

# UPDATE ON CONSULTATION



<b>Governors Committee:</b>	<b>Special Meeting of Full Governor Body</b>	
<b>Paper prepared by:</b>	<b>Mr D Hermitt</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> January 2011</b>	

Since the last full governor's meeting the official consultation process has been underway. The following groups have been contacted by letter:

- All Parents via student post
- Headteachers of Local Secondary and Primary schools
- Local Authority Representatives
- Local Companies
- Local Church Leaders
- Fiona Bruce, MP for Congleton

The school website has been used to advertise the consultation and the closing date. There is a web page that allows anyone to download copies of the consultation pack.

## **Responses**

### **1. Staff**

A staff meeting was held on 13<sup>th</sup> December to allow all staff to respond to the consultation documents and ask questions. A copy of the questions asked and the responses is also available on the website.

During the consultation period the Chair of Governors has already received three letters from members of the teaching staff which are attached along with the responses.

The main issues with staff revolve around their pay and conditions. They would like some reassurance that the change to Academy would not have a negative impact on their terms and conditions. They understand that at transfer their conditions will remain the same, but they are fearful that a future Governing Body or Headteacher would alter these terms adversely.

### **2. Parents**

An email has been received from a parent asking some questions for clarification. This is attached alongside the response.

Parents in Partnership meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January was used to receive further questions and answers. Parents are largely supportive of the chance for increased income.

### **3. Students**

All students have been made aware of the potential change. They have approved the news that there may be greater investment in their education as a result of the change.

The Local MP (Mrs Fiona Bruce) has expressed her strong support for the school to make this change both informally at our Sixth form presentation evening on 6<sup>th</sup> January.

The Local Authority has already been making changes to the way that they are structured to allow Community schools and Academies to purchase services from them in the next

financial year. They have provided an online survey to gain the views of schools on the services that they provide. I have completed this survey on behalf of the school and indicated that the school would be buying back many services if they are offered at competitive prices.

Updated information on the consultation process will be presented at the meeting.

### **Conclusion**

All stakeholders have had an opportunity to provide their views on the conversion to academy.

The views are mainly positive and the reservations revolve around the potential for future problems if Governors are unwise in their decision-making regarding future terms and conditions for staff which would adversely affect the morale and smooth running of the school.

### **Recommendations**

1. Governors to provide reassurance to staff that they would continue to treat them in a fair manner regarding Terms and Conditions to ensure that the school retains the services of its best staff.

## Additional Responses from Consultation



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### Staff

We have received correspondence from the following small minority of staff (less than 5%) – Teacher ‘A’, Mrs S Dearnaley, Teacher ‘B’, Mrs G McNulty, Ms T Paling, Mr B Thomas, Teacher ‘C’ and Teacher ‘D’. Some respondents asked questions that were already covered in the consultation material. Half of the letters were very similar. These were responded to in a similar manner. The remaining letters introduced some specific concerns. The table shows the concerns raised.

The Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severing links</li> <li>• Collaboration with other schools</li> <li>• Local Authority decisions</li> <li>• Purchase of LA services</li> <li>• The effects on all students in the LA</li> </ul>
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privatisation of State education</li> <li>• Two tier educational system</li> <li>• Decision making by central Government</li> </ul>
Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms and conditions – wanting reassurance</li> </ul>
Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English baccalaureate</li> <li>• Inflation of achievement by non-GCSE subjects</li> </ul>
Religious Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible high jack by religious vested interests – unlikely</li> </ul>
Future Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns regarding any changes in the leadership of the school and Governing Body.</li> </ul>

### Students

Three students provided written feedback to me. Their concerns were:

- Possible loss of good teachers in the run up to exams
- The role of the Local Authority
- The needs for future investment in ICT
- The school being run as a business

Responses were provided to them and one wrote back to express gratitude for the reassurances given.

### Parents

Only one parent responded and my reply to that parent is in the original papers to Governors.

### Other Stakeholders

We have also received a letter of support from our local Member of Parliament, Fiona Bruce (attached).

The letters from stakeholders and their responses will be posted on the school website next week.

The meeting for stakeholders was attended by a mix of parents, governors, staff and other stakeholders. The notes of this meeting is attached.

### **Conclusion**

The concerns raised by staff remain connected to their Terms and Conditions of Employment.

It seems clear that although a minority of staff have expressed their concern about Academies in general, there are wider concerns about the Government's intentions which are not connected with Academies.

### **Recommendations**

- 1      Governors to provide reassurance to staff that they would continue to treat them in a fair manner regarding Terms and Conditions to ensure that the school retains the services of its best staff.