

**Name of meeting:** Children's Scrutiny Panel  
**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020  
**Title of report:** Almondbury Community School update

**Purpose of report:** To provide Children's Scrutiny panel with an update on the implementation of the Council's decision to change the age range of Almondbury Community School from the 1st September 2020.

<b>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?</b>	n/a
<b>Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u>?</b>	Key Decision – n/a Private Report/Private Appendix – n/a
<b>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> &amp; name</b>	Jo-Anne Sanders (for Mel Meggs)
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?</b>	n/a
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?</b>	n/a
<b>Cabinet member <u>portfolio</u></b>	Cllr Carole Pattison – Learning and Aspiration Cllr Viv Kendrick – Children's Services

**Electoral wards affected:** Almondbury

**Ward councillors consulted:** Ward members are receiving regular updates

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

## **1. Summary**

To provide Children's Scrutiny panel with an update on the progress of the implementation of the decision to close the secondary phase of Almondbury Community School by September 2020.

## **2. Current position**

The preparing for the transition of Almondbury Community School secondary pupils to schools they referenced has remained a key priority for the council despite the current Covid-19 crisis.

### **Working in partnership with Almondbury Community School, King James's School, Netherhall High School and Newsome High School**

Strong partnership work has continued between Kirklees, Almondbury Community School, King James's School, Netherhall High School and Newsome High School. All parties have remained committed to achieving the best outcomes for children affected by the closure and have continued to work together to achieve this.

Despite the challenges faced due to Covid-19 significant progress has continued to be made and planned pupil transitions are still on track for September 2020.

Schools have been communicating directly with families in the lead up to September. Although parent information evenings had to be cancelled alternative arrangement have been put in place to support transition such as making available virtual tours, videos from staff and the publication of frequently asked questions.

### **Academy Conversion**

Close collaboration has continued with Impact Education Trust who were appointed by the Regional Schools Commissioner as the academy sponsor for the primary school. The Trust have been engaging stakeholders about a new identity for the school and as a result have announced their intention to change the name to Hill View Academy.

Progress is being made towards the target conversion date of 1<sup>st</sup> September however contingency plans will be in place should this date need to be reviewed. Such risks are common with all academy conversions.

### **Uniform support**

It was agreed some time ago that vouchers would be issues to parents of pupils currently at Almondbury Community School to allow them to purchase branded items of uniform required for their new school in September.

Uniform suppliers have been closed due to Covid-19. However, we will be working with the suppliers over the coming days to co-ordinate the timing of when the vouchers can be issued.

### **Staffing/HR**

#### **Primary phase**

The Interim Executive Board of Almondbury Community School approved a new fit for purpose staffing structure to be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. The staffing review has been completed in consultation with staff and their trade union representatives. There have been no compulsory redundancies as a result of this process.

A consultation for the required TUPE process associated with the academy conversion has now commenced.

## **Secondary phase**

Staff who were aligned to the secondary phase all now have an exit strategy for 31<sup>st</sup> August. Some staff have secured roles in other schools including the local partnership of schools and others have chosen to take voluntary severance. Again, there have been no compulsory redundancies.

We would like to place on record our gratitude to the staff at Almondbury Community School for their professionalism and dedication to the pupils of the school in challenging circumstances.

## **Capital development**

On 16<sup>th</sup> June Cabinet approved the invest of £6.5million in high quality education facilities of which a large proportion will support Almondbury Community School (primary), King James's School and Netherhall Learning Campus High School.

Planning permission has been granted to move the temporary classrooms on the St Helen's Gate site to the front and the full planning application is expected to be submitted shortly for the new block of classrooms and associated facilities.

Plans are in place for works at the Greenside building to be completed over the summer holidays to ensure that facilities are ready for September. There are also minor works to the Fernside building and site to support the continued use on a temporary basis by King James's School.

Letters have been sent to parents keeping them informed of this progress.

## **Marking the closure**

The Interim Executive Board of Almondbury Community School are planning an event to mark a good end to the school in its current form. Arrangements will take account the current Covid situation and more information will be available soon.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

### **3.1. Working with People**

We are continuing to work with the partnership of local schools to ensure that all children and young people enjoy the best possible standards of care and education in a school which is sustainable for the long term.

### **3.2. Working with Partners**

Regular meetings engagement continues with staff, school leaders and trade unions.

We are continuing to work in collaboration with Impact Multi Academy Trust for the long term benefit of Almondbury Community School pupils now and into the long term future.

### **3.3. Place Based Working**

We continue to work with the local partnership of schools to ensure that all local children have access to high quality educational opportunities.

### **3.4. Improving outcomes for children**

Throughout programme of works involved, improving outcomes for children is at the heart of everything. In addition to ensuring that there are sufficient secondary places in the local area we continue to aim to 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

### **3.5. Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

Work has continued on the academy conversion and the TUPE process.

## **4. Consultees and their opinions**

Communication and keeping all stakeholders updated has remained a priority.

In order to reassure parents and answer any questions we have been working with the partnership of local schools to keep parents updated.

Consultation will take place as part of the planning process for the development of facilities at King James's School, St. Helen's Gate.

## **5. Next steps and timelines**

- Continue to work with local schools and parents on high quality transition arrangements for all ACS pupils
- Staff consultation on TUPE process (primary)
- Issue school uniform vouchers in advance of planned transitions
- Submit a planning application for the development of facilities at King James's School, St. Helen's Gate
- Finalise temporary transport arrangements for King James's School pupils attending the Fernside site from September

## **6. Contact officer**

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director Learning and Early Support

[Jo-anne.sanders@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Jo-anne.sanders@kirklees.gov.uk)

Martin Wilby – Senior Strategic Manager – Learning Places and Access

[Martin.wilby@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.wilby@kirklees.gov.uk)

## **7. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

[Future Options for ACS - Cabinet Report - 19 March 2019 \(agenda item no 20\)](#)

(Background and seeking permission to consult)

[Future Options for ACS - Outcome Report for Cabinet 29 May 2019 \(agenda item no 9\)](#)

(Outcomes of the consultation and next steps including publication of statutory notices)

[Future Options for ACS - Final Decision report for Cabinet - 16 July 2019 \(agenda item no 8\)](#)

(Final decision)

[Call-in of Cabinet decision in relation to Almondbury Community School](#)

(Call-in in relation to the decision taken by Cabinet)

**8. Service Director responsible**

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director Learning and Early Support

[Jo-anne.sanders@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Jo-anne.sanders@kirklees.gov.uk)