

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS 15th November 2007

Report of Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To ask Members to agree to a variation with regard to responding to a consultation paper and request that the task group report be utilised as the City Council's response.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee agree to a variation of the process regarding responses to consultations and delegate to the Chief Executive approval that the Review of Secondary Education Task Group's report be utilised as the City Council's response to the County Council's consultation exercise.

Introduction and background

At its meeting on the 5th September 2007, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a task group to consider the impact and effect of Lancashire County Council's consultation on the closure of Hornby and Skerton High Schools and their possible amalgamation with Central High. The terms of reference of the task group stipulate that the task group would feed their views into the consultation process.

The consultation period closes on 31st December 2007. The constitution allows for a task group to make recommendations to Full Council or Cabinet but the scheduled dates of these meetings will not allow for the Task Group report to be approved in time to meet the consultation deadline.

It is suggested therefore that as the report of the Task Group will on this occasion become the Council's response to a consultation document it can be approved in accordance with that process.

The agreed process for agreeing a consultation paper response is that the Chief Executive agrees one of the following options if he feels a response is required:

- (i) That an Officer response be prepared on purely technical matters

- (ii) That a draft response be prepared by Officers on policy matters for comments by the Council Business Committee prior to approval by the Chief Executive.
- (iii) That consultation papers be forwarded to Group Leaders for a response on matters of a purely political nature.

Members are asked to agree to a variation of (ii) whereby the Task Group are asked to provide a draft response rather than Officers and to delegate the approval of that response to the Chief Executive.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK	
None	
CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)	
This report has no direct impact.	
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	
There are no direct financial implications to the Council.	
SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS	
The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments	
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
There are no direct legal implications. The proposal complies with the requirements of the Council's Constitution and agreed decision making processes.	
MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS	
The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Contact Officer: Liz Bateson Telephone: 01524 582047 E-mail: ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk Ref:
Consultation papers from Lancashire County Council on the closure of Hornby and Skerton High Schools and amalgamation with Central High, Lancaster.	