

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet

Date: 14 October 2013

ITEM 6(i)

**Title:
Review of Secondary
School Provision**

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Ian Grayson

Report from Directorate: Children, Young People and Learning

Report Author: Gill Alexander, Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Learning (Tel: (0191) 643 8001)

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to consider:

- (a) The issues and pressures facing North Tyneside's maintained secondary education provision taking account of the impact of Kings Priory Academy and;
- (b) A process for working with headteachers to determine the most appropriate course of action to tackle those issues in order to sustain a sufficient supply of high quality secondary school places.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) Notes the issues and pressures facing the Borough's secondary education provision over the next five – ten years, taking account of the impact of the new Kings Priory Academy; and
- (b) Approves the proposed approach to working with headteachers to develop a full analysis and detailed appraisal of options for securing a high quality secondary education provision in North Tyneside

1.3 Forward Plan:

The report appears on the Forward Plan.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework:

The report relates to the draft Council Plan Our North Tyneside 2014 - 2018 Priority Our People Will – Be supported to achieve their full potential, especially our children and young people.

1.5 Information:

- 1.5.1 On 5 August 2013 Cabinet requested a further report be submitted setting out the steps to be taken to address the impact of surplus places in the Borough's school system resulting from the Secretary of State for Education's decision to approve the creation of the Kings Priory Academy. Cabinet was concerned that there would be a destabilising and disproportionate impact on individual schools over a very short period of time which should be addressed as soon as possible. The all-age Academy opened in North Tyneside in September 2013 and the analysis in this report and its appendix takes account of the impact of the introduction of additional publicly funded places.
- 1.5.2 As a result of a falling birthrate in the borough from 2000 – 2008 the level of surplus places in North Tyneside secondary schools was forecast, prior to the Kings Priory proposal, to operate between 16-18% between 2014 and 2021. However, as a consequence of a rise in the birth rate from 2010 onwards projections also indicated that this surplus capacity would reduce to 10% by 2022. This position has now changed see paragraph 1.8.
- 1.5.3 Prior to the Kings Priory proposal options were being considered in partnership with schools for building resilience into the secondary system through collaboration and partnership between schools since no individual school would have experienced a rapid and significant decline in pupil numbers. However, both the DfE and Local Authority impact assessment of Kings Priory identify that the introduction of an additional all-age academy will have a detrimental impact on neighbouring schools. The situation therefore, requires full consideration of the options for strengthening resilience within the system and providing a strong basis upon which to deliver a curriculum that will equip young people for life and work in the 21st Century.

1.6 Role of the Local Authority:

- 1.6.1 A Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of good school places which:
- Enable children and young people to achieve high standards of educational excellence;
 - Meets the needs of vulnerable learners;
 - Ensure fair access to educational opportunity; and
 - Promote diversity and parental choice within an area.
- 1.6.2 **Goals**
- In fulfilling these responsibilities it is proposed that North Tyneside should work collaboratively with schools to:
- Deliver a strong education system that will enable all children and young people to achieve their potential and develop the skills and attributes they

- need for life and work in the 21st century;
- Ensure that every child and young person in North Tyneside can attend a good school in which they experience excellent teaching;
- Realise the potential of education to equalise life chances and therefore to close the attainment gap for children and young people who face social and economic disadvantage.

1.6.3 Underpinning Principles

In undertaking this role it is proposed that the Local Authority should have regard to the following underpinning principles.

- Subsidiary – individual schools, academies and colleges are responsible for their own improvement journey and for the financial and human resource decisions that underpin that process;
- Learners First – All decisions should be tested against the best interests of learners, not the best interests of an institution;
- Accountability – Schools are accountable for their own performance and the Local Authority has a key role in providing local external challenge to schools, and in assisting schools by brokering support to tackle performance issues;
- Community – Schools are part of a wider system and have a shared responsibility and wider accountability for securing good outcomes for all children and young people across the community of North Tyneside;
- Collaboration – Excellence and fairness for all will be secured if we strengthen the capacity for system-wide collaboration to tackle complex problems.

1.6.4 Local Authority Intervention

The factors that trigger a local authority review of school provision are as follows:

- Surplus capacity – there is excessive surplus capacity across the system overall. Audit Commission research indicates that surplus capacity over 10% will result in inefficient use of resources;
- Mismatch of supply and demand – there is evidence that some schools are operating with surplus capacity over 25%, whilst others are over capacity;
- Financial and educational viability – there is a risk of a school becoming financially unviable because of small and falling rolls and therefore unable to provide a sound curriculum offer and access to specialist teachers;

Failure to provide a good education – there is evidence from Ofsted reports, trends in examination and test results and Local Authority reviews that, despite intervention, a school is failing to provide a good quality education

1.6.5 Planning Principles

Where it is agreed that organisational change is necessary in order to strengthen resilience, the Local Authority will apply the following planning principles:

- Intervention in inverse proportion to success:

The Local Authority will only intervene to bring about structural change where there is a risk of system failure that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated by individual schools or through school-to-school collaboration.

- Minimum disruption:

Where it is agreed that structural change is necessary, models will be evaluated against the need to minimise disruption to the children and young people currently being educated within the system.

- Size of new schools:

As far as possible, new primary, first and middle schools will be planned to have a Planned Admission Number (PAN) in multiples of 30 or where necessary 15. Secondary schools will be planned to have a PAN in multiples of 30. The minimum PAN for new secondary schools will be 120 and the maximum 350.

- Schools at the heart of the community:

Priority will be given to maintaining a high quality and visible secondary school at the heart of communities. In order to maximise the potential of education to equalise life chances, particular priority will be given to maintaining a good secondary school in communities where children experience multiple disadvantage.

1.7 Pressures and issues facing North Tyneside secondary school provision:

The Local Authority has undertaken a detailed analysis of the issues and pressures facing the North Tyneside secondary education system. The analysis identifies a number of key issues that necessitate that the Local Authority should conduct a review of secondary school provision. The major issues to be considered are detailed below.

1.8 Pupil population and surplus capacity:

Taking account of the introduction of Kings Priory Academy, secondary school surplus capacity is now forecast to rise to just above 20% by 2015/16 with five out of fifteen schools providing secondary education operating with over 25% surplus capacity. This will only reduce to a more appropriate level of 12% by 2022/23.

1.8.1 Financial viability and size of school

Over the next five years secondary schools will face financial pressures as a result of falling pupil numbers. Between 2013/14 and 2015/16 pupil numbers in Local Authority maintained schools will fall by 368 pupils. This equates, over this period alone, to a loss of £2m to the secondary system. In addition some neighbouring schools will be disproportionately impacted by the implementation of Kings Priory Academy.

1.9 Housing Development and Section 106 Agreements:

- 1.9.1 The analysis shows that taking account of the planned housing developments both within North Tyneside and in Newcastle to the North West of the borough, schools within the North West of the borough may experience an increased demand for school places. Decisions will need to be taken at both primary and secondary level about the best use of Section 106 contributions (under planning obligations imposed in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) to meet this demand in this area of the borough.

1.10 **Capital Investment:**

- 1.10.1 The need for capital investment in the school infrastructure in North Tyneside is well established. The current asset management plan indicates a requirement to invest £40.495m (priorities 1-3 grades A – D) in order to improve the condition of the existing school estate. This does not take account of the need to provide access to specialist facilities that are required by a modern curriculum. The Local Authority received a formula allocation for the whole school estate of £3.733m (including Basic Need) for 2013/14.
- 1.10.2 In addition four schools are currently included in the DfE's Priority School's Building Programme with design work about to commence in 2013/14 for the four schools. Given the issues that need to be addressed in relation to school capacity and viability it is critical that capital investment decisions are aligned to a plan for sustaining the secondary education system across North Tyneside.

1.11 **Approach to Option Appraisal:**

- 1.11.1 In applying the principles set out above the Local Authority in collaboration with headteachers will need to undertake an option appraisal to determine the most appropriate way of building resilience and capacity within the education system in North Tyneside in order to give every child and young person the best possible start in life.

1.11.2 **Range of Options**

The following high level options will require detailed consideration:

- Individual school action where individual schools downsize staff teams and cut costs
- Formalised collaboration underpinned by a business model that would demonstrate substantial and real savings based upon sustainable and binding vertical and horizontal federations, utilising any capacity within the North Tyneside Learning Trust
- Structural change to be achieved through amalgamations in order to establish schools of a viable size; or
- A combination of all of the above.

1.11.3 **Sustainability Tests**

In appraising the available options a number of key tests will need to be applied which scrutinise whether the proposed model for a locality secures a sustainable solution. In determining the most appropriate course of action it will be important to be confident that the agreed model will secure:

- Sufficient management, curricular and teaching expertise to deliver high educational standards at KS4 and KS5, improve achievement and narrow the gap in outcomes.
- Schools that are of sustainable size and financially viable going into the future that will not require a deficit.
- The removal of surplus capacity and the financial burden of unfilled school places and the provision of sufficient school places to meet demand rising from housing developments.
- Improved pupil mobility and the mitigation of risks to pupil progression at transition points.

- Maximum investment in transforming learning environments.

1.11.4 **Timescales and Project Management**

The secondary education system in North Tyneside will face significant challenges in the immediate future and over the next few years. In addition to this, planned capital investment through the Priority Schools Build Programme, Section 106 Agreements and the ongoing education capital programme means that it is urgent that a way forward is agreed for addressing the immediate issues faced by the secondary school system. Given the importance of the decisions to be taken it is proposed to invest significant time and resource in working with Headteachers to conduct a full analysis and detailed option appraisal.

- 1.11.5 It is therefore proposed to establish a joint approach between the Local Authority and schools to developing a detailed understanding of the issues to be addressed and developing detailed option appraisals during the academic year 2013/14, with a report back to Cabinet in the summer of 2014.

1.11.6 **Project Management Arrangements**

To facilitate the management of the programme the Local Authority will establish:

- A steering group led by the Head of Fair Access and Commissioning to include technical expertise in school place planning; secondary curriculum and pedagogy; schools finance and schools capital planning, together with representative headteachers/principals to assist in the modelling and option appraisal process. If necessary additional expertise will be sourced on an interim basis, including advice from the DfE and Education Funding Agency (EFA).

1.12 **Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Approve the recommendations set out in Section 1.2

Option 2

Not approve the recommendations set out in Section 1.2

Option 3

Approve the recommendations with amendments.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.13 **Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended because of the urgent need to carry out a review of secondary education provision to ensure the additional risks arising as a result of the surplus school places resulting from the introduction of the Kings Priory Academy can be identified and options considered within appropriate timescales.

1.14 Contact officers:

Gill Alexander, Strategic Director for Children Young People and Learning
Tel (0191) 643 8000
Anthony Gollings, Financial Business Manager for CYP&L and Finance & Resources
Tel (0191) 643 8071

1.15 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

(i) Report to Cabinet dated 5 August 2013 – Kings Priory Academy Proposals and minutes of meeting

http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=546556&p_subjectCategory=41

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The resources required for undertaking the first stage review, modelling and option appraisal process can be met from within existing budgets. A financial impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the option appraisal process.

2.2 Legal

The Authority is required to secure (so far as its powers enable it to do so) that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population of the area (s.13 Education Act 1996). It must promote high standards and ensure fair access to educational opportunity (s.13A Education Act 1996). If, following the review, changes to schools are proposed it will be necessary to comply with the relevant legislation pertaining to all proposed changes.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Internal consultation has been undertaken with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning and the Elected Mayor.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Initial consultation has been undertaken with Secondary Headteachers. Wider consultation will be undertaken with Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and interested bodies as part of the option appraisal process.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as appropriate in relation to options arising from the review.

2.6 Risk management

Any risks to the provision of education in the Borough identified as part of the review will be monitored and appropriate steps will be taken to safeguard against those risks.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Strategic Director(s)
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Strategic Manager Policy and Partnerships