and to consider future arrangements in the longer term for local families. School leaders are keen to be creative and collaborative to support transitional arrangements for existing Almondbury Community School pupils and their families alongside the potential for opportunities for staff should the proposal be agreed following a statutory process in order that young people have access to the widest educational opportunities.

3.4. Arrangements for future primary education at Almondbury Community School

There is support for retaining mainstream education for the Almondbury Community. The projected pupil population indicates that a 210 place primary school would be financially viable and educationally sustainable in the future should changes be made to Almondbury Community School. Therefore it is recommended that the statutory proposal is published that;

- Changes the planned admission number of the primary phase from 60 (KS1) and 110 (KS2) to 30 (starting from September 2020) in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, thereby resulting in 210 places across Reception to Year 6 (to be phased in over time). There would be no impact on existing pupils, they would remain on the school roll until the end of Year 6.
- Consolidates Almondbury Community School as a future primary school into the current Key Stage 1 building on Fernside Avenue.

As Almondbury Community School is a school in Special Measures, there is a requirement for the school to become an academy, sponsored by a Multi Academy Trust. As was outlined in the cabinet report on 19 March, officers were authorised to enter into a dialogue about the proposals that were agreed for non-statutory consultation with the Regional Schools Commissioner's office in the knowledge that there are deadlines for the issuing a directive academy order.

3.4.1. Academy Order

On 16 May 2019 the Regional Schools Commissioner issued an Academy Order for Almondbury Community School. An accompanying letter states:

I am aware that Kirklees LA has recently consulted on the future options for Almondbury Community School and the basic need for school places across Huddersfield South & East and South West...The Local Authority has been keeping my team informed of the proposal for a 1FE primary School at Almondbury. I will take this into consideration as part of the selection of a suitable academy sponsor for the school once the consultation process has concluded...The Secretary of State has the power to revoke this Academy Order. This would usually only happen in exceptional circumstances, predominantly where following due diligence a school is judged to be financially unviable. Where this is the case, the expectation is that the local authority will take steps to close the school.

Prior to this, officers have provided the Regional School Commissioner with modelling which demonstrates a one form entry can be educationally sustainable and financially viable. It has not been possible to demonstrate the same for the secondary phase with the current pupil numbers attending or projected to attend Almondbury Community School.

4. Implications for the Council

4.1. Working with People

The LA has undertaken a four week non-statutory consultation to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders could participate to express their views. The LA held a number of sessions to engage with parents. Should the proposals be approved, following a required statutory process, carefully planned transitional arrangements would be required to ensure that children have access to a broad, high quality educational offer. Working in partnership with parents and carers, schools and staff would be essential in securing the very best for children both now and in the future.

4.2. Working with Partners

School leaders and staff care deeply about and are highly committed to the children and young people in the Almondbury area. Work to improve Almondbury Community School across all key stages is being overseen by the Executive Principal of a partner school Carr Manor Community School, based in Leeds. To take forward the proposals the Council would work with Almondbury Community School leaders and staff, the Interim Executive Board, neighbouring secondary schools and the Regional Schools Commissioner to support the transition to a Multi Academy Trust as a future Primary school.

4.3. Place Based Working

The assessment of the need for school places in the Almondbury area has been assessed taking into account the current and future pupil cohort sizes. The proposals aim to secure now and into the future, long term sustainable, high quality educational opportunities for children locally.

4.4. Improving outcomes for children

The proposals are intended to improve outcomes for children. By taking a strategic approach Kirklees Council wants to ensure that sufficient secondary school places are available in Huddersfield South East and South West and maximise opportunities to;

- Offer high quality and inclusive education and diversity of provision to all
- Provide a breadth of curriculum offer that enables young people to have access to the widest opportunities to fulfil their aspirations and ambitions
- Be financially viable and therefore have future security
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Strengthen community cohesion
- Use sustainable travel and transport for school

4.5. Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

4.5.1. Finance - Revenue

The annual Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation that the Council receives from Government can only be spent on education and would fund the recurrent revenue implications of the changes being proposed.

The proposals are intended to bring long-term sustainability of provision for primary-age children in the area traditionally served by Almondbury Community School (ACS) and for other primary and secondary schools in Almondbury and the wider Huddersfield South East / South West planning areas.

There would also be a range of one-off revenue costs associated with delivering the proposed changes to provision. Existing DSG-funded budgets would be deployed first to absorb the revenue costs insofar as is possible but it is anticipated that some input from the Council would be required.

The existing buildings that house ACS are part of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract. Further work would be required in relation to the implications of the proposals and this would be undertaken as part of the implementation planning.

Should the proposals go ahead, ACS would consolidate in the Key Stage 1 building. The future of the Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 school building would be considered after a final decision is made. The building would be required for at least one academic year. However, it is recognised that the site, including the pool facility, is important to the community and there are options that would be considered for alternative educational use.

4.5.2. Finance – Capital

Should the proposals go ahead, some modest capital investment would be required to the Key Stage 1 building to ensure it is fit for purpose as a primary school, for example, ensuring personal hygiene facilities were age appropriate.

To enable King James's School to accommodate an additional 150 pupils (over time), capital investment would be required to ensure that classroom and ancillary facilities, for example dining and social spaces were suitable for the number of planned places. The Council would wish to work collaboratively with the school in order that a detailed programme of expansion to the physical space at King James's could be planned.

Should the proposals be approved to the next stage, the anticipated range of costs, and associated funding implications and options set out above will be further reviewed as part of the next stage of the process for member consideration.

4.5.3. Human Resources

Should the proposals be agreed, there would be Human Resources implications resulting from the proposed changes to Almondbury Community School. Human Resources staff would need to work with school leaders at the school regarding any revision to structures. Following this, consultation would need to be held with staff and recognised Trade Unions. The Council would support staff wellbeing and work alongside staff, trade unions and other schools to look at how to access other opportunities. If the proposals are approved, other schools in the area will be increasing their pupil numbers and would need additional staff.

4.5.4. Equalities implications

The Equality Act 2010 places the Council under a duty - the Public Sector Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to achieve equality objectives when carrying out its functions.

The initial equalities impact assessment has been revised following non-statutory consultation. A negative impact for some members of staff cannot be ruled out. During the non-statutory consultation staff were consulted and further engagement will take place to continue to identify opportunities to mitigate against negative impact and the equalities impact assessment would remain under review. Members are recommended to review the revised impact assessment by following the link below;

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/equality-impact-assessments.aspx>

Then select 2018/19 and 'Children'

- The stage 1 report is named '190521 Stage 1 Future options for Almondbury Community School outcome report'
- The stage 2 report is named '190521 Stage 2 Future options for Almondbury Community School outcome report'

5. Consultees and their opinions

The non-statutory consultation has enabled parents and carers, pupils, staff and other interested parties to feedback their views. These views have been taken into account in shaping the proposed next steps.

Should members agree to move to the publication of statutory proposals, a four week statutory consultation/representation period would follow. During this period any person or organisation can submit comments on the proposal. Submissions received would be taken into account in a final decision.

6. Next steps and timelines

Subject to decisions made by Cabinet, the indicative timeline for the next stages of the Local Authority's proposals are set out below:

Activity	Date * These dates are indicative and may change; they are also subject to Cabinet approval.
Consultation and engagement (non-statutory)	March - April 2019
Report back to cabinet on the non –statutory consultation and seeking cabinet approval to move to next stage Publication of Statutory notices.	May 2019
Publication of Statutory notices and proposals and period of representation (formal consultation on statutory proposals)	June 2019
Kirklees Council Cabinet take a final decision regarding the proposals	July 2019
Implementation would begin	From 1 September 2019

7. Officer recommendations and reasons

The consultation process has not elicited additional factors that have not been thoroughly considered prior to making the proposals put forward for non-statutory consultation. This means that the current available number of school places exceeds the current and future pupil population, and even taking into account future housing growth, this would not result in an alternative option that could secure the financial viability and educational sustainability of Almondbury Community School in its current form. Taking account of the current position faced by the school, the consultation responses, officer commentary to key themes raised as part of the non-statutory consultation it is recommended that members approve delegated authority for officers to publish statutory proposals and allow the requisite representation period for Almondbury Community School that would;

- Change the age range of the school from age 3 –16 years to age 3 – 11 years (to be implemented from September 2020).
- Change the planned admission number of the primary phase from 60 (KS1) and 110 (KS2) to 30 (starting from September 2020) in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, thereby resulting in 210 places across Reception to Year 6 (to be phased in over time).
- Admit no new pupils into year 7 from September 2020.

The proposals would include detail about proposed transitional arrangements for existing secondary age pupils attending Almondbury Community School which, if approved, would require changes to admission arrangements, including reconfiguring catchment areas. Therefore members are recommended to authorise officers to;

- Continue to explore consolidating the primary year groups of Almondbury Community School into the current Key Stage 1 building on Fernside Avenue, and report back on the indicative level of investment required.
- Continue to explore the opportunity to work with King James’s School to make changes to its current catchment area, create 30 additional planned places from September 2020 (so that over time there are an additional 150 secondary places at the school i.e. 5 year groups x 30 places), and report back upon the indicative level of investment required.
- Work with Newsome High School to make changes to its current catchment area to include the catchment area of Lowerhouses CE(VC) Junior, Infant and Early Years School which forms part of the current Almondbury Community School secondary catchment area.
- Explore with Netherhall Learning Campus High School the impact of extending their catchment area to include parts of Moldgreen Community Primary School and Dalton School primary catchment areas (south of A642) which form part of the current Almondbury Community School secondary catchment area.
- Continue to work in partnership with local secondary schools and the Regional Schools Commissioner to plan for the transitional arrangements to best support the pupils, their families and the staff of Almondbury Community School should the proposals be agreed.
- Continue to engage with and support children and families, particularly those in challenging circumstances who may be affected by the proposals.
- Continue to work with King James’s Academy Trust in further assessing the level of capital investment that would be required to enable King James’s School to create 30 additional planned places and that this be brought back to a future meeting.
- Continue to assess the level of investment that would be required to enable the existing Key Stage 1 building of Almondbury Community School on Fernside Avenue to be utilised by the revised age range and that this be brought back to a future meeting.
- Report the outcomes of the statutory consultation/representation period to Cabinet to enable a final decision.

8. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

We would like to thank those that engaged with the non-statutory consultation and took the time to feedback their views.

We do recognise that the majority of those parents and carers, pupils and staff who responded are supportive of Almondbury Community School. This a challenging set of circumstances where we have a school with a number of spare places, making it incredibly difficult to offer a broad, sustainable curriculum and maintain financial viability. Given this and the facts as they stand in relation to more pupil places being available than there are children, and the likely revenue budget constraints as a result is hampering the school to be able to sustain a broad curriculum with learning opportunities that secondary age pupils should be enabled to experience. Therefore, we support the recommendation to begin a statutory proposal.

We have listened carefully to the views of parents and their worries about the potential impact of transition. It would be important to note that we would aim to provide a calm, secure and supportive environment for every young person to complete their secondary education with minimum disruption and with the maximum opportunities to enable them to achieve their potential. How these opportunities are seized is crucial.

9. Contact officer

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10. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Cabinet: 19 March 2019 Future options for Almondbury Community School

Purpose of report: To seek approval to undertake a non-statutory consultation about future options for Almondbury Community School in the context of wider basic need for school places across Huddersfield South East and South West.

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/s27801/Item%2020%202019-03-19%20Draft%20Cabinet%20-%20Almondbury%20permission%20to%20consult.pdf>

Office of Schools Adjudicator: 10 March 2017: A statutory proposal to extend the age range of All Hallows' Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant and Nursery School, Almondbury, Huddersfield. – available on the OSA page on the DfE website

Cabinet: 28th November 2016: Decision about the published statutory proposal made by the Governing Body of All Hallows' CE(VA) Infant and Nursery School to change the upper age range from 3-7 years to 3-11 years and become an all through primary school

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/s15539/2016-11-28%20All%20Hallows%20final%20report.pdf>

Cabinet: 8th April 2014: Report on the related statutory proposals to discontinue Greenside Infant and Nursery School, to discontinue Almondbury Junior School and to change the lower age limit and expand Almondbury High School in order to develop an all-through school for 3-16 year old pupils, including nursery provision, to serve the Almondbury area.

<http://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/201404081530/Agenda/CABINET08041450933D.pdf>

Cabinet report 28th January 2014: Report on the outcomes of the statutory consultation on the proposals affecting Greenside Infant and Nursery School, Almondbury Junior School and Almondbury High School.

<http://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/201401281600/Agenda/CABINET28011450315D.pdf>

Cabinet report 16th September 2013: Report in relation to proposals affecting Greenside Infant and Nursery School, Almondbury Junior School and Almondbury High School.

<http://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/201309161600/Agenda/CABINET16091349240D.pdf>

Schools causing concern - Guidance for local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners on how to work with schools to support improvements to educational performance, and on using their intervention powers - November 2018 – available on the DfE website under schools causing concern

Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools - Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers October 2018 – available on the DfE website under maintained schools – prescribed alterations

11. Service Director responsible

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