

Cabinet

Agenda

9th March 2006

The Cabinet will meet at the **SHIRE HALL, WARWICK** on **THURSDAY, 9TH MARCH 2006 at 1.45 P.M.**

The agenda will be :

1. General

(1) Apologies for absence.

(2) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Members are reminded that they should disclose the existence and nature of their personal interests at the commencement of the relevant item (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a prejudicial interest the Member must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.

Personal interests relating to any item on the agenda arising by virtue of the members serving as District/Borough councillors and as members of the Warwickshire Police Authority are declared below:

Councillor Alan Cockburn, Member of Warwick District Council.

Councillor Peter Fowler, Member of North Warwickshire Borough Council.

Councillor Colin Hayfield, Member of North Warwickshire Borough Council.

Councillor Richard Hobbs, Member of Stratford on Avon District Council and the Warwickshire Police Authority.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse, Member of Rugby Borough Council.

Councillor Chris Saint, Member of Stratford on Avon District Council.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Member of Stratford on Avon District Council
and the Warwickshire Police Authority.

Councillor Bob Stevens, Member of Stratford on Avon District Council.

**(3) Minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd February 2006 and Matters
Arising. (For exempt items see later on the agenda).**

(4) Requests for Discussion of En Bloc Items.

PART A - ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION (WHITE PAPERS)

2. Proposed closure of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School, Rugby

The report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families.

Local member - Cllr John Vereker.

This report summarises the outcome of the proposal to close (formally to cease to maintain) Bishop Wulstan School in Rugby and presents the options for the way forward.

Recommendations:

(1) That feedback from the formal consultation concerning the proposal to cease to maintain Bishop Wulstan Catholic School, Rugby, with effect from 31st August 2006, be noted.

(2) That the proposal to close Bishop Wulstan School should not be proceeded with.

or

That officers be authorised to publish statutory notices of the Authority's intention to close Bishop Wulstan School with effect from 31st August 2006.

or

That this matter be considered at the meeting of the Cabinet on 25th May 2006 with a further report on the innovative proposal being developed by the Arch-diocese of Birmingham on the future of Bishop Wulstan School.

For further information please contact: Mark Gore, Assistant County Education Officer (Strategy). Tel: 01926 412887, e-mail: markgore@warwickshire.gov.uk

3. Report of the Review of Higher Education Student Finance Delivery in England

The report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families.

Following a review of the end-to-end delivery of Student Finance in England which was announced on 7th June 2005, a report was published on 1st February 2006 with an initial Ministerial statement supporting the centralisation of a role currently administered by Local Authorities.

Recommendations:

- (1) That Members consider the potential implications of the report on the Student Finance Section and service delivery in Warwickshire.
- (2) That a response to the Government's proposals be drafted for consideration by the Cabinet.

For further information please contact: Nick Williams, Education Officer (Pupil
Tel: 01926 412956, e-mail: nickwilliams@warwickshire.gov.uk
or: Donna Isard, Student Finance Tel: 01926 412268, e-mail:
donnaisard@warwickshire.gov.uk

4. Establishment of Warwickshire's Safeguarding Children Board

The report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development and the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families.

This report details the requirement for Warwickshire County Council to establish a local safeguarding children board to agree and oversee the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the County.

Recommendation:

That the Cabinet establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board for Warwickshire with the membership and terms of reference as set out in the Draft Constitution attached to the report.

For further information please contact: Victoria Gould, Principal Solicitor. Tel: 01926 736125, e-mail victoriagould@warwickshire.gov.uk or Dr Vic Tuck Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Development Officer. Tel: 01926 731141, e-mail vicktuck@warwickshire.gov.uk

PART B - ITEMS FOR EN BLOC DECISIONS (YELLOW PAPERS)

5. Integrated Risk Management Plan Year 3 Action Plan - Consultation

The report of the Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer.

This paper sets out the Integrated Risk Management Plan Year 3 Action Plan. The final version of the plan has been produced following consideration of all the feedback received during the consultation period from 1st October 2005 to 31st December 2005.

Recommendation

That Full Council adopts the Integrated Risk Management Year Three Action Plan on behalf of the Fire Authority from 1st April 2006.

For further information please contact: William Brown, Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer. Tel: 01926 423231, e-mail williambrown@warwickshire.gov.uk

6. Irrecoverable Debt

The report of the Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer

The Service is requesting the write off of a debt to the value of £9,926.57.

Recommendation:

That Members note the report and approve the debt worth £9,926.57 outlined below be written off as irrecoverable.

For further information please contact: William Brown, Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer. Tel: 01926 423231 Helen Murphy, Financial Services Manager. Tel: 01926 466218, e-mail helenmurphy@warwickshire.gov.uk

7. Warwickshire Arts Service: A Vision for the Future

The report of the Chair of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The report sets out the results of a major consultation with stakeholders on policy and priorities for the County Arts Service. The report was considered by the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 January 2006.

Recommendations (of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee):

That the Cabinet approve the recommendations within the report regarding:

- (1) Key Areas (detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of the report)
- (2) Grant Aid (detailed in paragraph 4.2.1 of the report)
- (3) Joint Working (detailed in paragraph 4.3.1 of the report)

For further information please contact: Christopher Jeens, Head of Heritage & Tel: 01926 412329, e-mail: chrisjeens@warwickshire.gov.uk or: Ann Mawdsley, Senior Committee Administrator. Tel: 01926 418079, e-mail: anmawdsley@warwickshire.gov.uk

8. Any Other Items

To consider any other items that the Chair decides are urgent.

PART C - EXEMPT ITEMS (PURPLE PAPERS)

9. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

To consider passing the following resolution:

'That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Local Government Act 1972'.

(NB. Copies of extracts describing exempt information are available in Warwickshire Libraries, the County Council Handbook and the Access to Information Register held in my office).

10. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd February 2006 and Matters Arising.

11. Equal Pay Strategy

The report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

This report describes the latest issues in relation to equal pay and a strategy for discussion with the trades unions

For further information please contact: Reuben Bergman, Deputy Head of Human Resources (Employee Relations). Tel: 01926 41 2314, e-mail reubenbergman@warwickshire.gov.uk

12. Report on Insurance Renewals 2006

The report of the Strategic Directors – Performance & Development and Resources

The Cabinet will consider the proposed renewals for 2006.

For further information please contact: David Carter, Strategic Director of Performance and Development. Tel: 01926 412564, e-mail: davidcarter@warwickshire.gov.uk or: David Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources. Tel: 01926 412003, e-mail: davidclarketr@warwickshire.gov.uk

13. Contractual Arrangements - Warwickshire Care Services

The report of the Strategic Directors of Adult, Health and Community Services, Performance and Development and Resources.

The report describes the current contractual arrangements with Warwickshire Care Services and seeks agreement on a way forward in partnership.

For further information please contact: Jon Whiting, Service Manager, Older Tel: 024 7674 6427, e-mail: jonwhiting@warwickshire.gov.uk or: Tim Willis, Capacity Planning. Tel: 01926 731089, e-mail: timwillis@warwickshsire.gov.uk

14. Design Services Partnering Contract

The report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

The existing partnering arrangement will expire in June 2006 and Cabinet has agreed the principle of letting a new partnering agreement. This report outlines the competitive tendering process undertaken to identify a suitable organisation to partner with Design Services to provide professional and other services as required. It also provides an assessment of the tenders received and gives recommendations for the award of the contract.

For further information please contact: Brian Follett, Group Manager, Design Services. Tel: 01926 412094, e-mail: brianfollett@warwickshire.gov.uk

Shire Hall,
Warwick

JIM GRAHAM,
Chief Executive

March 2006

Cabinet Membership

Councillor Alan Farnell (**Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet**) (**Policy and Governance**),

cllrfarnell@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor John Burton (**Schools**),

cllrburton@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Alan Cockburn (**Corporate Services**),

cllrcockburn@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Peter Fowler (**Family Services**),

cllrfowler@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Colin Hayfield (**Adult and Community Services**),

cllrhayfield@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Martin Heatley (**Environmental Services**),

cllrheatley@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Richard Hobbs (**Community Safety**),

cllrhobbs@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Chris Saint (**Economic Development**),

cllrsaint@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (**Children's Services**),

cllrmsseccombe@warwickshire.gov.uk

Councillor Bob Stevens (**Performance Management**),

cllrstevens@warwickshire.gov.uk

Non-voting Invitees - Councillor June Tandy (**Leader of the Labour Group**) cllmrstandy@warwickshire.gov.uk and Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (**Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group**) cllrroodhouse@warwickshire.gov.uk, or their representatives.

General Enquiries: Please contact Pete Keeley, Member Services, Performance and Development Directorate Tel: 01926 412450 Email: petekeeley@warwickshire.gov.uk

Enquiries about specific reports: Please contact the officers named in the reports.

The reports referred to are available in large print if requested.

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web
www.warwickshire.gov.uk/committee-papers



**The Cabinet met at the Shire Hall, Warwick
on the 23rd February 2006.**

Present

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Alan Farnell (Chair) (Policy and Governance),
“ John Burton (Schools),
“ Alan Cockburn (Corporate Services),
“ Peter Fowler (Family Services),
“ Colin Hayfield (Adult and Community Services),
“ Richard Hobbs (Community Safety),
“ Martin Heatley (Environment),
“ Chris Saint (Economic Development),
“ Izzi Seccombe (Children’s Services),
“ Bob Stevens (Performance Management).

Non-Voting Invitees:

Councillor June Tandy, Leader of the Labour Group,
“ Jerry Roodhouse, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Other Members:

Councillors Ken Browne, Richard Chattaway, Josie Compton, Michael Doody, John Haynes, Marion Haywood, Mick Jones, Frank McCarney, Helen McCarthy, Tim Naylor, Raj Randev, Sid Tooth, John Vereker and John Wells.

1. General

(1) Apologies

for non attendance were received from Councillors Richard Grant and Anne Forwood.

(2) Members’ Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

The following members, who were members of the Borough/ District Councils indicated and/or members of the Warwickshire Police

Authority, declared personal interests in any matters affecting the relevant Borough/District Council or the Police Authority:-

Councillor Alan Cockburn, Member of Warwick District Council.

Councillor Peter Fowler, Member of North Warwickshire Borough Council.

Councillor Colin Hayfield, Member of North Warwickshire Borough Council.

Councillor Richard Hobbs, Member of Stratford on Avon District Council and the Warwickshire Police Authority.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse, Member of Rugby Borough Council.

Councillor Chris Saint (Economic Development), Member of Stratford on Avon District Council.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Children's Services), Member of Stratford on Avon District Council and the Warwickshire Police Authority.

Councillor Bob Stevens (Performance Management). Member of Stratford on Avon District Council.

Councillors Josie Compton and Michael Doody declared personal interests in any matters affecting the Warwick District Council, as members of that Council.

Councillors Richard Hobbs and Izzi Seccombe declared prejudicial interests relating to Agenda Item 23 – South Justice Centre as members of the Police Authority. Councillor Colin Hayfield declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 23 as a Magistrate.

Councillor Richard Hobbs also declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 1(3) Matters Arising on the Minutes of the last meeting relating to Consultation on PPS3 in view of his land interests.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse declared a personal interest in both Agenda Items 4 and 5, Fairer Charging – Care at Home Services and Fairer Access to Care Services – A Well-Being Threshold in view of his wife's employment.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd February 2006 and Matters Arising.

(i) Minutes

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Cabinet's 12th January 2006 meeting be approved.

(ii) Matters Arising

Minute 16 New Draft national Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing

Councillor Richard Hobbs left the meeting for this item.

Councillor Chris Saint indicated that PPG3 advised that there was no presumption of development over the whole of large brownfield sites, e.g. hospitals and airfields but that this qualification had been omitted from the current consultation relating to PPS3. He expressed concern that this could create an open door to developers, with little regulation.

The Cabinet agreed to an urgent supplementary letter being sent on behalf of the Council making further representations that the simplified definition of brownfield land reduces the control over the release of land for housing, causing lack of conformity with spatial strategies.

(4) Request for Discussion of En Bloc Item.

It was agreed that items 12, 15 and 17 would be discussed before decisions were taken.

2. Completion of the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA2) 2006-2009

The Cabinet considered the report and a supplementary report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

The Cabinet had deferred consideration of this matter on 2nd February 2006. Subsequently, excellent progress had been made and provisional agreement reached with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the overall content of the LPSA2 agreement. The final version of the draft agreement had not been received from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister when the Agenda was dispatched.

The supplementary report had been circulated following receipt of the draft Agreement. The reports described the progress that had been made, and gave detailed information on the targets that have been provisionally agreed with central government.

During his introduction of the item Councillor Bob Stevens the officers for the work undertaken, in particular Nick Gower-Johnson. He

indicated that regular reports would be submitted to the Cabinet and then to Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

It was then Resolved:-

- (1) That Cabinet supports and adopts the Local Public Service Agreement 2 (LPSA2) 2006-2009 on behalf of the County Council
- (2) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Chief Executive to finalise and enter into LPSA2 on behalf of the County Council

3. Response to Consultation on the Future of Local Strategic Partnerships.

The Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

This paper summarised the current ODPM Consultation on the future of Local Strategic Partnerships. The paper contained a draft County Council response to the specific questions raised within it. The consultation was taking place at a highly relevant time and coincides with the Council's early work on the development of the Local Area Agreement and the partnership and governance issues that this raised. The Cabinet was asked to consider and comment upon the draft response which will then, subject to any amendments, be forwarded to ODPM prior to the consultation deadline of 3rd March 2006.

During his introduction of the item Councillor Chris Saint referred to sub paragraph a) of the proposed response relating to two tier areas and urged members to include regeneration in the list of county-wide responsibilities.

Councillor Bob Stevens considered that, having regard to the importance of partnership working sub paragraph a) should be reworded. He suggested amended wording (which is set out in the resolution below).

Members discussed several aspects of the proposed Agreement and raised a number of points, including:-

- o The possible impact on the arrangements of the expected White Paper relating to Local Government Reorganisation.
- o The significance of the reference to Local Strategic Partnerships in the Governments consultations about Police Reform.
- o The involvement of members in the government of all partnerships and the simplification of matters through the Local Area Agreements.

- o Opportunity for ongoing debate at the forthcoming seminar.

It was then Resolved:-

(1) That the Cabinet authorise the Strategic Director for Performance and Development to forward the response to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Warwickshire Members of Parliament.

(2) That sub paragraph a) be amended to read:

“ a) Ensuring that the role of the County Councils as the authority with a county-wide responsibility for education, social care, strategic planning and regeneration - is reflected in any delineation of responsibilities between county and district-based partnerships.”

(3) That the response be signed by the Cabinet portfolio holder and the other political group spokespersons.

4. Fairer Charging – Care at Home Services

The Cabinet considered the report of the Interim Director of Adult Social Care.

The report had been prepared in response to advice contained in the performance assessment report from CSCI and the 2004/05 Strategic Review of Older People and set out a proposal for a revised charging policy options as a basis for consultation.

During his introduction of this item Councillor Colin Hayfield indicated that the proposed system was expected to be cost neutral and would enable consistency in approach to care at home..

During the discussion members raised several points including the need for views on the fairness of the system and the appeal process in any future reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet:

- (1) Notes the issues highlighted by the Commission for Social Care Inspection regarding the Council's existing approach to care at home charges.

- (2) Approves the proposed revised charging policy options as a basis for a statutory consultation exercise.
- (3) Notes that the feedback from the consultation exercise and a recommended revised charging policy will be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet.
- (4) Invites the relevant overview and scrutiny committee to consider the consultation response and advise on further progression of the revised charging policy framework.

5. Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) - A Well-Being Threshold

The Cabinet considered the report of the Interim Director Adult Social Care.

The paper built on earlier work considered through the scrutiny process and proposed that the eligibility threshold for Adult Social Services, as set out in the FACS Framework, should be modernised to embrace the well-being agenda being pursued by Government. The implementation would be project managed in line with available resources determined through the Council's corporate budget process.

Following introductory comments from Councillor Colin Hayfield it was Resolved:-

That the Cabinet:

- (1) Approves the proposed changes to Fair Access criteria as submitted to enable the Council to develop, in partnership where appropriate, a co-ordinated low intensity support service,[A Bit of Help] with special reference to older people,
- (2) Invites the Adult and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor the development and implementation of new arrangements for low intensity support and advise Cabinet on progress as appropriate
- (3) Notes the financial implications of change and the ability to meet them within relevant approved budgets for 2006/07.

6. The County Council's Response to Government Consultation on Planning Gain Supplement.

The Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

During his introduction of the item Councillor Chris Saint expressed his support for the amended recommendation that had been circulated before the meeting indicating that the Cabinet should “broadly” support the principle of planning-gain supplement. He also suggested that the last sentence of paragraph 4.2 should be amended by the substitution of “.....it is proposed that all local authority development should be exempt” by “suitable criteria be proposed for local authority development to overcome this issue.”

It was then Resolved:-

That the Cabinet broadly supports the principle of planning-gain supplement and the proposed responses to consultation set out in this report subject amended as set out above.

7. Rokeby Primary Schools

The Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families.

The report sought approval in principle to the proposal to amalgamate Rokeby Infant School and Rokeby Junior School and authorisation that further consultation be undertaken on a revised proposal.

During his introduction of this item Councillor John Burton indicated that a site visit should be arranged for all members before a final decision was taken on this matter. He added that the views of children at the schools would also be sought.

Councillor John Vereker, the local member and Chair of the Rugby Area Committee, outlined the reasoning behind the Area Committee’s views.

Resolved:-

(1) That the proposal to amalgamate Rokeby Infant School and Rokeby Junior School be approved in principle and that further consultation be authorised on a revised proposal to base the resultant primary school on the site of the existing infant building.

(2) That a site visit for all councillor be arranged prior to the final decision being taken.

8. Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2006

The Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

The County Council had a statutory responsibility to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP set out the County's Transport Strategy, and provided the framework for how transport and accessibility would be improved across Warwickshire over the next five years. The County Council submitted a Provisional LTP to the Department for Transport in July 2005. A Final version of the Plan had been prepared following a public consultation held during Autumn 2005.

The Cabinet was invited to endorse the proposed response of the Authority to the concerns and issues raised by consultees, and endorse the Final Plan to the Council for formal adoption.

During the debate Councillor Alan Cockburn requested that the cycleway project between Kenilworth and Leamington should be included in the report to provide greater opportunity to attract funding. This was agreed.

Councillor Martin Heatley moved the recommendations and following comments about the problems relating to the reinstatement of the Stratford to Honeybourne Railway Line, it was Resolved:-

That the Cabinet:

- (1) Notes the results of the public consultation on the Provisional Local Transport Plan (LTP), and approves the proposed response of the County Council to the issues and comments raised in the consultation.
- (2) Recommends that Council adopts the Final LTP (including any minor modifications proposed to them by the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy).
- (3) Supports the inclusion of Virtual Bank and Prudential borrowing within the LTP Delivery Strategy as the proposed method of funding the introduction of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement (DPE) in Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick and North Warwickshire Areas.
- (4) Supports the draft allocation of resources in the LTP Delivery Strategy subject to the inclusion in it of the additional statement in paragraph 6.5 of the report.

9. Draft Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy 2006-2010

The report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy was considered.

The vision of the Department's new Strategy was "to create a sustainable and vibrant local economy which promotes employment and prosperity for all". It was based on three strategic objectives:-

- o To improve the competitiveness of the local economy.
- o To provide clear leadership and influence.
- o To build community capacity to reduce social exclusion and embed sustainable regeneration.

The Cabinet was asked to approve the Strategy.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet endorses the draft Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy 2006–2010 and recommends the County Council to adopt it.

10. Adoption and Children Act 2002 – Special Guardianship

The report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families was considered.

The report outlined the introduction of Special Guardianship Orders being introduced from 30th December 2005 as part of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. It proposed that Special Guardianship Orders provide for some children an appropriate permanency option in addition to Adoption and Residence Orders. It also proposed a policy that support to carers applying for a Special Guardianship Order mirrors the current schemes for Adoption and Residence Orders.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet agrees a policy to introduce support, including financial assistance, for Special Guardianship Orders that complements the existing schemes for adoption allowances and Residence Order allowances to enable some children and young people to be secured in permanency placements with their carers.

11. Licensing Act 2003

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director, Libraries, Heritage & Trading Standards.

The duty to enforce the provisions of the Licensing Act 1964 had previously been delegated to the Trading Standards Service. As this legislation had now been revoked, to discharge the Council's duty efficiently, the responsibility for the enforcement of sections 146 and 147 of the Licensing Act 2003 should be delegated to an appropriate Head of Service/Chief Officer and the Council's constitution amended accordingly.

Following introductory comments from Councillor Richard Hobbs members asked that staff concerned be thanked for the work undertaken.

Resolved:-

That the Director of Libraries, Heritage and Trading Standards or his/her nominee be authorised to exercise the functions of the County Council in relation to offences concerning the sale of alcohol to children under the Licensing Act 2003 and that the Director of Performance and Development be requested accordingly to amend Paragraph 13 of Part 6, Section, Part 2 of the Constitution by replacing references to provisions of the Licensing Act 1964 with references to sections 146 and 147 of the 2003 Act.

12. Food Standards Agency Audit Report

The report of the Director, Libraries, Heritage & Trading Standards was considered.

The Food Standards Agency had recently conducted an audit of the Food Standards work conducted by the Trading Standards Service. The report was complimentary about the broadly based work in Warwickshire that involved stakeholders at many stages. No improvement plan was necessary.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Cabinet agree the Trading Standards Service aims and objectives for Food Standards remain current and appropriate.
- (2) That the Trading Standards Service and in particular those who have contributed to the Food Standards work are congratulated on the FSA audit result.

13. Corporate Governance Audit 2005

The joint report of the Strategic Director of Performance & Development and Strategic Director of Resources was considered.

The report summarised the outcomes of the Corporate Governance Audit 2005 and made recommendations about the action to be taken.

Resolved:-

That the views of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Standards Committee are endorsed and in particular:-

- (1) That Cabinet approves the areas for improvement set out in the Draft Action Plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report.
- (2) That each Strategic Director prepares a Directorate Action Plan to address the areas for improvement identified in the 2005 Audit to set targets for improvement and reports on progress to the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Standards Committee in 12 months time.
- (3) That the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives an update report on the action plans at its meeting in November 2006

14. Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy was considered.

The report related to the results of the consultation exercise on the Draft Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the included proposals to modify the Plan for publication in April 2006.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet adopts the Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006- 2016 with amendments proposed within the report.

15. Birmingham International Airport Draft Master Plan: Towards 2030.

The report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy was considered.

Following the Government's White Paper on the Future of Air Transport, which was published in December 2003, Birmingham International Airport (BIA) had published its consultation draft Airport Master Plan for 2030. The report set out the County Council's proposed response to the consultation, particularly in terms of its implications for surface access to BIA.

The Cabinet was invited to authorise that a formal response be made to the consultation based on these observations.

Councillor Peter Fowler reported, on behalf of Councillor Joan Lee, that local residents were concerned about the proposals and in particular, the lack of information about air pollution and evening flights. He indicated that local people already had to endure a great deal of inconvenience including disturbance from motorway traffic.

It was then Resolved:-

That Cabinet authorises the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy to submit a response incorporating the points summarised in Section 5 of the report.

16. Review of Contract Standing Orders

The report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development was considered.

The report summarised the outcome of the phase 2 review of the Council's Contract Standing Orders and proposed amendments to be endorsed by Cabinet and to be approved by Council.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet endorses the amendments proposed to Contract Standing Orders and Contract Standing Orders for Schools as set out in this report and recommends their approval by the County Council.

17. Irrecoverable Debts

The report of the Interim Director of Adult Social Care was considered.

Authority was requested to write off 39 irrecoverable debts, which the Director of Performance and Development had advised he was unable to pursue any further.

Resolved:-

That the 39 debts amounting to £122,167.45 referred to in the report be written off as irrecoverable.

18. Any Other Items

There were no urgent items to consider.

19. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

Resolved:-

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Local Government Act 1972'.

20. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd February 2006 and Matters Arising.

Resolved:-

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2006 be approved as a correct record and the minutes be signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

21. Coleshill Parkway Transport Interchange - Approval to Enter Into a Partnership Agreement, Approval of the Scheme's Financial Aspects and Approval to Enter a Land Lease and Easement

The report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

Final approval of Central Government funding for Coleshill Parkway Transport Interchange is anticipated imminently from the Department for Transport. In order for construction to commence and the scheme to operate, a partnership agreement and a land lease will be required.

22. Electrical Reactive/Planned Maintenance and Minor Improvement Work at County Buildings.

Report of the Strategic Director of Resources.

The Cabinet agreed the further extension of the Measured Term Contract

23. Southern Justice Centre Project / 1 and 2 Euston Square

Councillors Richard Hobbs and Izzi Seccombe left the room for this item.

The Cabinet considered the joint report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development and the Head of Finance, Resources Directorate, which dealt with the criminal justice centres and land issues affecting the County Council.

24. Rugby Western Relief Road

The report of the Report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

The Cabinet considered several issues arising from the recommendations from the Inspector's report and the Secretary of State's decision on the Orders.

The Cabinet rose at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee

The Cabinet

Date of Committee

9th March 2006

Report Title

Proposed closure of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School, Rugby

Summary

This report summarises the outcome of the proposal to close (formally to cease to maintain) Bishop Wulstan School in Rugby and presents the options for the way forward.

For further information please contact:

Mark Gore
Assistant County Education Officer (Strategy)
Tel: 01926 412887
markgore@warwickshire.gov.uk

Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]

No

Background papers

- Draft School Organisation Framework document 2005/10
- Cabinet report 12th January 2006
- Consultation document, January 2006

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

Other Committees

- Rugby Area Committee, 6th March 2006

Local Member(s)

- Cllr John Vereker – Caldecott – *“I hope the Cabinet will keep as open a mind as possible while the situation develops”*
Cllr Ian Smith – Caldecott

Other Elected Members

- O&S Spokespersons for information:
Cllr Helen McCarthy
Cllr Richard Grant – *“Pupil numbers are the vital key to the viability and sustainability of the school. I understand that there are some very positive and*

innovative proposals being worked on to secure Catholic provision in Rugby to which the Cabinet should give serious consideration."

Cllr Jill Dill-Russell

- Cabinet Member Cllr John Burton – *“a good comprehensive report”*
- Other Cabinet Members consulted Cllr Izzi Seccombe – *“approve for Cabinet consideration”*
Cllr Peter Fowler – *“happy for Cabinet to consider”*
- Chief Executive
- Legal Jane Pollard / Richard Freeth – *“fine”*
- Finance David Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources – no comments to make
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals Governing body, staff and parents/carers of pupils at the school
Other local schools in the area, other Catholic secondary schools in the county, Diocesan Authorities, neighbouring Education Authorities and all other stakeholders

FINAL DECISION **NO**

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS: Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

The Cabinet – 9th March 2006

Proposed closure of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School, Rugby

Report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families

Recommendations:

- (1) That feedback from the formal consultation concerning the proposal to cease to maintain Bishop Wulstan Catholic School, Rugby, with effect from 31st August 2006, be noted.
- (2) That the proposal to close Bishop Wulstan School should not be proceeded with.
or
That officers be authorised to publish statutory notices of the Authority's intention to close Bishop Wulstan School with effect from 31st August 2006.
or
That this matter be considered at the meeting of the Cabinet on 25th May 2006 with a further report on the innovative proposal being developed by the Arch-diocese of Birmingham on the future of Bishop Wulstan School.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At their meeting on 12th January, Cabinet agreed that the Strategic Director should conduct a formal consultation on proposals to cease to maintain Bishop Wulstan Catholic School in Rugby with effect from 31st August 2006.
- 1.2 A consultation paper was published on 20th January and comments were requested by 20th February. The consultation paper was sent to other local schools, Diocesan Authorities, neighbouring Education Authorities, the local Parish Councils, trade unions, other Catholic secondary schools in Warwickshire, all parents and prospective parents seeking admission in September 2006, and staff and governors of the school. A copy of the consultation document is attached as **Appendix A** to this report. During the period of the consultation a series of scheduled meetings took place with the governing body and staff of the school and a public meeting was held mainly

for parents of pupils at the school. The Rugby Area Committee will also consider the proposal at a special meeting on 6th March.

2. Background to the proposal

- 2.1 Bishop Wulstan Catholic School is an 11-16 years High School serving the Catholic community of the Rugby area. The school has been of concern to both the Authority and the Diocesan Schools Commission (DSC) for some time. In fact the school has been in the Authority's category of concern continuously for a number of years although it was not placed in a category of concern by Ofsted following the most recent inspection in 2003. Over that period the Local Authority and the DSC have provided significant levels of external support to the school, to effect changes in the leadership and management of the school, to support teaching and learning and to deal with high levels of unauthorised absence and fixed-term exclusions.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 12th January the Cabinet received a report drawing the attention of Members to two important issues:
- In the Summer of 2005 Bishop Wulstan achieved only 12% 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE, the lowest level of attainment in the county and amongst the lowest in the country.
 - For September 2006 parents of only 25 pupils had expressed a first preference for Bishop Wulstan School.
- 2.3 In the light of these ongoing concerns and the very low level of subscription for admissions for September 2006, the County Education Officer took the view that the school was no longer educationally viable and could not sustain the curriculum and the improvement necessary to achieve acceptable levels of attainment. Cabinet agreed to a recommendation that consultation should take place on a proposal to close (formally to cease to maintain the school) with effect from 31st August 2006.
- 2.4 The background to the proposal is given more fully in attached consultation document (Appendix A).

3. Response to the consultation

- 3.1 Meetings were held as part of the consultation with governors and with staff. A third meeting was held at the school for parents and other interested parties, which was attended by around 500 people.

Notes of the comments made and questions raised at these three meetings are attached as **Appendix B**.

- 3.2 A total of 255 e-mails and letters were received in response to the consultation, including:

- a response from the headteacher and governors of Bishop Wulstan School
- a response from the Archdiocese of Birmingham
- 113 letters and e-mails from parents and families of pupils currently in the school
- 21 letters from current pupils
- 15 letters from staff at the school
- 13 letters from other schools
- 91 letters from others.

A copy of the response from the headteacher and governors of the school is given as **Appendix C**.

A copy of the response from the Diocesan Schools Commission on behalf of the Archdiocese of Birmingham is given as **Appendix D**. This sets out an innovative alternative scheme which could secure the future viability of Catholic provision in Rugby.

- 3.3 Copies of all the letters and e-mails received have been placed in folders in each of the group rooms. While a summary of the main points raised in discussion is given below, Members will find it helpful to read the responses themselves in order to be aware of the strength of feeling which has been engendered by this proposal. It is perhaps not surprising but none of the responses supports the Authority's proposal and there are many well articulated arguments given to retain the school.

4. Summary of the responses to the consultation

The main points made at the various meetings and in the responses received are summarised below under the following headings:

1. Pupil numbers
2. Standards and levels of achievement
3. Parental choice – Catholic provision
– Small school provision
4. Consultation process
5. Funding
6. Arrangements in the event of closure.

A commentary in response to the issues raised is also given.

4.1 Pupil numbers

4.1.1 *Issues raised in consultation*

The proposal is made on the basis of low pupil numbers but numbers could increase in future years.

The school has a new sports hall and has acquired specialist college status which will make the school more attractive. Insufficient time has been given for people to be aware of these developments.

The school is now able to 'market' itself to parents in the neighbouring Northamptonshire diocese, particularly in Daventry where there is no Catholic secondary provision.

New housing developments in Rugby will lead to more pupils seeking admission.

There are growing numbers of people moving to Rugby from the countries of the European Union, including Portugal and Poland, many of whom are Catholics seeking Catholic provision.

Non-Catholic parents are not aware that they could send their children to Bishop Wulstan. The Authority has not promoted the school.

The publication of the proposal has affected the numbers seeking admission in September 2006.

A number of additional pupils are admitted during the course of each academic year.

4.1.2 Commentary

- (i) The issue of pupil numbers is central to consideration of the future of Bishop Wulstan School. Falling numbers mean decreasing resources and with fewer resources it is increasingly difficult for the school to sustain any improvements already made and to raise the very low level of attainment at 16. The school is already small with a planned admission number of 83 and a capacity of 415. The numbers on roll have fallen over the last few years and currently there are 330 pupils.
- (ii) For September 2006 only 43 parents expressed any preference for Bishop Wulstan, of which only 25 gave Bishop Wulstan as a first preference. Most parents who gave Bishop Wulstan a lower preference will be offered their first preference. The school is therefore unlikely to admit more than 30 pupils in September and numbers are likely to fall to below 300 even allowing for some admissions mid year. If the trend in subscription for Year 7 continues then numbers will continue to fall, and the school could become financially and educationally unviable.
- (iii) There is general acceptance in response to the consultation that if the school admits only around one form of entry and numbers continue to fall, the school is indeed unviable. It is the view of the school however, supported by many of the respondents, that this trend can be reversed and that the school can win back the confidence of the Catholic community and parents more generally in Rugby and beyond.

- (iv) The response from the school, supported by many letters and e-mails for example, draws attention to the new sports hall (completed in November 2004) and the newly acquired Business and Enterprise Specialist College status. They point out that there has been insufficient time for people to become aware of these developments. There is no doubt that these represent significant achievements for the school but it should be noted that every other secondary school in Rugby also has specialist college status and a number have or soon will have sports halls.
- (v) The responses to consultation refer also to the agreement reached between the Archdiocese of Birmingham and the neighbouring Diocese of Northampton which allows the school to recruit from Daventry which has no Catholic secondary provision. The Head of Bishop Wulstan reports considerable interest in the Catholic parish in Daventry. This agreement does present a very good opportunity to attract Catholics from a wider area to the school. However for this to be successful the school will have to win the confidence of that Catholic community in the same way as it will need to win back the support of the Catholic community in Rugby. It should be noted also that although protocols exist between Catholic dioceses in regard to recruitment to Catholic schools across Diocesan boundaries, there is no obstacle in law to parents, who are Catholic or non-Catholic and living in Northamptonshire, seeking and being given a place at Bishop Wulstan. It should be noted too that Northamptonshire does not have a policy of providing free or subsidised transport to parents seeking denominational provision.
- (vi) Respondents to the consultation are correct to point out the significant housing developments in the town at Cawston, to the north of the town and planned on the former Alstom/Cattle Market site. These developments will increase the demand for secondary school places although offset to some extent by falling rolls in primary schools. There is also some evidence supported by a number of letters that there is a growing number of economic migrants to Rugby from elsewhere in the European Union, in particular from countries like Poland, many of whom are Catholic and seeking Catholic provision. A number of letters have been received (some in Polish) from families in this position. Again these factors are very positive in terms of potential recruitment to the school but it should be noted that over the last two or three years many new houses have already been built at the same time that levels of subscription to Bishop Wulstan have fallen.
- (vii) Some respondents have suggested that admissions to Bishop Wulstan have been undermined by the Authority by allowing other schools to admit above their planned admission number (PAN) and by allowing Avon Valley School to expand. So far as Community schools are concerned, the Authority will only allow schools to go beyond the PAN to admit children from the priority area of the school (and in some cases pupils who live outside the area but with siblings already in the school). The Authority asks Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools where the governors are responsible for admission policy to adopt a similar approach. Agreement has been given to the expansion of Avon Valley School to meet increased demand for places from the priority area of the school where there has been considerable development.

- (viii) It is clearly not in the interests of the Authority to undermine admission to Bishop Wulstan as has been suggested by one or two respondents.
- (ix) Some respondents have suggested the Authority should have done more to promote Bishop Wulstan and that non-Catholic parents were not aware that they could seek places at the school. In relation to the first point, the Authority cannot promote one school rather than another, but is required to publish information on all schools. The booklet on admission sent to parents contains information largely supplied by the schools themselves. The information on Bishop Wulstan does make clear that priority is given to Catholics but non-Catholics may seek places. Indeed many do attend the school. Nearly half the pupils currently in the school are not Catholic.
- (x) It is the case that Bishop Wulstan does admit a number of pupils during the course of the year, including people moving into the area but also pupils excluded from other schools.

Summary

Viability is a key question in the debate about the future of Bishop Wulstan School. Actual numbers on roll and the trend in admissions in Year 7 lend officers to believe that the school is not viable. The school and many respondents point to a number of factors both within the school and external which when taken together provide a good platform for the school to turn round current perceptions of the school and recruit more strongly.

4.2 Standards and levels of achievement

4.2.1 Issues raised in consultation

The school should not close because it does not meet Government standards at GCSE.

The indicator 5+ A*-C is only one indicator. There are other indicators which are more positive.

The contextual value added data at Key Stage 3 puts the school in the first percentile of schools in English and amongst the best in the county in mathematics and science.

The proposal is made on the basis of low pupil numbers but numbers could increase in future years.

The GCSE results in 2005 were disappointing but are unreliable as an indicator. The school has many pupils with special educational needs and very high pupil mobility.

4.2.2 Commentary

- (i) There is some evidence cited by the school which suggests the potential for improved results at the school. In particular this is the contextual value added date for Key Stage 3 which, taking account of prior attainment and other factors, shows good progress for pupils on average between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. However there are other statistics which are less positive and the Authority continues to have concerns about levels of attainment and achievement.
- (ii) The standards achieved by pupils by the time they leave the school are very low and declining. The Government has set a floor target of all schools nationally achieving a minimum of 30% 5+ A*-C grades. In the last two years the school has fallen increasingly below this floor target. In 2005 there were 73 pupils on roll in Year 11. Of these pupils only 8% achieved 5+ higher grades at GCSE including English and mathematics. This is one of the lowest figures for any school in the country. Too many pupils leave the school achieving no GCSE passes at all:

Key Stage 4	2003	2004	2005
5+ A-C	34	20	11
5+ A-C incl E/M		15	8
No passes	10	11	8

Pupil achievement is significantly below expectations. Even when taking into account all contextual factors the school is placed in the lowest 1% of schools for the level of pupil achievement. It is also a concern that the trend in results is declining.

- (iii) In Key Stage 3 pupil attainment has declined in mathematics and science but improved in English. The overall performance of pupils in 2005 was below that reached in the previous two years. The Government set a minimum floor target of 65% of all pupils achieving level 5+ in English, mathematics and science. In the last three years this has only been achieved in English in 2005. However, overall pupil achievement has improved in Key Stage 3 so that the school is ranked in the 13th percentile for similar schools in 2005.
- (iv) Pupils who do well in Key Stage 3 do not always continue to do so in Key Stage 4. For example, of the twelve pupils who obtained level 6+ in mathematics in 2003, only three went on to achieve a grade C in 2005 (no pupil achieved an A or B in mathematics). In other words the rate at which pupils move from average or above results in Key Stage 3 in English and mathematics to higher grades at GCSE is very low compared to other schools.

4.3 Parental choice

4.3.1 Issues raised in consultation

Government policy over many years has been to give parents choice. This is reinforced in proposals from this Government. By proposing closure of Bishop Wulstan, the Council is reducing choice.

Bishop Wulstan is the only Catholic secondary provision in the Rugby area. If closed there will be no Catholic provision available for those seeking denominational Catholic provision. Trinity School in Leamington is too far to provide an alternative.

Many parents have chosen Bishop Wulstan because it is a small school better suited to the needs of their children, and where the staff know all the pupils and all the pupils know each other.

Children currently at Bishop Wulstan and used to its small size would not be able to cope if moved to bigger schools in Rugby.

A small school can better meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and there is less bullying.

4.3.2 Commentary

- (i) This Authority is committed to the principle of parental choice and to diversity in its school provision.
- (ii) The Authority is also committed to the 'dual system' of education established by the 1944 Education Act and has a long tradition of working very closely and successfully with the church authorities to make denominational provision available.
- (iii) The Authority is statutorily required to maintain the proportion of denominational places across the county.
- (iv) It is for these reasons that, although the school has been giving concern for some years, the Authority is only now consulting on the proposal to close the school. For a number of years, the Authority, working with the DSC, has supported the school in order to sustain Catholic provision in the town. However the level of subscription for September 2006 and the unacceptable level of attainment at GCSE in 2005 led officers to conclude that the school was no longer viable and to propose closure. The principles of diversity and parental choice are important but cannot be supported if a school is unable to deliver an acceptable level of education for its pupils.
- (v) Moreover the evidence suggests that, while the Catholic community is keen to preserve denominational provision, insufficient numbers of Catholic parents are choosing Bishop Wulstan School, and that in recent years the school has lost the confidence of the Catholic community.

- (vi) In taking the decision on whether to go forward with the decision to close, Members will therefore need to recognise that closure will end Catholic secondary provision in Rugby and it is unlikely that such provision will be restored in the foreseeable future. Alternative provision in Leamington or Nuneaton is unlikely to be acceptable to Catholic parents because of the very significant distances involved.
- (vii) Members will note that if parents do choose denominational provision then under the Authority's existing policy free transport would be provided if the distance is over three miles. The distance from central Rugby to Trinity School in Leamington is around 18 miles.
- (viii) So far as the size of the school is concerned, it is clear that for many parents and pupils being a small school is attractive. There was much convincing testimony at the public meeting from parents to the way in which Bishop Wulstan had provided for their children, some of whom had special educational needs, some of whom had transferred from other larger schools, some of whom had not coped in larger schools, and one or two of whom were dual registered at Bishop Wulstan and at Brooke (Special) School. There is no doubt that the school has created a very strong caring ethos and is very inclusive and that this ethos is helped by the small size of the school. The difficulty is that the size of the school while attractive to some parents does make the school vulnerable if rolls fall as they have done in recent years and will do in September 2006.
- (ix) As has already been noted, the closure of Bishop Wulstan would reduce elements of the diversity of secondary provision – not only Catholic provision but the opportunity to attend a small school. The capacity of the high schools in Rugby is as follows:

School	Age range	PAN	Capacity
Ashlawn (bilateral)	11-18	256	1,508
Avon Valley	11-16	166 *	830
Bilton High	11-16	285	1,426
Harris (C of E)	11-16	157	750

* It has been agreed that for Avon Valley the PAN will rise to 220 and the capacity to 1,100 from 2007.

- (x) It should be noted that the size of these schools is not out of line with the situation across the country and indeed some Authorities have schools much larger than those in Warwickshire. It is important to recognise also that larger schools put in place pastoral systems which allow high levels of support and care for pupils, and that all the schools in Rugby are committed to meeting the needs of all their pupils including those with special educational needs and very successfully do so. In celebrating the success of Bishop Wulstan in providing care and support it should not be assumed that such care and support is not available in other Rugby schools.

4.4 The consultation process

4.4.1 Issues raised in consultation

The decision to close has already been made.

The period of closure is too short. The consultation and implementation period for the amalgamation of the Rokeby Schools, for example, is much longer.

4.4.2 Commentary

- (i) Officers have made clear throughout the consultation period in all written communications and orally that the only decision taken by the Council is to consult on the proposal. Any decision would only be taken following the period of consultation.
- (ii) A number of respondents were concerned about the short timescale for consultation. Members will be aware that the decision to recommend consultation on a proposal to close the school was prompted by the very low level of subscription which was only known at the end of October. Time was taken subsequently to seek validation of the view that the school could not sustain the improvements necessary and to discuss with, for example, the Archdiocese, the conclusion of officers.
- (iii) Having taken the decision to consult, the view was taken that if the school were to close it would have to be in August 2006. To prolong the period of uncertainty to August 2007, for example, would make it almost impossible to maintain the staffing and curriculum. It would be increasingly likely that over that much longer period, parents would seek places in alternative schools. As a result, the consultation period is necessarily short although within the guidelines.

4.5 Funding

4.5.1 Issues raised in consultation

The proposal is being made as a cost-cutting exercise.

The Authority should increase the level of resources available to the school.

The school has had a balanced budget for the last three years and plan to have a balanced budget in the financial year 2006/07.

4.5.2 Commentary

- (i) It has been made clear throughout the consultation period that the proposal is not borne out of a desire to reduce costs. Indeed if the school were to close,

the Authority would be faced in the short term with significant additional costs. Nevertheless the Authority does have a responsibility to ensure the effective use of resources and value for money.

- (ii) Members will be aware that schools are funded by a formula which includes a 'per school' allocation but is largely based on pupil numbers. In 2004 the Authority changed the formula to provide additional support for small schools like Bishop Wulstan School. However, any further change to the formula would be at the expense of other schools. The cost per pupil at Bishop Wulstan is already the highest in the county. Bishop Wulstan receives approximately £4,500 per pupil. The average in the county is approximately £3,500.
- (iii) It is the case that the school has not been in deficit in the last two years and will be able to balance the budget in 2006/07. This is partly the result of prudent and sound financial management and partly the school receiving over the last three years Leadership Incentive Grant (LIG) totalling over the period £385,000.
- (iv) The concern is that in future years the resources available to the school will reduce as pupil numbers fall and as the LIG funding also reduces (by £33,000 in 2006 and a further £40,000 in each of the next two years). Such significant reduction in funding could significantly impact on the viability of the school.

4.6 Arrangements in the event of closure

4.6.1 Issues raised in consultation

The proposal by the Authority will impact adversely on the education of the pupils currently in the school, particularly those in the middle of GCSE courses.

The current pupils will find it difficult to settle into other schools which are much larger than Bishop Wulstan. Experience elsewhere in the country suggests these pupils may be bullied.

What are the arrangements to be put in place to protect the education of the pupils currently in the school, particularly those in Year 10 moving into Year 11?

Transporting pupils to Trinity School in Leamington is not satisfactory alternative provision, and will be expensive.

Long term how will the Authority find places elsewhere to replace the provision lost if Bishop Wulstan School were to close?

What arrangements will be put in place to protect the interests of the staff of the school during the period of consultation and if the school were to close in September 2006?

4.6.2 Commentary

- (i) The consultation document sets out in broad terms the arrangements the Authority would put in place in the event of closure:
 - (1) Where parents wish to send their children to another Catholic school, e.g. Trinity School in Leamington, free transport will be provided in line with the Council's home-to-school transport policy.
 - (2) Some parents/carers may wish to seek alternative places for their children at other Rugby schools which have places. The County Council will do all it can to facilitate transfers to alternative schools for existing pupils, if the decision is taken to close the school.
 - (3) All those parents whose children are due to transfer to secondary education in September 2006 and who gave first preference to Bishop Wulstan Catholic School will be allowed to express an alternative first preference. Those new preferences will be given equal consideration with those preferences made by the Authority's deadline of 24th October 2005, in the event of closure of the school.
 - (4) In order to protect the curriculum for pupils in the older year groups, arrangements with another school or other schools will be put in place. The details of any such arrangements will only be agreed following an assessment of the individual needs of all existing pupils in the school.
- (ii) In terms of alternative provision, preliminary discussions have taken place with all of the other high schools in Rugby and with Trinity School in Leamington. All have committed to doing all they can to support the Authority in providing for the pupils currently at Bishop Wulstan School in the event of closure. All the schools have co-operated in advising parents not to seek alternative places for their children until a decision has been taken on the proposal. All are committed to providing for and welcoming any pupils who transfer to their school from Bishop Wulstan, and to minimising the disruption.
- (iii) So far as the pupils currently in the middle of GCSE courses are concerned, discussions have taken place about arrangements for these pupils to remain on the Bishop Wulstan site and the curriculum to continue but taught by teachers who would formally be on the staff of another school.
- (iv) Inevitably any process of reorganisation has the potential to disrupt the education of pupils currently in the school. The Authority is committed in the event of closure to minimising the disruption.
- (v) Responses to the consultation suggest that alternative provision short term or in the longer term on the site of Trinity School would not be acceptable to many parents solely because of the travel distances involved.
- (vi) In the longer term, the Authority may need to expand one of the existing Rugby schools by one or two forms of entry to meet the demand for secondary places

in the town in the event of closure. The Authority would, therefore, be faced with significant capital expenditure with no possibility of capital receipts since the site of Bishop Wulstan School is not in the ownership of the County Council.

- (vii) To the credit of the staff the meeting held with them focused very largely on the Authority's proposal and the impact on pupils. However arrangements for protecting the interests of staff set out in broad terms in the consultation document were discussed and further information supplied. The Authority has committed to one-to-one interviews with all staff to consider their individual circumstances, their wishes and aspirations and the support available from the Authority. Members will be aware that closure could involve significant costs if staff are made redundant.

5. Alternative proposal from the Archdiocese of Birmingham

5.1 At the beginning of the consultation, officers made clear that in their view the current situation of the school was untenable, the status quo could not be allowed to continue, and hence the proposal to close. Officers made clear, however, that if proposals were to come forward which presented a viable alternative to closure, the County Council would give such proposals serious consideration.

5.2 The Archdiocese of Birmingham have come forward, following discussion with officers of the Authority, with such a proposal. In brief they propose:

- to establish a new school for pupils aged 3-16 to replace the existing Catholic primary schools (St. Marie's Infant, St. Marie's Junior and English Martyrs Primary) and Bishop Wulstan School
- the school would be two forms of entry in the primary phase and three forms of entry in the secondary phase giving a school of around 900 pupils, possibly operating on two or three sites
- the school would be established as a Roman Catholic academy for which the sponsor would be the Archdiocese of Birmingham who would make the capital contribution required to establish such an 'academy'. The remainder of the capital cost would be provided by the Department for Education and Skills.

The proposal is set out in full in the DSC's response to the consultation given at Appendix D.

5.3 All the Catholic schools concerned have expressed support for exploring this alternative proposal further.

5.4 The Director of Schools of the DSC with officers of the Authority has had a preliminary discussion with officials from the DfES who reacted positively to the initial proposal put forward by the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

- 5.5 There are very significant hurdles to be overcome and a great deal of detail to be worked out in this proposal is to be implemented. However the possibility of a 3-16 school has been discussed informally previously but it was felt that it would be unlikely to gain the support of the Catholic schools in Rugby. That support, at least to explore this proposal, now exists.
- 5.6 Members will appreciate the decision to close Bishop Wulstan School has major implications for the children currently in the school but also in the future pattern of secondary school provision in Rugby. If Bishop Wulstan School were to close, there would be no Catholic secondary provision in the area for the foreseeable future. The County Council is committed to considering any alternative provision which would secure viable and high quality Catholic provision in Rugby. In these circumstances, Members may wish to defer a decision on the future of the school in order to give time to investigate further this alternative proposal.
- 5.7 Such a decision to defer is not without difficulties since it would lengthen the period of uncertainty for staff, pupils, parents and prospective parents. It may be necessary, therefore, to commit to the school staying open until the end of the school year 2006/07. This would have the advantage of giving the time to the school, which they have asked for, to put in place its strategy for pupil recruitment.

6. The way forward

- 6.1 The Authority's case is founded on the actual current situation facing the school: falling numbers and a very low level of subscription for admissions in September 2006 which, in the view of officers, makes the school unviable and sustainable improvement on very low level of attainment very difficult. The school are clear in their response that they can reverse the trend in admissions and that the potential for much better results is already there.

Members will need to make a judgement as to whether that potential exists in deciding whether or not to move to the next stage of consultation on closure.

- 6.2 Members may, however, consider that the alternative proposal put forward by the Archdiocese of Birmingham is worthy of further exploration and may wish, therefore, to defer the decision to allow time to a strict and agreed timetable to explore the proposal further.

- 6.3 The Cabinet are asked to agree:

- that the proposal to close Bishop Wulstan School should not be proceeded with,

or

- that officers be authorised to publish statutory notices of the Authority's intention to close Bishop Wulstan School with effect from 31st August 2006

or

- that the County Council does not proceed with the proposal to close Bishop Wulstan School to allow time for the Archdiocese of Birmingham to explore further the alternative proposal they have made to secure Catholic provision in Rugby with a further report to the Cabinet on progress on the proposal to their meeting on 25th May.

MARION DAVIS
Strategic Director for Children,
Young People and Families

22 Northgate Street
Warwick

24th February 2006

Consultation

Proposal To Close
Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

January 2006

1. The Proposal

The Cabinet of the County Council has agreed to consult on a proposal to cease to maintain (to close) Bishop Wulstan Catholic School with effect from 31 August 2006.

It is important to note that at this stage no decision has been taken, except to consult on this proposal. No decision will be taken until after consultation has taken place with parents and pupils, governors, staff, the church authorities, the community and other interested parties.

The purpose of this document is to set out the background to the proposal and the arrangements to be put in place if the school were to close.

The County Council wishes to hear your views. If you have any comments on the proposals then please write to:

Mark Gore
Deputy County Education Officer
Education Department
22 Northgate Street
Warwick
CV34 4SP

Email: markgore@warwickshire.gov.uk

The closing date for comments is 20 February 2006. All comments will be made available to the Cabinet when they take their decision.

2. The Background to the Proposal

Bishop Wulstan is a Catholic 11-16 high school in Rugby where there is a selective system of education. In January 2006 there were 330 pupils on roll. This number is very low for a secondary school. 162 of these pupils attending the school are Catholics.

It is the view of the County Education Officer that Bishop Wulstan Catholic School, as a result of falling numbers on roll, is no longer financially nor educationally viable. This situation means that the school is unlikely to be able to sustain the curriculum and therefore achieve acceptable levels of attainment and consistently sustain the improvements necessary to secure the future viability of the school.

Falling pupil numbers

The school has a planned admission number of 83 giving a capacity of 415.

Table 1 shows the number on roll in each year group in January 2006.

Table 1

Numbers on roll – January 2006

Year	7	51
	8	52
	9	72
	10	79
	11	76
Total		330

The number of pupils on roll has fallen from 369 five years ago to 330 in January 2006. This means that the school has 85 empty places. Only 25 applications for admission in September 2006 have been received by the closing date. Assuming all of those pupils are admitted, numbers on roll in September 2006 will fall to around 275. If this trend continues then pupil numbers will continue to fall markedly in future years.

Levels of Attainment

There are many indications of the success of a school, for example 'value added data' which shows the progress of pupils compared with their levels of attainment when they entered the school. Such data, including the value added data at the end of Key Stage 3, is positive and suggests that Bishop Wulstan Catholic School does well by a number of its pupils and there are some signs of further improvement. However looking at one of the Government's key indicators, the percentage of pupils who achieve 5+ A* - C grades in GCSE, this figure is too low and declining. The school is not reaching its predicted targets. Table 2 shows that in September 2003 34% of pupils achieved 5+ A* - C; in September 2005 that figure fell to only 12%. This placed the school in the lowest 1% nationally.

Table 2

Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE

	2003	2004	2005
5+ A*-C	34% (53%)	20% (54%)	12% (56%)

Figures in brackets are the corresponding average figures for the Local Authority.

Much has been done in an attempt to make improvements and raise standards, including recruiting and retention of appropriate staff, securing funding from the Department for Education & Skills for a Sports Hall and achieving specialist college status. Both the Authority and the Diocesan Schools Commission have over the years provided very high levels of support. The Authority is of the view that the support it has given is unsustainable in the long term.

However, on the basis of the evidence and despite the clear leadership in the school and the best efforts of the headteacher, the staff and governors, it is the view of the County Education Officer that the school will be unable to meet acceptable levels of attainment by September 2006, or in future years.

3. Arrangements for Pupils in the event of Closure

Clearly in any process of closure the highest priority is to protect the education of the pupils currently in the school. If the decision is made to close the school:

- (1) Where parents wish to send their child to another Catholic School, eg. Trinity School in Leamington, free transport will be provided in line with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.
- (2) Some parents/carers may wish to seek alternative places for their children at other Rugby schools which have places. The County Council will do all it can to facilitate transfers to alternative schools for existing pupils, if the decision is taken to close the school.

- (3) All those parents whose children are due to transfer to secondary education in September 2006 and who gave first preference to Bishop Wulstan Catholic School will be allowed to express an alternative first preference. Those new preferences will be given equal consideration with those preferences made by the Authority's deadline of 24 October 2005, in the event of closure of the school.
- (4) In order to protect the curriculum for pupils in the older year groups, arrangements with another school or other schools will be put in place. The details of any such arrangements will only be agreed following an assessment of the individual needs of all existing pupils in the school.

Parents are strongly advised not to seek alternative places for their children until the final decision has been taken on this proposal. It is unlikely to be in the best interests of children to move school in the middle of the school year.

4. Arrangements for Staff in the event of Closure

In addition to securing the education of pupils, the County Council will do all it can to protect the interests of staff by facilitating re-deployment and in some circumstances redundancy and retirement.

Detailed individual discussions will be held with all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching and including the headteacher, to discuss their particular circumstances and wishes. A consideration in those discussions with staff would be the need to protect the curriculum for existing pupils.

In Aided schools like Bishop Wulstan Catholic School the governing body is the contractual employer and legal responsibility, therefore, rests with the governors. However, the principles and Code of Practice in the Authority's policies are equally applicable to all schools maintained by the Authority whether Foundation, Aided or Community. The Authority will therefore treat staff in Bishop Wulstan in relation to this policy in the same way as staff in Community schools.

This Policy includes a redeployment Code of Practice that states that the Authority will make every effort to redeploy staff to vacancies which arise within other Warwickshire schools. In order to do that, the Authority will make every effort to promote the redeployment prospects of staff by exploring appropriate training or retraining opportunities. This may include use of a range of the Authority's personnel, courses at local institutes of higher education, and training for application and interview skills.

The Policy also encompasses procedures and payments to be applied in the circumstance of premature retirement, voluntary redundancy or compulsory redundancy.

The Authority will undertake, in association with the governing body, regular and thorough consultation with the recognised professional associations and trade unions on all relevant staffing matters and will consider issues identified. The Authority will also ensure that the Archdiocese are party to that consultation.

The Authority will look to provide all relevant advice and support to the governing body in dealing with the staffing issues associated with a potential closure.

5. The Process

Stage 1 – Formal Consultation 20 January to 20 February 2006

This document sets out the proposal on which the County Council is seeking comments and views. No decision has been made at this stage other than to consult on the proposal.

Copies of this consultation document have been sent to:

- Parents of pupils currently attending Bishop Wulstan School
- Parents of pupils who have expressed a preference to attend Bishop Wulstan Catholic School from September 2006
- Governors and Staff
- Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham and the Catholic Diocese of Northampton
- Primary and secondary schools in the Rugby area
- Other interested parties including the Borough Councillors, all Parish Councils in East Warwickshire, all admission authorities and neighbouring Local Authorities, teacher associations and trade unions, the Learning & Skills Council.

Further copies are available from the school and from local libraries.

As well as seeking written responses a series of consultation meetings with Governors, Staff and parents have been arranged as follows:

- **Meeting for all staff of Bishop Wulstan School on 6 February at 3.30pm**
- **Meeting for the Governing Body of Bishop Wulstan School on 6 February at 5.45pm**
- **A meeting for all parents of children attending Bishop Wulstan School on 6 February at 7.30pm.**

All meetings will be held at the school.

It is important that we have your views on the proposal.

The closing date for comments is **20 February 2006**.

The proposal, together with feedback from the consultation, will be reported to the Rugby Area Committee so that its comments can be forwarded to the Cabinet of Warwickshire County Council.

Stage 2 – Decision whether or not to adopt proposal and publish notices

The outcome of consultation will be reported to the Cabinet at its meeting on 9 March 2006. The Cabinet may decide not to go forward with the proposal at this stage. If however they do decide to continue with the proposal, the Authority is required to publish statutory notices of its intentions.

Stage 3 – Publication of statutory notices

Notices would be published at the School and in the local press for a six-week period, beginning on 24 March and running to 5 May. This would give a further opportunity to interested parties to comment on or object to the proposals.

Stage 4 – Final Decision

If there were no objections the matter could be determined by the Cabinet at its meeting on 25 May, subject to confirmation by the County Council.

If there were to be objections to the closure, the matter would be considered by the Warwickshire School Organisation Committee (SOC) as soon as possible in May. The SOC is a body independent of the County Council which includes representatives of the Council, the Church Authorities, Schools and the Learning & Skills Council. Should the groups represented on the SOC be unable to reach unanimous agreement, the matter would be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. He aims to give a final decision within eight working weeks.

6. SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Have alternatives to closure been considered?

Recognising the sustained commitment of the governors and headteacher the Local Authority and the Diocesan Schools Commission (DSC) have explored a number of options with a view to strengthening the position of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School. These options have included federation with other Catholic schools, formal or informal links with other high schools in Rugby with enhanced joint working, and links with a local independent Catholic school. For a variety of reasons none was felt to be genuinely viable and none was judged likely to provide a solution to the very low levels of recruitment, in particular from the Catholic community in Rugby.

Why is the proposal being made now?

The Authority and the Diocesan Schools Commission (DSC) have been concerned to maintain if at all possible Catholic secondary provision in Rugby, and have worked with the school to secure improvements and raise standards. However, numbers and levels of attainment have fallen in the last two to three years to a point at which, in the view of the County Education Officer, the school is no longer viable and an acceptable standard of education cannot be provided.

Could the Authority provide more funding?

The Authority is required to fund schools on the basis of a formula which is largely based on pupil numbers. If numbers fall then the money allocated to the school is reduced. In 2004 the Authority changed the formula to provide additional support for small schools like Bishop Wulstan Catholic School. However any further change to the formula of this sort is at the expense of other schools. The cost per pupil at Bishop Wulstan Catholic School is already much higher than the county average and will rise as pupil numbers fall. It would be inappropriate and inequitable to change the formula to provide the level of resources necessary to sustain the curriculum in this school.

What will happen to the buildings of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School?

The buildings are in the ownership of the Trustees of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. It will be for the Trustees to determine the future of the buildings.

What is the position of the Diocesan Schools Commission?

As required by law, the proposal to cease to maintain Bishop Wulstan Catholic School is being made by the Local Authority. The Diocesan Schools Commission has been kept fully informed of the proposal of the Authority, but does not have a formal role in the statutory process, except as a group represented on the School Organisation Committee.

7. Further Information

If you have any queries please contact:

- Peter Thompson – Senior Area Education Officer 01926 412888
- Phil Astle – Education Officer (School Organisation) 01926 412820

A dedicated Helpline for parents is also available on 01926 736366 accessible Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

8. Summary

The decision to consult on the closure of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School is not taken lightly. The County Education Officer believes that the proposal contained in this document is in the interests of children and young people in Rugby. We wish to test that view during consultation and would welcome any comments, observations or alternative proposals from interested parties.

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE BISHOP WULSTAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL CONSULTATION MEETINGS

Monday 6 February 2006

Comments and questions raised in the meeting with the governing body

- Will the governing body be able to see the report when it is circulated to Cabinet?
- Discussions about the school on the local BBC radio station have focussed on standards rather than viability. Why is this?
- Are there not worse schools than Bishop Wulstan in Warwickshire when measured on value-added statistics? Are not these statistics more representative of the school's achievements?
- The strength of the school is in individual children, not in general statistics. If you look at the school child-by-child, many are fulfilling their potential.
- Standards at Key Stage 4 are not adequate, however it should be noted that conversion rates from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 have been low in previous years due to the school accepting many children with challenging circumstances during Key Stage 4. Furthermore, some high achievers at Key Stage 3 left the school before completing Key Stage 4.
- There are indicators other than the percentage of children achieving 5 A*-C that shows how good a school is.
- The achievements at Key Stage 3 have been understated by the Local Authority and deserve fuller recognition.
- Small cohorts of students will inevitably lead to extreme fluctuations in results when translated into statistics. This should be taken into account.
- The make-up of each cohort does change year-on-year which is not adequately reflected in statistics.
- What would the Local Authority accept as suitable improvements to the viability of the school before the end of the consultation process?
- If the report for Cabinet is written for 2 March, then there is not adequate time for the school to provide a full response to the proposal.
- What support will the Local Authority provide to the governing body to ensure that they do not put their efforts into a response that will not be viewed favourably by the Local Authority?

- Will the report summarise all letters sent supporting education at Bishop Wulstan, or only those received by Mark Gore?
- How many second and third preferences have been indicated for Bishop Wulstan?
- Have any preferences for Bishop Wulstan been rescinded since the proposal was announced?
- There are misperceptions and misunderstandings about the admissions system at Bishop Wulstan. The school is confident that it can address these issues and consequently improve admission numbers.
- It was requested that there was clarification about the admissions system. 43 children had actually indicated a preference for Bishop Wulstan, however some of these will end up attending other schools that have been given a higher preference by parents.
- Will the report to Cabinet just be a summary of the consultation process?
- Which reports/parts of the report will the governing body be allowed to see before the decision is taken? Are we allowed to see the notes of these meetings?
- It is a duty of the Local Authority to maintain a balance of voluntary-aided schools across the county. By closing Bishop Wulstan there will be no voluntary-aided schools in the east of the county and therefore the balance will be permanently upset.
- Would free transport to other Catholic schools be provided to all students or just the Catholic students?
- Is Warwickshire County Council considering changing its denominational transport policy? If so, how will this affect students who are bussed to other schools, should Bishop Wulstan close?
- What will be the cost of providing free transport to other schools to all the pupils at Bishop Wulstan? Is this really viable? Will the Cabinet paper include these costs in a clear way?
- Many children attend Bishop Wulstan who have additional educational needs and have been rejected by other schools. What will happen to these children?
- Bishop Wulstan does not offload pupils like other schools in the area do. Bishop Wulstan takes on a higher proportion of pupils with challenging backgrounds than other schools in Rugby. What will happen to these children if the school closes?
- The proposal has had a negative impact on the morale of staff and learning of the pupils. What does the Local Authority think of this situation?
- The governing body is not making plans for closure. However, has the Local Authority devised a contingency plan should the school close?

- By law, the governing body are the employers of the staff and are therefore responsible for them, however there is very little information about how to help staff should there be a closure. If the Local Authority take on this responsibility without the full input of the governing body they will be usurping the powers of the governing body.
- If the school were to close, it is assumed that the Local Authority will wish to clawback some of the money delegated to Bishop Wulstan for the period April 2006 to March 2007. Will the Local Authority be sympathetic to extra costs incurred by the school due to closure (such as supply staff should teachers leave before the Summer Term), rather than demand back the exact proportion of the money delegated for the time that the school will not be open?
- What measures would the Local Authority take to maintain the employment of teaching and support staff?
- It would be better to spend money on encouraging staff to stay at Bishop Wulstan rather than paying for supply staff.
- Will the Local Authority be flexible with staff who wish to resign before their contractual end date, due to the extraordinary nature of the situation?
- Have the teaching unions and professional associations been advised of the proposal, and have consequences for staff been discussed?

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE BISHOP WULSTAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL CONSULTATION MEETINGS

Monday 6 February 2006

Comments and questions raised in the meeting with staff

- The current White Paper on education in schools emphasises a need for more choice for parents over where their child should be educated. This proposal will only reduce choice for parents in Rugby and specifically will eradicate the opportunity for parents to choose a Catholic education in Rugby for their children.
- It is premature to make a proposal to close the school on a low number of first preferences in one year. Recently, the school roll has consistently been at around 330. The proposal does not take into account the number of lower preferences for the school.
- There is a belief among staff that the Local Authority has engineered the position at Bishop Wulstan. Other secondary schools in the area have been allowed to exceed their authorised admission numbers causing a negative effect on Bishop Wulstan.
- The leak to the local press before Christmas concerning this proposal has caused the staff to distrust the Local Authority.
- The timescale for the whole process of discussing the proposal is far too short. The proposal for a merger of two primary schools in Rugby has been given a significantly longer timescale.
- If the school is closed, the learning of three year groups will be interrupted during a Key Stage. This will cause disruption to the pupils' learning and there is no guarantee that these children will study the same syllabuses at other schools. Consequently, their chances of achievement will diminish.
- It is perceived that only six weeks consideration was given to making this proposal (based on the time that the Admissions team received preferences from parents and the time of the press article). This is not an adequate time for consideration. We don't think you have given enough serious in-depth consideration to closing the school.
- The letters sent to prospective parents requesting further preferences to Bishop Wulstan imply that the decision about the school's future has already been made and the school will close.
- Parents who have phoned Warwickshire County Council with regard to EMAG provision have been advised to attend Ashlawn School rather than Bishop Wulstan.

- On the day a member of staff's child started their education at Bishop Wulstan the proposal to close the school was announced. Why were they not informed about this proposal before the child started?
- Bishop Wulstan is a fantastic school and one of the reasons that many of the children, staff and parents like it so much is because it is a small school.
- Are there enough places in other Rugby schools to accommodate all the children of Bishop Wulstan should the school close?
- Will the merger of the Rokeby schools and the possible sale of land for new housing developments not lead to additional secondary school pupils?
- The consultation document states that 'a number of options with a view to strengthening the position of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School' have been explored but 'for a variety of reasons' none was felt to be viable. What were the options and why are they not viable?
- Numbers at the school fluctuate year-on-year. The Year 9 cohort has increased from its original Year 7 intake. The cohort has gone from two forms to four forms. Has this potential to grow been taken into account?
- History shows that the school has cyclical success with its admission numbers. It is currently at a low figure as it is at a low point in the cycle, but this will improve again in time. Have you looked back at the school's history?
- Is there not an expected growth for all secondary school numbers in Rugby following the establishment of new housing estates?
- What is a viable Year 7 intake?
- The school has just achieved Business & Enterprise Specialist Status. This will have a positive effect on admission numbers for 2007/08.
- What would be a reasonable timescale for the school to demonstrate improvements?
- The staff feel that their future is in the school.
- The proposal has had a negative impact on standards in the school in recent weeks. What measures are the Local Authority taking to support the school to maintain 'business as usual'? Is it not their responsibility to ensure high standards of education provision to children in Rugby?
- If significant numbers of staff do leave following the announcement of this proposal, will the Local Authority close the school due to the lack of staff making it unviable?
- If staff do leave and the school continues, how will vacancies be filled?
- Why should staff have to leave the school when they are happy here?

- The Local Authority could take steps to ensure that staff stay at the school but refuse to because of costs.
- If staff do not hand in their notice and the school does close, what happens next?
- By the time a decision is made on whether the school should close, many of the teaching vacancies at other local schools will have been filled.
- Paragraph 3.5 in the consultation document refers readers to paragraph 6.10, however there is no 6.10.
- Some staff feel that they are being pushed to the door. They cannot wait for the decision to be made as vacancies in other schools will have gone by the time the decision is taken.
- The information for staff to make an informed choice about their future is not available. It has been insensitive to staff to delay the consultation process until now. Staff feel they have to secure the future for themselves and their families.
- There is no information about what steps have been taken by the Local Authority to keep the school open. All the information has been negative from the Local Authority. There is a feeling that the Local Authority is pushing the school into decline.
- How can the school be viable in September if it stays open, if most of the staff have left?
- Who represents the school when the report goes to the Cabinet of Warwickshire County Council? How will the report be prepared? What will be included? Will members of staff be able to see this report before the meeting of the Cabinet?
- The achievements in Key Stage 3 in 2004/05 have not received the recognition they deserve.
- Does the Local Authority accept that Key Stage 4 will improve very soon following the improvements at Key Stage 3?
- The school should be given the chance to show that improvements at Key Stage 3 can be converted into improvements at Key Stage 4.
- Are not all indicators at Key Stage 3 very good?
- Every time improvements in the school are spoken of it receives a negative reply from the Local Authority.
- It sounds like there is nothing that the school can do to save itself.
- Bishop Wulstan is not a normal school. It is a small school with many pupils who speak English as their second language. The statistic of the percentage of students achieving 5 A*-C does not reflect this.

- As the decision will be made before this year's GCSEs have been taken, the school has been given no time to show the improvements it has made.
- Standards can be maintained and improved despite falls in admission numbers.
- If the school were able to recruit 50 more children for Year 7 in 2006/07, could it remain open?
- If improvements are demonstrated, can the school remain open?
- Can officers of the Local Authority ignore the decision taken by the Cabinet?
- Many students at this school blossom due to better opportunities for one-to-one tuition. This will not be available at larger schools and the pupils will not do as well as a consequence.
- Results and admissions at the school goes in cycles. Looking at the figures for the last three years is not representative of this.
- Every child matters at Bishop Wulstan and the school does not feel that the Local Authority appreciates that.
- There are many new, high quality and committed teaching staff at the school who are not being given the chance to show that standards can be improved. They feel let down by the Local Authority and distanced from it.
- One staff member has never known staff morale so high at a school.
- Contextual figures should be used to judge standards at the school, not crude statistics of GCSE results.
- Quoting the figure of 12% 5 A*-C is unrepresentative of the school and insulting.
- Is the Local Authority satisfied that it is fulfilling its duties to children at Bishop Wulstan?
- Who will ensure that pupils who may be required to leave Bishop Wulstan are developed and fulfil the potential that they have?
- The Local Authority is living in the negative past, not the positive future.

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE BISHOP WULSTAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL CONSULTATION MEETINGS

Monday 6 February 2006

Comments and questions raised in the public meeting

Approximately 500 people attended this meeting. Among those in attendance were pupils, parents, staff, governors, county councillors, representatives of the Catholic diocesan authorities, members of the local Catholic community, headteachers from local primary Catholic schools, former pupils and staff, members of the local press, Jeremy Wright MP, and officers of Warwickshire County Council.

The following comments were received by those present:

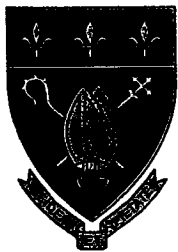
- It is difficult to find a mainstream school that will admit a pupil with Downs Syndrome. For one day a week, Bishop Wulstan does. Bishop Wulstan is at the forefront of practising inclusion in schools and it is going splendidly. The school should be left to continue this pioneering practice of inclusion and nurture its pupils in the ethos of the school.
- This consultation period is the launch pad for advertising just what a good school Bishop Wulstan is and pupil numbers will rise because of it. Admissions have been low for one year only.
- There is a strong sense of community which comes from being in a small school. There are bigger issues than admission numbers.
- How can Trinity School be a viable option to those in Rugby who wish for their child to have a Catholic education? What about the children who have friends in Rugby? Are parents expected to drive to Leamington to support children with after-school activities or if their child falls ill during the day? Closing the school would be an unnecessary disruption to children's education and transporting children to Leamington would cause further disruption.
- The closure of the school will unnecessarily and undeservedly attach a stigma to pupils and staff.
- The government are actively promoting personalised learning and involving young people in a community ethos. Bishop Wulstan has these qualities. In particular, the school achieves in providing education for children without English as a first language.
- Children with learning difficulties are supported so well by staff at the school. 38% of children at this school have special educational needs. Where will these children go if the school is closed? What will happen to pupils who have already been excluded from other schools in the area?
- Schools should not be closed simply because they do not meet government standards on GCSEs.

- The PANDA results for the school are fantastic as are the achievements at Key Stage 3. Elected members should look at more than just the GCSE data, as the school offers more than just GCSE results. The number of children in the school with SEN should be noted.
- Bishop Wulstan is a very popular school with many children with SEN. Resources should not decrease simply because admission numbers decrease. Education must be child-focussed. Education is more than GCSE results.
- The staff at the school are of high quality and have many years experience. With five children educated at the school over a period of fifteen years, the school has not failed one of them. The school is a wonderful community and it would be a sin to break it up. It is not right to close a school simply because of low intake.
- How much money will the Local Authority save by closing Bishop Wulstan School? How can you put a price on a child's happiness?
- The school has improved considerably over the last seven years. My eldest two children went to a different school, but my youngest child attends this school and loves it. There should be room for a small secondary school in the Rugby community.
- What will the Local Authority do to help the school improve rather than close it?
- Why did the school community have to learn about the proposal from the Rugby Advertiser? Why did a month pass between the press story and the official proposal?
- Why were letters sent to prospective parents about their preferences?
- Factors such as the Business and Enterprise specialist status, the inclusive nature of the school, and the provision of Catholic education in Rugby should be appreciated. Further to this, the Polish and Portuguese population in Rugby is growing. This population is mainly of a Catholic faith and therefore there will soon be further demand for Catholic education in Rugby. All agencies should work together to improve the school, to build on the achievements at Key Stage 3, to inform the Polish and Portuguese community that free Catholic education is available, and create a school that all Catholic in Warwickshire can be proud of.
- The ethos of the school, the religious education and the feeling of community are all positive factors in the school. Pupils are proud of Bishop Wulstan. Allow the staff and pupils to develop the school to what it could be.
- Our child who joined the school recently integrated into the school immediately and is very happy here. However, we were not informed of the proposal despite being prospective parents. The school is fantastic.
- What does the Local Authority consider to be the qualities of a good school?

- How will children perform better in another school when the teachers are so good here? Bishop Wulstan may not play the 'numbers game' but it enhances children's chances in other ways and plays a 'real life' game.
- Headteachers of local Catholic primary schools stated that all the Catholic schools in Rugby had started working closer together and wished for the opportunity to develop this. Rugby must offer the distinctive Catholic education and the links are there to do so. It would be tragic for the Catholic community to lose its secondary school.
- Fr Marcus Stock (Director of Schools, Diocesan Schools Commission) explained that the Archdiocese had been listening carefully to views expressed in the consultation and was forming concrete ideas on a way forward, however further details cannot be released at this stage. He added that with the support of other schools in the area we could climb the mountain the Local Authority had referred to and address the issues of viability and sustainability. The diocese will contact the school soon with its proposal on the way ahead.
- Catholic education in Rugby cannot disappear. The proposal to close the school should be shelved and the partnership between Catholic schools in Rugby should be allowed to develop. This consultation process is a window of opportunity for furthering this partnership.
- Children made presentation – DVD to be circulated.
- It appears to me an impossibility to accommodate every student into another secondary school in Rugby.
- Is it any wonder parents stated other preferences if letters were issued informing them of the proposal?
- Only negative statistics are being used and statistics can be manipulated. Which schools will want to take children who will damage their statistics? Why can efforts not be put into promoting this school? By closing this school you are permanently eradicating choice in Rugby and destroying the life chances of the current pupils of Bishop Wulstan.
- The new housing estates will mean that there are more children who need to be educated in secondary schools. Where will these children go?
- The figure of 25 does not take into account those who have put down Bishop Wulstan as second or third preference.
- My son started in Year 10 at Bishop Wulstan and has really improved since attending this school.
- Many non-Catholics do not realise that they can send their child to Bishop Wulstan. Can the Local Authority not assist the school in advertising itself?
- If pupil numbers fall, resources decrease. Conversely, if you increase the resources for the school, will pupil numbers not rise?

- The school takes more than its fair share of pupils with disabilities, pupils with learning difficulties and pupils that have been excluded from other schools. This has an effect on the learning of other pupils.
- The school had low numbers in the 1960s but was successfully turned around within five years. Please give Mr Higgins the chance and the time to revitalise the school.
- The Local Authority must realise that education is about more than just academic grades. There is a great ethos in the school, please allow the children to enjoy their school experience.
- Bishop Wulstan has always been a small school. What is so different now?
- The number of ex-pupils and teachers who have attended this meeting show how strong the community in this school is. Please give Mr Higgins the chance to improve the school.
- This is Westminster not Warwickshire! Previously when it was proposed that schools were closed they were given two years. Bishop Wulstan has been given six weeks. The timescale is simply not adequate. By closing Bishop Wulstan you will destroy a community not a school and that requires more than six weeks consideration.
- Cllr Morris-Jones stated that he hoped the decision would be referred to the whole County Council as there was no representation from Rugby on the Cabinet. He stressed how important the school community was to the future of the school and commented that the school's future was in their hands. He was surprised that only 25 parents had expressed a first preference for the school when there were so many people at the meeting fighting to keep it open. He encouraged parents to go out into their local communities and encourage more parents to come to the school.
- The school exudes quality and excellence yet it must be viable. The costs of bussing children to other schools should be made clear to County Councillors.
- We wish the decision was in our hands!
- Many Eastern European families have arrived in Rugby and will continue to arrive. They will require a Catholic education.
- How can a Catholic secondary school be taken away from a town with three Catholic churches?
- A pupil came to school in 1999 and left in 2001 with 14 A*-C. She was offered a wide curriculum by the school and was able to achieve because of the school. She asked the Local Authority to allow Mr Higgins the opportunity to give other students the same chance and let the school fulfil its potential.

- The word about how good Bishop Wulstan is has already started at Hillmorton Primary. Other parents are encouraged to spread the word around other primary schools.
- My daughter was going to Ashlawn School but when she heard the proposal she said she wanted to attend Bishop Wulstan. Please let Eleanor Watson attend the school of her choice!
- I know this is a consultation but what does the Local Authority want from the school community to keep it open?



Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College

"Growing to fullness with Christ"

Mr Mark Gore
Deputy County Education Officer
Warwickshire County Council
22 Northgate Street
WARWICK
CV34 4SP

20 February 2006

Dear Mark

Please find attached the Governors' response and formal objection to the LEA's Consultation on the proposal to close Bishop Wulstan School. This illustrates and addresses a number of key points including:

- The determination of the local and wider Catholic community, including schools and parishes, to preserve Catholic secondary provision in this town.
- The overwhelming support of parents and students of all faiths who recognise and value the distinctive faith education of our small secondary school.
- The importance of preserving **parental choice** for a Catholic option and a small secondary school option within the local community of Rugby.
- A future recruitment strategy based on a Rugby 3 – 16 partnership and a recognition of the potential of new communities in the town and Daventry.
- A need to recognise more overtly the strengths and successes of the school its improving performance at KS3, positive outcomes for KS4 students, specialist status, wider collaborative links and improved facilities.
- Concern and opposition from Councillors and political parties across the spectrum.

In addition there is supplementary data and information relating to why we believe that our school is viable set out in eight appendices as follows:

- Appendix 1 – Mission Statement - setting out our distinctive ethos
- Appendix 2 – Every Child Matters - highlighting our strengths in this area
- Appendix 3 – School Roll Data – providing a detailed 5 year pattern
- Appendix 4 - Recruitment Strategy – setting out our strategic plan for the future
- Appendix 5 – Performance, Attainment & Achievement – independent analysis
- Appendix 6 – Financial Summary – demonstrating our viability
- Appendix 7 – Curriculum Organisation – illustrating the breadth of provision
- Appendix 8 – Staffing & Resources – relating our staff expertise and commitment

As you know St Wulstan is our school patron. He was the only Anglo Saxon Bishop that resisted and survived the attempts of William the Conqueror to close down existing diocesan structures. His many qualities inspire and guide the work of this school, not least his longevity and ability to renew communities in difficult times.

Yours sincerely

Brendan Higgins

Brendan Higgins - Headteacher

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Mr Brendan Higgins BSc
Headteacher

Mrs Maria Lee B Phil(Ed)
Deputy Headteacher





Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College

"Growing to fullness with Christ"

Mr Mark Gore
Deputy County Education Officer
Warwickshire County Council
22 Northgate Street
WARWICK
CV34 4SP

Dear Mark,

17 February 2006

Consultation on the Future of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

We write on behalf of the Governing Body of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School in response to the Consultation document regarding the future of our School.

Firstly, we would like to thank you and your staff for attending the meetings on Monday 6 February, at which you will have gathered the feelings and views of the school, the local and the wider community with regard to your proposal. At the evening meeting attended by nearly 500 interested individuals and representatives from all political parties including Jeremy Wright MP, the former MP Andy King, County and Borough Councillors, we had the opportunity to clarify some issues regarding the school's future. We were particularly grateful for your offer to work with us and the Archdiocese to consider alternative strategies on the future of Catholic education in the Rugby area. This is particularly important given the views expressed at the consultation meeting by Headteachers of all the Rugby Catholic Schools and by the Diocesan Director, Fr Marcus Stock. They and the clergy and communities of the Catholic parishes are clearly in support of the aim to preserve Catholic secondary provision in Rugby.

Whilst we acknowledge many of the facts contained in the consultation document, we feel that these do not present a full and balanced picture, and may mean that a decision is made without all relevant facts being considered. In addition to this letter we attach a report with 8 appendices providing further details and data related to the school's current situation and our intended plans for the future.

Viability

You have stated publicly that the main concern about Bishop Wulstan School is not the results at KS4, but concerns about our future viability, given the small number of likely enrolments in September 2006. We share these concerns. Setting aside, for the moment, the fact that we see the size of our school as a great advantage, we do agree that a 1 form entry secondary school will find it very difficult, although by no means impossible, to offer a broad and balanced curriculum.

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Our main concern is that the timescale imposed by the authority, giving something less than 6 weeks notice, appears designed to reduce our ability to develop sustainable alternatives to closure. As you are aware, under the guidance and sponsorship of the Archdiocese we, and other local schools, have been engaging in just this process and our intention is to present the Authority with proposals that would ensure not only our own future viability, but that of a continuous Catholic education, 3-16, in Rugby.

We would particularly draw your attention to **Appendix 4** in our attached report explaining our recruitment strategy. In our view it is imperative that the threat of irrevocable closure in September is lifted in order for these proposals to be developed and considered. Again, we are grateful for your offer of help as our proposals will need advice and guidance from the Authority but this cannot be done in a fair and open-minded way in the timescale set. Currently the school's finances are good – see **Appendix 6** – and the proposed recruitment strategy would ensure future financial viability.

Student Outcomes

We have deliberately headed this section “**Student Outcomes**” rather than “**Levels of Attainment**” (the heading used in the consultation paper) as we believe there is more to being a successful school than raw GCSE scores. We believe that greater consideration should be given to our success with students who would - and will - find it difficult to access the curriculum in larger schools. Our record for students moving into further education, training and employment opportunities is very good and is in line with the average for Warwickshire, see **Appendix 2**.

Whilst we accept that present overall standards of attainment at KS4 are unacceptable, we feel it is important that Cabinet is aware that, as a small school, each student has a disproportionate impact on the overall statistics. Thus, although in 2005 only 12% of students achieved 5 A*-C GCSE's, the total reporting cohort was made up of only 69 students each contributing 1.45 % to the final statistic. Clearly, in these circumstances, large swings are likely to occur year by year.

Further, Cabinet may not be aware of the extent to which our school is subject to student mobility. Of the 95 students registered in Year 11 at some point, only 55 are the same as those who started in year 7 (i.e. completing 5 years). This has a huge impact on our KS4 results, and also explains why, on paper, some of our students who do well at KS3 appear not to do well at KS4: in many cases they are not the same people.

Our most recent Ofsted inspection highlighted the volatility of our student roll, see **Appendix 5**. As you are aware, not only is our intake at Year 7 skewed socially and educationally (in terms of prior achievement), but our difficulties become more acute with the arrival of students excluded or in difficulty at other schools, or who arrive in the area with little or no spoken or written English, but whom we welcome and whom we register for examinations, even though it is not necessarily in our own interest. We should not be penalised for operating such an inclusive policy, which has been to the benefit of both students and the Council.

You heard from a number of current and former students about the educational transformation that we have helped them achieve not only in respect of results, but in terms of confidence, social, emotional and spiritual growth, as well as areas such as behaviour, tolerance and awareness of others. We are proud of our ethos, and believe it produces successful and well rounded individuals, whatever their faith. Sadly, we can find no mention of these aspects in the consultation paper, and would ask that you redress this perceived imbalance in the report that the Cabinet receives. We offer a distinctive faith based education which demands our attention to the whole person.

Other Considerations

As you will be aware, the DfES has stated that there should be a presumption against the closure of small schools. In our view, the proposal to close Bishop Wulstan will have a detrimental affect on choice and diversity of provision in Rugby, and will alter the proportion of Catholic Aided to non-Aided places throughout the County. With no secondary Catholic provision in Rugby, the attraction of Catholic primary education will be reduced as there will be no opportunity for continuity of Catholic education with the town. If secondary Catholic provision is lost in Rugby it will be impossible to re-instate.

We fully accept that the proposal to consult on the possible closure of Bishop Wulstan School was not made lightly. However, we feel sure that Cabinet will want to consider this matter not just as a short term solution to a perceived problem, but also taking into account longer term implications. In particular, we would ask that Cabinet is provided with the full financial implications in terms of home-school transport costs in perpetuity, and also provided with details of bus journey times in rush hour to suitable alternative Catholic Schools. In our view, committing our young people to extensive bus journeys should be avoided wherever possible. Not only will it cost the Authority money for many years to come, it will also add to pollution and congestion on the County's roads at a time when Councils are seeking to reduce these factors. It will also be detrimental to young people, excluding them from many after school clubs and activities, in contradiction to the emerging "extended schools" provision we and other schools are currently developing.

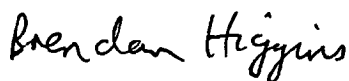
In conclusion, we feel that whilst the consultation process is not, in itself, prejudicial to the continuation of the School, the Authority has not worked with the Governing Body of Bishop Wulstan, nor the Governing Bodies of local Catholic Primary Schools, to explore in any detail all possible alternatives to ensure the continuation of Catholic provision in the area. We therefore wish to register our objection to the proposals, and ask that Cabinet does not proceed with further consultation at this stage. This will allow the Governors and the Diocese time to develop robust alternative proposals.

We ask that you make copies of this letter and the accompanying report available to all Rugby Area Committee Members for their consideration at their meeting of 6 March 2006 and Cabinet Members in advance of their meeting on 9 March 2006.

Yours sincerely



Eddie Kealey – Chair of Governors



Brendan Higgins - Headteacher

Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College



Appendix 1 Mission Statement

This school is totally committed to an inclusive vision of a faith-based education for all students. For the past five years the school has worked hard to develop this Mission Statement and recognises that there is still much to be achieved.

Vision

Drawing its inspiration from the Scriptures and the Catholic Church's extensive experience in education, Bishop Wulstan School sets its sights on Gospel Values of love, service and truth and seeks to meet the highest expectations of parents and achieve in the school community academic excellence, social and moral maturity and spiritual wholeness.

We therefore see the mission of the school as striving to ensure that all students and staff without exception:

- Achieve their full potential – spiritually, socially and academically
- Show loving care for all God's people and for the rest of creation
- Are enabled fully to co-operate in the improvement of society and the transformation of the world

In particular, Bishop Wulstan School aims:

- to make prayer and worship authentic experiences and to contribute to the faith journey of each individual in the school;
- to provide a balanced curriculum with a Christian basis through which students can grow in understanding and acquire the skills, attitudes and values for responsible adult life;
- to ensure that students' experience of relationships throughout the whole school community and through extra-curricular activities have a positive formative influence;
- to foster links between school, parish and home and with local work and business, so as to prepare for the student's entry into the wider community;
- to provide inspiring leadership so that the whole school community is led to co-operation, high achievement and consideration for others.
- to cherish a particular regard for the least privileged and those with special needs.

Objectives

To achieve these aims Bishop Wulstan School *Business & Enterprise College* is therefore committed to the following objectives:

- developing the spiritual life of the school especially regarding the Catholic tradition;
- developing literacy, numeracy, oracy and computer skills across the curriculum;
- implementing a programme of personal and social development including citizenship and multicultural, environmental and global awareness;
- promoting high standards of behaviour and achievement, enabling students to take responsibility for their own learning and the realisation of their full potential;
- monitoring and evaluating student progress and quality of teaching;
- providing effective school management and an efficient use of resources.

Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College



Appendix 2 Every Child Matters

This school is very proud of its inclusive approach to education. As a result of the consultation parents have overwhelmingly given testimony to the strength of this school in addressing individual needs within a community that replicates a family atmosphere and values reflected in our school mission statement. The school's work on Anti-Bullying is particularly noted by parents and students.

We would ask that Cabinet Members are made fully aware of the letters sent by current and past parents and students to evaluate this school's viability in meeting the challenges of the Every Child Matters agenda, especially in relation to the first three aspects:

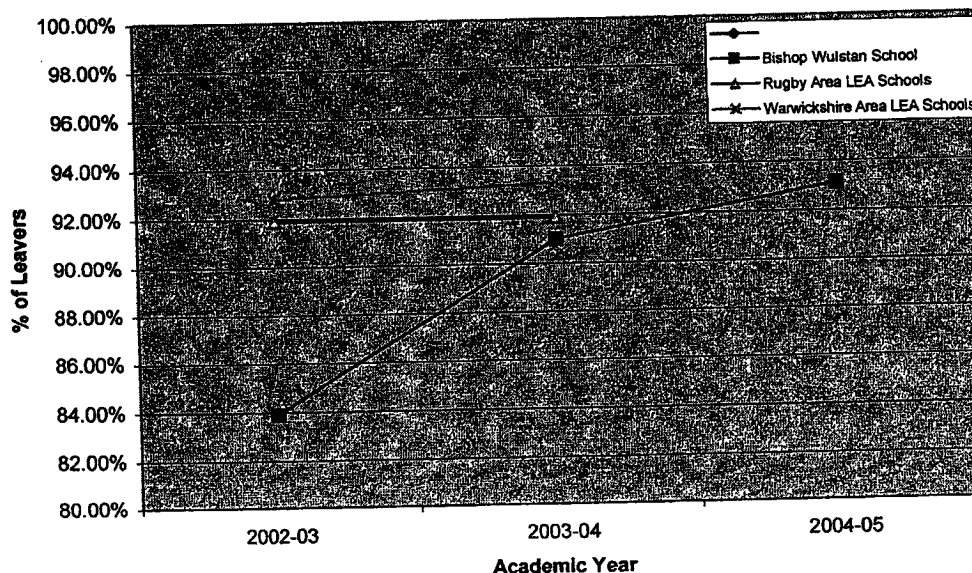
- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve

The school's choice of specialist subject, Business & Enterprise, was specifically linked to the school mission statement aspect, 'where students and staff should be enabled to co-operate in the improvement of society and the transformation of the world'. This also links to the other two aspects of Every Child Matters:

- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

We are aware that achievement for every individual on leaving the school must be given the highest priority to ensure that students may progress to the next stage. Despite low attainment at KS4 in 2003 - 2005 student outcomes were very good and have improved year on year as shown in the following graph. This illustrates that student's aspirations and ability to move into further education, training and employment is secure and improving.

Bishop Wulstan School - 3-Year Post 16 Positive Outcomes Destination Trend



Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College



Appendix 3 - School Roll Data and Viability

In the LEA Consultation document it states that the school roll is declining and if the trend were to continue then the roll would be 267 in September 2006 and fall further in future years. The table below details the school roll over the past 5 years indicating considerable fluctuations and that it has been between 315 and 363 students. Our prediction for September 2006 was to recruit 285 students.

School roll statistics taken from Head's reports to Governors, Form 7, PLASC		
Date	Actual School Roll	Predicted Roll
Sept 2001	351	358
January 2002	361	
June 2002	363	
Sept 2002	359	362
January 2003	360	
June 2003	362	
Sept 2003	315	329
January 2004	317	
June 2004	330	
Sept 2004	318	304
January 2005	330	
June 2005	342	
Sept 2005	326	309
January 2006	325	
Sept 2006		285

The school recognises that there is a need to increase numbers especially at intake in Year 7. The school is fully aware of the increased stability that this will bring and its impact on standards as the level and proportion of mobility is reduced. Appendix 4 sets out some of the strategies that will be employed.

Baptismal records for the local Churches are taken to predict future demand for Catholic places. This can only give approximate figures since there is significant mobility of students in the town. Equally, not all children are baptised in their local parish. Very often parents return to previous home parishes to baptise their children for a variety of reasons. According to the local parishes there is an increase in baptisms currently, due to inward mobility of families and new immigrant communities.

Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College



Appendix 4 - Recruitment Strategy and Viability

At the appointment of the current Head Teacher, the strategic plan for the school did not give highest priority to external marketing and the recruitment of new students, until the following issues had been addressed and resolved satisfactorily.

- Between 1999 - 2003 the school was categorised by Ofsted in Serious Weaknesses and there was a need to recruit and retain teaching staff
- Standards and performance outcomes were variable
- Accommodation and facilities for PE were almost non-existent
- The school decided that its long term strategy required Specialist Status

Over the past 5 years the strategies employed by the Head Teacher and his team have ensured the above issues have now been, or are currently being, addressed as indicated below.

- a) **Ofsted Judgements** - The school is no longer categorised by Ofsted as in Serious Weakness. Staff recruitment and retention has been very good, all subjects on the curriculum are taught by appropriately qualified teachers. Significant appointments have been made to support staff posts to enable teachers to concentrate on teaching and learning and to address all issues of the Workforce Remodelling agenda.
- b) **Performance** - Although KS4 headline statistics have been poor – and the school is committed to addressing this – significant numbers of individual achievement profiles at all levels of ability have been very good and KS3 performance indicators have improved.

The school's performance at KS3 last year for contextualised Value Added places the school in the top 4% of schools nationally and third highest in Warwickshire secondary schools. At KS4 Value Added needs to be improved with the school placed in the lowest 5% of schools nationally and fourth lowest in Warwickshire secondary schools.

- c) **Accommodation** - A new Sports Hall was opened in November 2004 and this is now raising the standards of PE in the school and the profile of Bishop Wulstan in the local community and within the Sports Co-ordination Partnership.
- d) **Specialist Status** in Business and Enterprise was granted in September 2005 despite the declining attainment at Key Stage 4 in 2004. The achievement of Specialist Status, supported at the time by the LEA, enabled the school to set out a 5-year improvement plan to address all issues of standards and performance at KS3 and KS4. This plan requires the school to have time to make the changes. More importantly the school was set to improve and increase the level of partnership with its partner feeder schools and post 16 providers in the town.

Recruitment Strategy and Viability continued....

The proposed recruitment strategy for new students will include:

- **1 - Catholic Partnership 3-16** – The Diocesan Schools Commission have instigated a discussion with all Catholic providers in Rugby as part of their strategic document 'Securing the Future', (see www.bdsc.org.uk) This discussion also involves the parishes of St Marie's, English Martyrs', Sacred Heart and the wider Catholic Community. Proposals regarding a new model of 3 – 16 provision are under discussion and will be presented by the DSC.

An initial survey of local Primary and Infant Schools in Rugby indicates that a significant number of baptised Catholics attend non-Catholic Schools. 9 local schools responded to the survey with 51 of their students identified as Catholic – we are awaiting replies from 17 other schools. A detailed survey to establish actual numbers of Catholic students attending non-Catholic Primary and Secondary schools should be undertaken to assess the future possible recruitment of students to a renewed and strengthened Catholic sector within Rugby.

- **2 - Targeting New Communities** – In addition to the influx of additional families as new housing developments occur in Rugby a number of immigrant communities are growing in the town. These include Polish, Portuguese, Mexican, African and Asian groups many of whom are from Catholic traditions. The LEA and DSC need to work with the school to establish the details of these demographic changes and potential effect on Bishop Wulstan School recruitment.

Daventry Option - Over the past two years discussions to enable the school to recruit in the Daventry area have been underway. Daventry, located in the Diocese of Northampton, does not have any Catholic secondary provision. There are already a few students from this town attending Bishop Wulstan. According to Warwickshire data significant numbers of out of county school places are being taken up at some of the Rugby secondary schools and there is scope for Bishop Wulstan to increase their numbers. It is anticipated that a further 6 and 12 places could be filled from out of county places to add to the current 7 students. Over time this would increase the school roll by between 30 and 60 students.

- **3 - Improving Communication** – As a result of the LEA consultation many parents have stated that the admissions procedure is not clear especially to non-Catholic families who assume they are not eligible to apply for Bishop Wulstan. Equally, it is apparent that the many strong features developed by the school in the past few years have not been recognised or appreciated within its own community. The 3-16 development offers opportunities to develop more robust communication within the Catholic community. The development of specialism in Business and Enterprise enables access to the wider community.

Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College



Appendix 5 - School Performance Attainment & Achievement

An Independent Education Consultant has analysed the school's 2005 PANDA to produce a summary report for the Governing Body as given below.

A study of the 2005 PANDA and comparisons with National statistics published by OFSTED show a number of factors, which are significant to the overall performance of this school. These are summarised as follows.

In this school, attainment on entry for the GCSE cohort was below the national average. The school has a larger than average number of pupils who achieved average or below average scores at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2005, over 27% of pupils were considered to have Special Educational Needs, a further 3.4% have a statement of Special Educational Needs. The number of pupils using English not as their first language was 9.5%. The school's pupil's mobility is 25%, which is high.

These factors appear to be possible barriers to the attainment of National Standards in GCSE, particularly in English, Mathematics and Science, and necessitate some careful assessment of pupils' current levels of progress prior to planning the next steps in their learning.

Key Stage 3

Attainment on entry to the school does not follow the National pattern. The school has a **higher than average** number of students who achieve below average scores range at the end of Key Stage 2. The number of students who have average scores is lower than average, although the school follows the National pattern for above average scores. This identifies the uniqueness of the cohort.

The levels of achievement at the end of Key Stage 3 have been **RISING** since 2003. This trend is particularly evident in English. It is variable in maths and science and indicates that the teaching and learning in English is at least **GOOD**. The number of pupils who attain the higher levels is also increasing, pupils attaining level 7+ in English was 5%, level 7+ in maths was 11% and this indicates the school having appropriate levels of challenge. In science 3% attain Level 7+.

Value Added measures for Key Stage 2 – Key Stage 3 indicate that 2005 was a good year with **rising trends** in all three-core subjects. The value added figure was **significantly higher than average** in English and **higher than average** in maths. The school's position nationally (rank) has **increased substantially** when compared with other schools in 2005. This confirms an improving picture for KS3.

Key Stage 4

The prior attainment of pupils at Key Stage 4 indicates levels **below the national average** at the end of Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 3 the school had taken the pupils from a points score of 25.3 at the end of Key Stage 2 to 30.4 at the end of Key Stage 3. Nationally pupils moved from 27.1 to 34.0

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is overall **significantly below National averages** and has fallen from an average position at the end of the 2003 academic year. Boys achieved **average** value added levels. However, the overall trend reflects the earlier analysis. In respect of **contextual value** boys continue to outperform girls.

When looking at the conversions of Key Stage 3 levels in to GCSE grades, English results indicate approximately 25% of pupils achieved GCSE Grades A - C with almost 100% achieved A - G. This would indicate that the more advanced students continued to progress at an appropriate rate. Mathematics shows a lower level of conversion; few pupils achieved GCSE A - C although most did achieve A - G. Science shows a similar pattern to Mathematics.

Indications and Barriers to Learning.

The school has **19.5%** of its pupils claiming Free School Meals, compared to a National average of 15.4%. The school has **27.4%** of its pupils from other ethnic groups, compared to the National average of 18.6%. The number of pupils with Special Educational Needs is **30%**, compared to a National figure of 17%. Of this Special Educational Needs group **3.4%** have Statements compared to the National average of 2.5%.

The school has a Stability figure of 75%, compared to the national figure of 89.3%. This is a difference of 14.3% and should be regarded as **significant**. The PANDA indicates a school deprivation factor of 0.2, the same as the national level in respect of housing and social economic background.

NC Year Group	FSM	Minority Ethnic Group	1st Language, not English	SEN
Year 11	20.5	24.7	8.2	31.5
Year 10	14.5	27.6	9.2	27.6
Year 9	21.9	32.8	14.1	32.8
Year 8	16.7	24.2	6.1	34.8
Year 7	24.5	18.4	6.1	26.5

(These figures relate to the 2004-2005 cohorts, source 2005 PANDA)

Conclusion

This summary is based on an evaluation of our 2005 PANDA by an independent education consultant with experience of OFSTED inspections.

As a school we make ourselves aware of all the possible challenges to learning experienced by our students. This PANDA and profile of data on cohorts of students is vital in that process, however, we pride ourselves on the individual attention we give to students. The school has recognised the need to improve its tracking and monitoring systems at the individual level.



Appendix 6 - Financial Summary and Viability

The LEA have stated that the fall in student numbers and loss of Leadership Incentive Grant (£185,000 per annum for the last three years) will mean the school will not have the financial viability to sustain its curriculum and staffing. In addition the LEA has indicated that it supports Bishop Wulstan in terms of additional funds to support LEA staff in working within the school. It is stated that this support is not sustainable.

1. Leadership Incentive Grant – Nearly half of all secondary schools in the country have been in receipt of this grant including 7 in Warwickshire. Bishop Wulstan, along with approximately 1400 schools will lose this grant next year. However, the government intends to have transition funding (details are still to be finalised). In addition £50,000 of this grant was ring-fenced for staff development; this expenditure will not exist next year.
2. The school's student numbers in September last year were higher than anticipated and so the school will receive an additional pupil adjustment of £20,879 in this year's budget. The 2006-7 budget is based on the January 2006 PLASC (325 students) any future drop in student numbers will affect the 2007-8 budget. We are confident based on previous years calculations that the school roll would not fall to 267 in September as predicted by the LEA but will be approximately 285* and given previous mobility patterns will rise by 10-15 by January 2007. The school's recruitment and marketing will then be able to secure future numbers. (*NB It is now very difficult to calculate the impact of the Consultation and uncertainty created for prospective parents and students)
3. The additional small school's grant is payable to all secondary schools in Warwickshire with less than 601 students. This grant takes into account the difficulties in making economies of scale regarding certain staffing and premises expenditure. This is to protect the quality of curriculum provision.
4. Additional LEA support – over the years the LEA has given considerable support to the school in enabling improvement. The achievements at KS3 reflect the success that the school and LEA have made in this area. The school recognises that the level of support in the future will be reduced considerably and the school will use the improved staffing profile to ensure further progress.

The school has not had a deficit budget over the past three years. The school has reserves to be carried forward from this current year of between £50-80,000. The school has managed a 5-year plan taking into account changes of student numbers, LIG funds and the revenue from the recently acquired specialist status. The school also constantly addresses the staffing profile to ensure financial viability whilst standards are maintained. The school plans to have a balanced budget for 2006-7.

Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College



Appendix 7 - Curriculum Organisation and Viability

As a small school we pride ourselves on the breadth and organisation of the curriculum. We are active in large number of collaborations to enrich our curriculum. These are summarised on a separate appendix to this report.

In Years 7 – 9 the full National Curriculum entitlement is delivered. In Key Stage 4 the provision of subjects in the option blocks is generous, courses include:

- Applied Business
- Asdan
- Graphics
- English Literature
- Geography
- Health & Social Care
- Leisure & Tourism
- Physical Education
- Art & Design
- Food Technology
- Resistant Materials
- French
- History
- ICT and Business Communications
- Music
- Science (Double)

We are proud of the development of the vocational GCSEs in this school and this underpins the specialist status we offer in Business & Enterprise.

Students who have other skills or aptitudes are catered for through out of school provision. GCSEs in the following subjects have been offered in the last three years.

- Drama Portuguese Polish Textiles

Student provision in other subjects is catered for by the College. Students have attended and passed courses in

- Hair & Beauty Small Animal Care Motor Vehicles Public Services

Curriculum Collaboration

On the reverse of this page are further details of our extensive collaborative partnerships to enhance and enrich the curriculum for students. These partnerships also enhance and enrich the experience of teaching and support staff and enable them to provide high quality learning experiences. As a small school we are committed to maintaining and developing these partnerships to sustain and enhance our viability.

Bishop Wulstan Catholic School - Business & Enterprise College
Curriculum Partnerships and Collaborations with other institutions and organisations

	Collaboration	Details
1	Rugby Catholic Schools	Bishop Wulstan, St Marie's Junior, St Marie's Infant, English Martyrs' and Our Lady's Princethorpe - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly meetings of Heads • Curriculum progression activities for Y5/6 pupils • Sports Co-ordination Project • Joint Inset Days
2	Warwickshire Leadership Incentive Collaboration	7 Warwickshire LIG Schools work collaboratively on a shared action plan to improve: 1 • leadership for learning 2 • behaviour for learning 3 • quality of teaching 4 • use of individual and collaborative data 5 • provision for children with SEN 6 • increase the capacity of Senior Leadership Teams through collaboration 7 • ways of broadening the curriculum at Key Stage 4
3	14-19 Collaborative Rugby Area	Meetings with the 7 secondary schools and 14-19 Co-ordinator to discuss and plan collaborative opportunities for staff and students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Activities • Staff Inset
4	Specialist Schools Partnerships	a – Lawrence Sheriff - Maths and Computing College: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students supported on ECDL • ICT/Technician CPD and support • Progression opportunities -shadowing of sixth formers b – Rugby High School Science College <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maths activity days for KS3 • Support teaching by RHS teacher KS4 – targeting more able students • Science CPD • Science activities
5	North Warwickshire College	Students attend Warwickshire College for courses identified during their careers/options discussion in Year 9. In the last three years students have attended and completed courses in a number of areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering • Hair and Beauty • Motor Vehicles • Small Animal Care • Public Service New Start programme offers disaffected students opportunities to engage in the curriculum
6	ISSP Independent State School Partnership	DfES funded project between BW, Rugby School and Lawrence Sheriff – and now Harris and Rugby High– several themes centre around Science, Maths, Technology and ICT including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technician support CPD • Staff CPD • Mentoring of BW students • In class support • Homework club at BW • Technology, Maths, Business and other Challenge days • Science Lectures at Rugby School
7	Bradby Club	Bradby Club located near the school and serves deprived wards – operates as an after school facility for boys and girls offering a variety of activities. Afternoon curriculum activities are targeted at disaffected Y7 & 8 students and those with attendance issues.
8	Coventry University Phoenix Partnership	Partnership established in 2005 offering at least 10 contacts/activities for students and staff at BW each year to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aid academic development • build confidence • raise aspirations • ensure potential is reached.
9	UFA - University of First Age	The school has been a part of the Warwickshire UFA group of schools developing awareness of personal learning styles and independent learning, developing peer mentoring and providing staff inset

Bishop Wulstan Catholic School

Business & Enterprise College



Appendix 8 - Staffing, Resources and Viability

Currently all teaching staff employed by the school are specialists and appropriately qualified in the subjects they teach. In many secondary schools this is not the case especially in Science and Mathematics.

A new staffing structure has been agreed to incorporate the Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLRs). The new structure is based on the formation of teams and addresses issues faced by small schools whereby individuals are left as single person departments. The Support Staff are organised to reflect the priority of teaching and learning. Further restructuring of support staff teams is planned to link with the new TLR structures.

The school has developed a range of resources over the past few years and through the LEA PFI project and its own funding every teaching room has an interactive facility for teaching and learning (16 tablet PCs and 7 interactive whiteboards). The ICT suite and Learning Resource Centre are fully networked and the school has invested in a set of laptops for use by the Business & Enterprise students in school.

Extended Schools

There are many possibilities to develop the Extended Schools Agenda within the 3-16 framework and the links related to our Business & Enterprise specialism. Alongside the increasing use of the school's sports hall facilities this school in partnership with the other Catholic providers is well placed to serve the community in providing extended learning opportunities and activities.

The Sports Co-ordinator Partnership links our school with the Catholic partner schools and is in its first year. This is proving to be very fruitful in terms of curriculum liaison and the opportunity it will bring to extending PE beyond the curriculum linking with community and other sports clubs. This partnership will only serve to strengthen progression and continuity between our schools if it is allowed to continue.

Our school also offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These currently include a large number of sports/PE activities, Sports Leader courses, drama, music, literacy, homework study, Interact, Fantasy Football, Duke of Edinburgh and a range of subject specific support extra lessons.

The school also organises a variety of residential and day visits to enhance the learning experiences of all students e.g. a group are visiting Italy over half term.

Charitable Works

Bishop Wulstan School has a very proud record of charitable works. Not only does the school raise money for appropriate charities but also it raises awareness of the need to support local, national and international charities. This work is not merely to treat symptoms of distress and difficulty but it part of our Mission Statement whereby we actively seek ways of improving and changing the world for the better.

The headteacher and governors of Bishop Wulstan have successfully obtained a new sports hall and Business and Enterprise Specialist College Status. Also, the value-added data for the end of Key Stage 3 in the school's most recent Performance and Assessment Report is very positive. Trends since 2003 are rising and suggest that many pupils do well at Bishop Wulstan and there are encouraging signs of further improvement.

As was evident from the consultation meeting held with parents on Monday 6 February and from the many letters sent by parents, powerful testimony and sound arguments have been given to the benefits of Bishop Wulstan's intimate school environment and the particular care it gives to children with special educational needs.

We believe it is important therefore that, despite the disappointing September 2005 Key Stage 4 results and low number of applications for school places in September 2006 referred to in the consultation document, every avenue be explored to sustain Bishop Wulstan until a viable alternative proposal to closure is secured.

Should the proposal enclosed be unsuccessful, alternative proposals will need to be explored. These should include the possibility of the federation of Catholic schools in Rugby or the federation of Bishop Wulstan with another Catholic secondary school in Warwickshire.

The consultation on the future of Bishop Wulstan, initiated by Warwickshire County Council, has without doubt raised the profile of the school and galvanised considerable support in the local community and beyond. We believe that, in partnership with each other, we should harness that support to secure the future of educational diversity and parental choice for Catholic secondary education in the Rugby area.

Yours sincerely

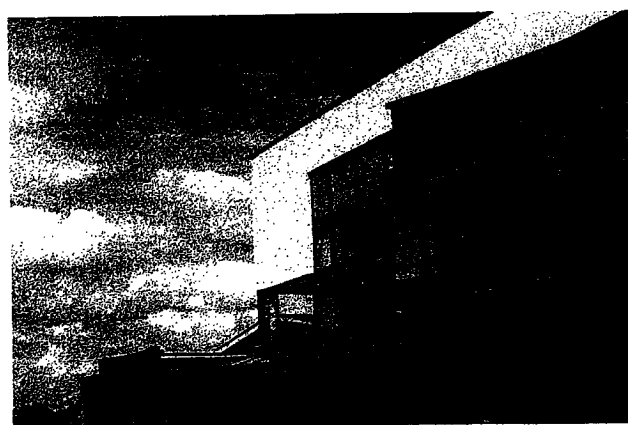
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MNR Stock', written in a cursive style.

Fr Marcus Stock
Director of Schools

Cc: Chair of Governors and Headteacher of Bishop Wulstan School

RUGBY CATHOLIC ACADEMY

DRAFT PROPOSAL BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM



DIOCESAN SCHOOLS COMMISSION

Serving Schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham

Registered Charity No 234216



DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RUGBY CATHOLIC ACADEMY

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DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RUGBY CATHOLIC ACADEMY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Baroness Morris of Bolton, in a speech made in the House of Lords on 8 February 2006, spoke of "a freedom highly prized in a country where education owes much to the historic partnership between Church and state". She went on to say: "I speak of the freedom of parents to choose schools where the beliefs and values which they hold dear are well taught and permeate the very ethos of the school."
- 1.2 The Diocesan Schools Commission, as the agent of the Archbishop and Trustees of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, believes that if the proposal to close Bishop Wulstan School is carried through, that very freedom to choose a Catholic secondary education in Rugby will, effectively, be removed. It is essential therefore that an alternative proposal be considered and explored.
- 1.3 The consultation on the future of Bishop Wulstan, initiated by Warwickshire County Council, has without doubt raised the profile of the school and galvanised considerable support in the local community and beyond. We believe that, in partnership with each other, we should harness that support to secure the future of educational diversity and parental choice for Catholic education in the Rugby area.
- 1.4 To do this successfully, it is clear that any alternative proposal will need to demonstrate how future viability in terms of pupil numbers can be achieved and particularly, how any alternative provision will have the capacity to support the raising of standards at all levels, be financially viable for the foreseeable future and demonstrate a high probability of sustained improvement.
- 1.5 The purpose of this document is to provide information to Warwickshire County Council and Rugby's Catholic school community to demonstrate how this can be done.

2 WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL?

- 2.1 Following initial consultation with the governing bodies of the schools involved, the Diocesan Schools Commission believes that a proposal for a 3 to 16 Academy should be explored as a way of securing the future viability of Catholic education and contribute to educational diversity and parental choice in the Rugby area.
- 2.2 The Rugby Catholic Academy would cater for the age range 3 to 16, and specialise in 'Business and Enterprise'.
- 2.3 The Academy would be established preferably on a new site to be identified and secured in the eastern area of Rugby and the existing English Martyrs Primary School in the western area of Rugby. The co-location would be necessary to ensure that access to the Academy is available to younger children in distinct geographical areas of Rugby.
- 2.4 The Rugby Catholic Academy would comprise a one form entry foundation and primary phase (ages 3-11) and a three form entry secondary phase (ages 11-16) on the main eastern Academy campus and a one form entry foundation and primary phase (ages 3-11) on the western (English Martyrs) site.
- 2.5 The total number of pupil places available across the phases in the Academy would therefore be 930, thus retaining the small school experience for pupils across the phases yet creating economies of scale securing viability.
- 2.6 To create the Academy, it would be necessary for the governing bodies of the existing St Marie's Infant, St Marie's Junior, English Martyrs Primary and Bishop Wulstan Catholic Business and Enterprise College to close their schools.

3 WHAT IS THE VISION FOR THE ACADEMY?

- 3.1 The Government's vision for Academies is that they generate: "...not simply good examination results but also young people superbly equipped for active citizenship; committed to lifelong learning; and, ready for progression into further and higher education and work." Similarly, while seeking to provide a high quality education, Catholic schools hold up Christian values to children, inviting them to build their own lives on them. Teaching these values, for those who know how to accept and live them consistently, yields highly positive results - as experience confirms - at the personal, family and professional levels.
- 3.2 Our vision is then, to establish a Rugby Catholic Academy, for pupils aged 3 to 16, rooted in the ideas, beliefs and tradition of Catholic education and providing opportunities to develop strategies to raise standards, improve behaviour and attendance, and contribute to educational diversity in the Rugby area.

- 3.3 The Academy would be fully inclusive and provide for pupils of different abilities. There would be no selection, but priority would be given in the admissions policy to Catholic children followed by other children from the local community living closest to the Academy.
- 3.4 The Academy, building on the "Every Child Matters" vision, would be a place where all pupils fulfil their potential, achieve high standards of work and behaviour, and learn to contribute positively to the community in which they live.
- 3.5 Extended school facilities contributing to the provision of Children's Services in Rugby would be a key feature. Working in partnership with other local Rugby schools, the Academy would seek to deliver the core offer of extended services including high quality wraparound childcare, business and enterprise activities based around the Academy's specialist status, parenting support and learning opportunities, information and through-access to the full range of available local specialist support services, and providing wider community access to the Academy's facilities.
- 3.6 The Rugby Catholic Academy would provide a unique opportunity to establish an outstanding cross-phase educational provision with many distinctive features. It would provide a high quality education for children from 3-16 years for the Rugby community.
- 3.7 The Academy would teach the National Curriculum and ensure that all its pupils have a strong grounding in literacy, numeracy, information technology and religious education. However, it would also provide many opportunities that go beyond the National Curriculum boundaries. It would foster a broad view of achievement that would not only include the gaining of qualifications but also personal and corporate success in a variety of other fields such as sport, music and community service.
- 3.8 At post 16 it would work closely with other providers, including higher education and the world of business and enterprise. The Academy's specialist status would create opportunities to form business partnerships, programmes and initiatives that would support the delivery of vocational education within the curriculum. Key features would include, curriculum development in the areas of Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education (AVCEs), General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), increased flexibility 14 - 16 and GCSEs in vocational subjects
- 3.9 The Catholic ethos of the Academy would support the whole curriculum. This would help to prepare students to take their place in an increasingly technological world where science, mathematics, languages, the arts, sports and all other subjects of the curriculum need to be infused with a strong sense of spirituality and moral purpose. This would enable the students of the Rugby Catholic Academy both to fulfil their own potential and ambitions and also be of service to their local community and to mankind as a whole.

- 3.10 There are already strong collaborative arrangements between the Catholic partners in Rugby: regular meetings between headteachers; shared staff days for continuing professional development; specialist links; curriculum liaison projects; sports co-ordination arrangements; joint services for parents in parishes, etc. The Academy would enable this collaborative foundation to be consolidated further.
- 3.11 Building on its existing Independent-State School Partnership links, the Academy would seek to form a Learning Partnership with the independent school sector. The learning partnership would seek to promote cross sector activity to mutual advantage, sharing expertise and experience with both institutions retaining institutional integrity and co-operating with agreed frameworks of engagement. The new Rugby Catholic Academy and the Learning Partnership would provide opportunities to develop strategies to raise standards, improve behaviour and attendance, and contribute to educational diversity in the Rugby area.
- 3.12 The Rugby Catholic Academy would be designed and constructed to provide a learning environment fit for the 21st Century, encouraging innovation, effective teaching and learning and with the flexibility to meet changing curricular requirements. The building design and construction would also enable the education of primary and secondary age pupils to be in distinct areas of the Academy whilst having the benefit and use of shared specialist sports, ICT, science and drama resources and facilities.

4 WHAT IS AN ACADEMY?

- 4.1 An Academy is a new kind of school. It is a publicly funded, independent school that provides a free education for pupils of all abilities in its local and wider communities. The Government intends to open 200 Academies around the country; many of them are already operating and contributing to greater educational diversity and, consequently, greater parental choice. The education being offered includes the best features of a well-run school together with new approaches to teaching, learning and school organisation. An Academy in Rugby would also be shaped by the distinctive ethos and values of a Catholic school.
- 4.2 The Government has given strong support to establishing Academies as a key feature of its policy to raise pupils' expectations, achievements and standards of attainment. It has continued to invite expressions of interest from sponsoring bodies to establish and maintain Academies and encouraged them to work closely with Local Authorities to identify situations where such Academies represent a positive way of raising achievement.
- 4.3 The Department for Education and Skills would fund the running costs of a new Rugby Catholic Academy at a level comparable to that of specialist schools in the area. These are substantial resources that would enable the Academy to make a strong start and develop innovative ideas. The Rugby Catholic Academy would manage its own budget and be free to raise additional funds to benefit the education of its pupils and school community.

- 4.4 The Archdiocese of Birmingham would be the sponsor and will provide £2m of the initial capital cost. The Department for Education and Skills provides the balance of capital needs. A Funding Agreement would be signed between the Archdiocese/Sponsor and the Department for Education and Skills to establish the Academy; this would confirm both the capital and on-going funding costs and sources of income.
- 4.5 This proposal presents the opportunity to provide, through the Academy, access for primary age pupils to a range of specialist facilities and continuity of education within a single establishment.

5 WHAT CHARACTERISTICS AND BENEFITS WOULD THE RUGBY ACADEMY OFFER?

- 5.1 The Rugby Catholic Academy would teach the National Curriculum and ensure that all its pupils have a strong grounding in literacy, numeracy, information technology and religious education.
- 5.2 A strong Catholic ethos and leadership will provide a clear strategic direction for the Academy and maintain a vision of a thriving school, including a care for the physical, spiritual and mental well-being of all who live and work in the school.
- 5.3 Religious Education would be central to the curriculum and life of the Rugby Catholic Academy. Whilst the Christian faith would be given a high priority, the curriculum would also include learning about and encountering other world faiths and belief systems.
- 5.4 Using the significant success and experience of the Independent sector, the Learning Partnership would facilitate the potential for developing strategies to raise standards in three key curriculum areas, Mathematics, Science and Modern Foreign Languages.
- 5.5 An extended day and an open access policy would make the substantial facilities and resources of the Rugby Catholic Academy available to the wider community and better meet the demand for the extended schools core offer. This would provide opportunities for individuals and groups within the community, including the parents of young children, to continue with their own education.
- 5.6 ICT would be used as an important tool for learning, as well as a subject in its own right, to support distance learning, the on-line curriculum and "any-where-anytime" learning, making personalised and contextualised learning a core feature of the Academy.
- 5.7 The Catholic Church provides schools and educational establishments in diverse forms all over the world. Using the potential behind the Academy's ICT provision, building links with this international educational community would widen pupils' educational experiences and broaden their horizons by providing them with an opportunity to share their experience, knowledge and views on an international scale.

- 5.8 The broad curriculum would include a range of vocational opportunities, including where possible, courses that reflect the specialist focus of the Rugby Catholic Academy; for example, business studies in a foreign language.
- 5.9 Careers guidance, work experience and other services would give a special attention to local, national and international opportunities for making the world a better place through one's values, behaviour and endeavour.
- 5.10 Students would be encouraged to take an important share in the responsibility for their own learning and conduct, relate positively to others, participate in the community, including volunteer work, and develop a sound understanding of citizenship and the world of work.
- 5.11 All pupils' progress would be carefully monitored. Those pupils whose achievement is hampered by low levels of literacy and numeracy would be identified and given additional support from the earliest stage.
- 5.12 Careful attention would be given to the assessment of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. The site would be fully accessible and inclusive in accordance with national policies.

6 WHAT WOULD BE THE SPECIFIC BENEFITS OF A 3-16 ACADEMY?

- 6.1 The principle benefit of a 3-16 across-phase Academy would be an integrated single school curriculum offer with coherent teaching and learning policies. These would be delivered with the benefit of greater continuity and progression.
- 6.2 Full account would be taken of the developmental needs of nursery and primary aged pupils in relation to the national expectations for the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, the aim would be to exceed those expectations significantly by fully exploiting the unique opportunities and resources of the 3-16 Rugby Catholic Academy.
- 6.3 Specialist staff would be able to teach across the key stages. Strengthened specialist teaching, especially in Key Stage 2, would draw upon the knowledge and skills of subject specialists to fashion and deliver teaching programmes for all pupils.
- 6.4 Delivery of music, art and other creative and performing arts could be strengthened across all key stages. This might include opportunities to work in specialist facilities, the early introduction of a modern foreign language and creative projects in the performing and visual arts that challenge and inspire pupils of all abilities.
- 6.5 Gifted and talented pupils across-phases would receive due attention through an enriched curriculum, extra-curricular courses and opportunities for advanced studies in accelerated teaching groups.

- 6.6 The Academy would build strong links with parents to enable them to become involved more closely across the phases in supporting and contributing to their own child's learning.
- 6.7 Financially, there would be significant economies of scale in having one integrated staff structure. The duplication of support staff roles and tasks across the four existing individual schools could be minimised, allowing for more effective deployment of staff to a greater range of activities and wider support to be adopted.
- 6.8 The economies of scale for purchasing resources, facilities, contracts and services would be enhanced. KS1 and 2 would benefit from the specialist resources and funding of KS3 and 4. The secondary key stages would benefit from the continuity gained from the single institution.

7 WHO COULD GO TO THE ACADEMY?

- 7.1 The Rugby Catholic Academy will be for the benefit of the local community and will be attended by the local community; however, priority would be given to Catholic pupils from Rugby parishes.
- 7.2 The Rugby Catholic Academy would therefore be integrated into the pattern of schools already serving the local community. It is anticipated that those who attend the Academy will be committed to its aims, objectives and discipline, and its determination to promote a school of excellence for pupils of all abilities.
- 7.3 The governors would be responsible for admissions. They would agree an Admissions Policy, having regard to the Department for Education and Skills' Code of Practice (including the guidance on appeals against refusal to admit). The final admission arrangements would be subject to approval by the Secretary of State. The Policy would seek to balance a wish to serve the local and wider Catholic community as well as local Rugby pupils, irrespective of their faith.
- 7.4 In the Academy's first year (September 2007) all pupils attending the existing St Marie's Infant School, St Marie's Junior School, English Martyrs Primary School and Bishop Wulstan Catholic Business and Enterprise College would have the right to transfer to the new Academy.
- 7.5 Pupils from Our Lady's Primary School, Princethorpe, would also have priority to transfer when beginning secondary education. It is anticipated that there is also strong potential for further recruitment of Catholic children from parishes in the Daventry area; priority in the admissions arrangements would also be made for these children.

8 THE ACADEMY'S GOVERNING BODY

- 8.1 The Governing Body of an Academy has similar responsibilities to those of maintained schools, particularly voluntary aided schools. These include responsibility for the overall strategic direction of the Academy, the curriculum, appointing and employment of staff, managing the budget, admissions, reporting to parents and raising levels of achievement.

9 THE ACADEMY'S TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF

- 9.1 At the existing St Marie's Infant School, St Marie's Junior School, English Martyrs Primary School and Bishop Wulstan Business and Enterprise College, the governing bodies are the employers. In the new Academy, the governing body would also be the employer.
- 9.2 The transfer of undertakings (TUPE) regulations would apply to all staff between the existing school and the new Rugby Catholic Academy, so all staff would have continuing employment rights. Existing staff would be given the opportunity to take up posts in the new Academy. While conditions of service under TUPE are protected, it may be necessary to adapt responsibilities and work practices to reflect the requirements of the Academy with a focus on raising standards and securing the capacity to sustain improvement.

10 THE PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING THE ACADEMY

- 10.1 The Archdiocese of Birmingham and Warwickshire County Council will approach the Academies Division at the Department for Education and Skills for informal discussions.
- 10.2 If the outcome is positive, the proposal for a 3-16 Rugby Catholic Academy will be tested through the statutory process.
- 10.3 The Archdiocese, in discussion with Warwickshire County Council, would need to quickly review potential sites across Rugby and prepare a formal 'Expression of Interest' to be presented to the Department for Education and Skills. The Department for Education and Skills would provide detailed criteria on the form that the Expression of Interest document should take.
- 10.4 The feasibility stage begins once the Secretary of State agrees support for an Academy project, following the submission of the Expression of Interest. It lasts for approximately 6 - 18 months, depending on the complexity of individual projects. During this stage, the project team prepares detailed plans, including an educational vision and model, and an outline building design, and formally consults with the local community. The Diocesan Schools Commission and Warwickshire County Council already have good experience in working together to develop major building projects.

- 10.5 Once detailed plans for the new Academy and core documents (e.g. Memorandum and Articles) are complete, they need to be submitted to the Department for Education and Skills. At this stage the Secretary of State must, by law, also formally consult the LA in whose area the Academy is based and any other LA if it is likely that a significant proportion of the pupils who might attend the new Academy live there.
- 10.6 Once the Secretary of State is content with the proposals, the Funding Agreement is signed by the Academy Trust and Secretary of State. This document contains all the formal information necessary for the opening and funding of the new Academy - and is a binding contract between the Secretary of State and the Academy Trust for an Academy to open on a specified date.
- 10.7 If a decision is taken to proceed, the governing bodies of St Marie's Infant School, St Marie's Junior School, English Martyrs Primary School and Bishop Wulstan Catholic Business and Enterprise College, would need to propose the closure of their Schools. They would do this with the full support and advice of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and Warwickshire County Council. The dates in the proposals would be for enactment in the year in which the Rugby Catholic Academy would open.
- 10.8 Anyone who wished to object would have two months in which to do so, and send their objection to the governing bodies and Warwickshire County Council. If there are no objections, the proposals for closure and the opening of the new Rugby Catholic Academy could be implemented.
- 10.9 If there are objections to the closures, the governing bodies would then send details of their proposals, together with the objections that have been received, to the School Organisation Committee for a decision. This Committee is independent of the Warwickshire County Council, and is made up of representatives of various groups with an interest in education in the area.
- 10.10 If the proposals to close are agreed by the School organisation Committee, then the implementation of the construction of the new Rugby Catholic Academy could begin.

Diocesan Schools Commission

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AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee

The Cabinet

Date of Committee

9th March 2006

Report Title

Report of the Review of Higher Education Student Finance Delivery in England

Summary

Following a review of the end-to-end delivery of Student Finance in England which was announced on 7th June 2005, a report was published on 1st February 2006 with an initial Ministerial statement supporting the centralisation of a role currently administered by Local Authorities.

For further information please contact:

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nickwilliams@warwickshire.gov.uk

Donna Isard
Student Finance Manager
Tel: 01926 412268
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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]

No

Background papers

The Report of the Review of Higher Education Student Finance Delivery in England (DfES document published 1.2.06)

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

Other Committees

.....

Local Member(s)

.....

Other Elected Members

O&S Spokespersons for information:
Cllr Helen McCarthy – *“If a centralised system resulted in a better service for our students I might be able to support it. Past experience, however, shows that a centralised system results in long delays and great confusion. Our present system*

gives good value. If it ain't broke, etc...."

Cllr Richard Grant:

- *"regrets a further period of turbulence in this Service*
- *pays tribute to the work carried out by the Student Finance Section and their determination to continue to deliver high quality service to Warwickshire students despite changes in systems*
- *point needs to be made to government that local authorities like Warwickshire have a proven record in delivering quality student finance services and that this evidence would be a worthwhile benchmark for future delivery of a potential nationwide service."*

Cllr Jill Dill-Russell – no comments to make

Cabinet Member

Cllr John Burton – *"very concerning"*

Other Cabinet Members consulted

Cllr Izzi Seccombe – *"I am concerned that it appears that conclusions are being reached about what kind of Service delivery will be required before the outcome of the review and the trials being run will have reported back. I welcome Cabinet's views"*

Cllr Peter Fowler

Chief Executive

.....

Legal

Jane Pollard / Richard Freeth – *"fine"*

Finance

David Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources – no comments to make

Other Chief Officers

.....

District Councils

.....

Health Authority

.....

Police

.....

Other Bodies/Individuals

.....

FINAL DECISION

NO

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet A further report will be provided to Members once the final Ministerial statement, expected Spring 2006, has been made
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

The Cabinet – 9th March 2006

Report of the Review of Higher Education Student Finance Delivery in England

Report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families

Recommendations:

- (1) That Members consider the potential implications of the report on the Student Finance Section and service delivery in Warwickshire.
- (2) That a response to the Government's proposals be drafted for consideration by the Cabinet.

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware that over the past few years the Government has introduced a programme of Modernisation regarding the administration of Student Finance. This programme introduced, amongst other things, a national computer system and standardised forms to eliminate inconsistencies between Local Authorities. Initial problems caused by the revised processes and failure of the computer system have now been significantly reduced.
- 1.2 The Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, Bill Rammell, announced the terms of reference for a review of higher education student finance delivery on 7th June 2005.
- 1.3 The Review was to give consideration to further improvements to the administration of Student Finance, focussing on whether the partnership arrangements and systems put in place through Modernisation were fit for purpose.
- 1.4 In advance of the conclusion of the Review, the Department for Education and Skills announced that the service delivery models likely to be recommended in the Review should be piloted during the 2006/07 application cycle.
- 1.5 Warwickshire did not volunteer to be a pilot authority but a number of other authorities have volunteered and the three pilot models (centralised, partially centralised and local delivery) are now in place to commence operation in March 2006.

2. Current position

- 2.1 On 31st January 2006 the Secretary of State for Education announced the publication of the report of the review of Higher Education Student Finance Delivery in England.
- 2.2 A written statement on the report was also laid in Parliament on 31st January confirming that, in principle, Ministers accept the 44 recommendations made, in particular the emphasis placed on electronic applications.
- 2.3 The accompanying letter to Chief Education Officers states that “Ministers think there are strong arguments for centralising the delivery of application processing...This would mean removing this function from Local Authority Student Finance teams. Ministers take the view that centralisation is more likely to achieve the transformation in service delivery we are seeking: namely to deliver a consistent level of customer service and support; clear and simple accountability and value for money...We recognise that there will be concerns about the impact of this on LA Student Finance staff.”
- 2.4 The more detailed response to the report will be published in the Spring, but the review makes recommendations for implementation in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010 which indicate that partial centralisation will commence in February 2007 with full centralisation for the 2008/09 academic year (to be completed by Spring 2008).
- 2.5 The review offers three options for a single national organisation with responsibility for delivering Student Finance and implies that any local assistance should be provided by Universities and Colleges. For the 2006/07 application cycle pilots this function will be administered by the Student Loans Company from bases in Darlington and Glasgow.
- 2.6 The review recommends the publication of Local Authority Student Finance ‘league tables’ for the processing of applications during 2006, detailing variances between processing speeds and quality of service in Local Authorities. These variances have been included in the reasons behind the proposed centralisation.
- 2.7 Members will be aware that the Student Finance Service in Warwickshire has always maintained a high quality service to students and parents in the County. Clearly the proposed centralisation would take away the local element from the service. For many years work has taken place within the Section to improve customer focus and deliver a timely and comprehensive service to Warwickshire residents, including: the provision of information presentations within schools and colleges, evening surgeries for students and parents to have applications checked and documents certified, and a form collection service from schools. These services are over and above the provision of local advice and guidance and the availability of experienced staff within the office in Warwick. All local involvement will potentially be scaled down from 2007 and cease from 2008.

- 2.9 All staff within the Student Finance Section have been briefed and have been given the opportunity to comment on both the overall proposal and the 44 individual recommendations.
- 2.10 A response to the Department for Education and Skills is being drafted for agreement by the Cabinet.
- 2.11 In view of the ongoing uncertainty some staff have been recruited on a temporary basis but there are 10 permanent staff remaining for whom redeployment/redundancy options will need to be considered.

3. The way ahead

- 3.1 This latest Review brings yet another period of instability for Student Finance staff and it is anticipated that all Local Authorities will face the difficulty of staff retention during the period of transition.
- 3.2 This in turn may at times affect the delivery of the service to students in Warwickshire although every effort will be made to ensure that overall the service will continue to the highest level possible.
- 3.3 Talks will commence with Human Resources and Unions in preparation for further discussion and planning as required.
- 3.4 Work will now take place on implementing the recommendations for 2006. Whilst we await further guidance from the Department for Education and Skills on some elements, planning will take place within the Section to ensure that Warwickshire maintains a respectable position in the 'league tables' this year.
- 3.5 The Department for Education and Skills is currently re-drafting the Service Level Agreement between Local Authorities and the Department for the 2006 application cycle. Members will be aware that Warwickshire did not sign the 2005 version of this document. The content of this agreement will be scrutinised before signature in light of the turbulent period ahead.
- 3.6 It is anticipated that the transfer of the Student Finance function from Local Authorities to the single agency will bring with it a certain amount of media and political interest.
- 3.7 A further report will be presented to Members following the final Ministerial decision in Spring 2006.

MARION DAVIS
Strategic Director for Children,
Young People and Families
22 Northgate Street
Warwick

23rd February 2006

Cabinet – 9th March 2006.

Addendum to Agenda Item 4 - Establishment of Warwickshire's Safeguarding Children Board:

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board considered the establishment of the Safeguarding Children Board on 3rd March. Following some discussion the meeting endorsed the establishment of the Board in accordance with the Children Act 2004.

The meeting further endorsed the recommendation tabled before them that the appointment of the Chair of the Board be delegated by the County Council to the Strategic Director for Children Young People and Families.

The Strategic Partnership Board went on to make a number of recommendations for consideration by Cabinet, namely, that the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board provide an annual report to the Strategic Partnership Board (or its successor) and that the Safeguarding Children Board cooperates with the County Council's Scrutiny arrangements. It is possible for these to be incorporated in the Constitution or simply for them to be agreed by the Safeguarding Board with the reporting arrangements added into the annual work programme. It should be noted that the Safeguarding Children Board will be a stand alone statutory body and is not a sub-committee of any other organisation.

Cabinet is therefore recommended to make the additional further resolution:

That the appointment of the Chair of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board be delegated to Marion Davis

And to consider making the following resolution:

The Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board's Constitution be amended in consultation with its member agencies to include requirements that the Board provides a report to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board annually and cooperates with the County Council's own Scrutiny arrangements.

David Carter
Strategic Director of Performance and Development
March 2006

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	Cabinet		
Date of Committee	9th March		
Report Title	Establishment of Warwickshire's Safeguarding Children Board		
Summary	This report details the requirement for Warwickshire County Council to establish a local safeguarding children board to agree and oversee the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the County.		
For further information please contact:	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Victoria Gould Principal Solicitor Tel: 01926 736125 victoriagould@warwickshire.gov.uk</td> <td>Dr Vic Tuck Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Development Officer Tel: 01926 731141 vicktuck@warwickshire.gov.uk</td> </tr> </table>	Victoria Gould Principal Solicitor Tel: 01926 736125 victoriagould@warwickshire.gov.uk	Dr Vic Tuck Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Development Officer Tel: 01926 731141 vicktuck@warwickshire.gov.uk
Victoria Gould Principal Solicitor Tel: 01926 736125 victoriagould@warwickshire.gov.uk	Dr Vic Tuck Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Development Officer Tel: 01926 731141 vicktuck@warwickshire.gov.uk		
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	No.		
Background papers	Children Act 2004		

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Other Committees | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Board – 3 rd March |
| Local Member(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Elected Members | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Councillors Richard Grant, Helen McCarthy and Jill Dill-Russell |
| Cabinet Member | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Councillor Izzi Seccombe – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services – supports the proposal |
| Chief Executive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Legal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Chief Officers | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| District Councils | <input type="checkbox"/> | Via Area Child Protection Committee |
| Health Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> | Via Area Child Protection Committee |
| Police | <input type="checkbox"/> | Via Area Child Protection Committee |
| Other Bodies/Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> | Children Act Project Team, Children Services Group and the Area Child Protection Committee/Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board |

FINAL DECISION

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Further consideration by this Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To Council | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To Cabinet | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To an O & S Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To an Area Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Further Consultation | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Cabinet - 9th March.

Establishment of Warwickshire's Safeguarding Children Board

Report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development and the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families

Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board for Warwickshire with the membership and terms of reference as set out in the attached Draft Constitution.

Background

- 1.1 The Children Act 2004 directs Children's Services Authorities to establish a Board to co-ordinate what is done by each of its local partner organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in its area by the 1st April 2006 (s13-s15). These will be known as Local Safeguarding Children Boards. They will replace the Area Child Protection Committees which were set up under Statutory Guidance. For the first time there is a duty laid out specifically in a statute for all Children's Services Authorities and their partners to co-operate with each other in meeting the objectives of the Board and to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each of them to this end.
- 1.2 The membership is, in part, also dictated by the Act and includes the police, probation, youth offending teams, health authorities, Trusts, Connexions, CAF/CASS, and governors of prisons etc. In addition to these members the Children's Services Authority may invite others to be represented on it having consulted their Board partners.
- 1.3 Any member of the Board may contribute towards the cost of establishing and running it.
- 1.4 Under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2005 the authority which establishes the Board must, after consultation with their Board partners, appoint a person to chair the Board. The Regulations list specific functions of the Board as being to:
 - develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in its area

- communicate to persons and bodies in the area the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and its board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and to advise on ways to improve
- participate in the planning of services for children in its area
- undertake reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and its partners on lessons to be learnt

1.5 From April 1st 2006 each Local Safeguarding Children Board may (and from 1st April 2008 they shall) also collect and analyse information relating to any death of a child in its area with a view to identifying matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children and any public health or safety concerns arising from the deaths of children. The Boards shall also put in place procedures for ensuring a coordinated response to any unexpected death of a child.

In Warwickshire

2.1 In Warwickshire the proposed members of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board have already met and agreed a draft Constitution setting out the aims and objectives of the Board and how the partners intend to work together. The draft Constitution is attached to this report. It is envisaged that the Draft Constitution will be kept under review by the Board and amended and improved from time to time to accord with Regulations, Guidance, and best practice.

2.2 The proposal and Draft Constitution were presented to the Children Act Project on the 30th January 2006 and the Project agreed and endorsed the Draft Constitution and recommended its endorsement and adoption by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board and Cabinet.

2.3 The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board considered the proposals at its meeting on the 3rd March. Their comments and recommendation will be available too late for inclusion in this report and will be shared with Cabinet at the meeting.

Recommendation:

Cabinet is recommended to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board for Warwickshire with the membership and terms of reference as set out in the attached Draft Constitution.

David Carter
Strategic Director of Performance
and Development
Shire Hall
Warwick

Marion Davis
Strategic Director of Children, Young People
and Families

February 2006



**A DRAFT
CONSTITUTION
FOR
2005-2006**

1. Title

- 1.1 The Board shall be known as Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board (hereinafter referred to as WSCB)

2. Statutory Framework and Purpose

- 2.1 WSCB has been formed as a result of and in accordance with the Children Act 2004, which places a legal duty on Warwickshire County Council and its partners to cooperate in the establishment and operation of a Local Safeguarding Children Board. The Act places an obligation on them to support its operation
- 2.2 WSCB operates in accordance with government guidance: *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard children and promote the welfare of children*. This document is issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, which requires local authorities in their Social Services function to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State. Chapters 3,5,6 and 7 of this guidance are also issued under Section 16 of the Children Act 2004, which further states that a Children's Services Authority *and each of the statutory partners*, must in exercising their functions relating to a Local Safeguarding Children Board have regard to any guidance given to them for the purpose by the Secretary of State. This means that they must take the guidance into account, and if they decide to depart from it, have clear reasons for doing so
- 2.3 The objective of WSCB as set out in statute, is to co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Warwickshire, and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose
- 2.4 It is the key *statutory* mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in Warwickshire will cooperate to safeguard children and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do

- 2.5 Safeguarding children and promoting their welfare is defined in government guidance as protecting children from maltreatment, followed by preventing impairment of health and development, and ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- 2.6 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes protecting children from harm and this is the key goal of WSCB. The Board will regard this as its first priority. Having secured this core business it will seek to develop a wider remit to its work, including preventative work to avoid harm occurring to children in the first place. It will therefore ensure that the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Warwickshire is carried out in such a way as to improve all five outcomes that are of importance to them:
- Staying Safe
 - Being Healthy
 - Enjoying and Achieving
 - Making a Positive Contribution
 - Achieving Economic Well-Being
- 2.7 The Mission of WSCB is therefore:
- To ensure that sound arrangements to protect children are in place in Warwickshire
 - To contribute to the prevention of harm and the promotion of the welfare of children in Warwickshire
 - To achieve these objectives by promoting interagency cooperation and collaboration
- 2.8 WSCB will contribute to the broader delivery and commissioning arrangements for children's services defined in the *Warwickshire Children and Young Person's Plan* and delivered through the children's trust arrangements in the County

2.9 While developing strong working relationships with wider strategic partnerships in Warwickshire, WSCB will exercise effectively its unique strategic role for aspects of the *Staying Safe* objective of *Every Child Matters*, and have a distinct identity within local arrangements. It will:

- Form a view of the quality of local activity
- Challenge organisations as necessary
- Speak with an independent voice

3. Functions of WSCB

3.1 ***Policies and Procedures*** – WSCB will ensure policies and procedures for safeguarding are developed and kept up to date in relation to:

- Action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention under Sections 17 and 47 of the Children Act 1989
- Training in safeguarding children on both a single and multi-agency basis
- Recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children
- Investigation of allegations concerning persons working with children
- Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered
- Cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners
- Other policies and protocols that may be necessary to safeguard children

3.2 ***Communication and Raising Awareness***

- Promoting public awareness of safeguarding issues in the wider community and how it can contribute to this work
- Listening to and consulting with children and young people in planning services

3.3 *Monitoring and Evaluation*

- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is being done by the Local Authority and Board partners and advising them of ways to improve
- Raising concerns about the work of partners that cannot be addressed locally, with others – senior managers, relevant inspectorate or government department

3.4 *Participating in Planning and Commissioning*

- Ensuring that local children's services take safeguarding and promoting welfare into account

3.5 *Serious Case Reviews and further functions relating to child deaths in Warwickshire:*

- Ensuring that all unexpected child deaths in Warwickshire are responded to in a timely, thorough and sensitive manner and in accordance with best practice
- Reviewing all child deaths in Warwickshire so as to develop an awareness of local patterns and trends and to identify measures for reducing child mortality
- Undertaking Serious Case Reviews of all deaths in which child abuse and neglect may have played a part in order to learn lessons for interagency working to safeguard children

3.6 *Publication of an Annual Business Plan*

3.7 *Any other activities conducive to the achievement of objectives of WSCB*

4. *Accountability*

- 4.1 WSCB is accountable for its work to its constituent agencies, the agreement of which is required for all work that has implications for policy, planning and the allocation of resources.
- 4.2 The planned programme of work for the year ahead, which includes measurable objectives, will be set out in the Annual Business Plan. This will also include relevant

information on safeguarding and child protection activity over the previous year.

- 4.3 Warwickshire County Council will take the lead for the effective working of WSCB, but all partner agencies are responsible for contributing fully and effectively to its work

5. Financing and Staffing

- 5.1 WSCB will be supported by partner agencies with adequate and reliable resources that will enable the Board to carry out its functions as defined in Part 3 of this Constitution, and for other such purposes relating to the achievement of its objectives as agreed by the Board
- 5.2 The financial year will run from 1st April to 31st March each year
- 5.3 The WSCB budget will be the responsibility of the Director of Children's Services, being administered by the Warwickshire County Council on behalf of WSCB
- 5.4 Core Contributions will come from Warwickshire County Council, Primary Care Trusts and the Police
- 5.5 Other agencies will contribute, financially and/or "in kind" as agreed by the Board
- 5.6 The staffing of the Board will be agreed by partner agencies in line with the objective of accomplishing the functions set out in Section 3
- 5.7 Details of the WSCB budget will be included in the Annual Business Plan

6. Role of Members of WSCB

- 6.1 Members of the Board have a duty to contribute to the effective work of the Board and to establish clear arrangements for communicating the decisions of the Board to their agency

6.2 In making their assessment of performance and in deciding upon the necessary steps to put right any problems in safeguarding children, members of the Board will be as objective as possible. This takes precedence over their role as representative of their organisation. They will:

- Speak for their organisation with authority
- Commit their organisation on policy and practice matters
- Hold their organisation to account

7. Membership

7.1 The membership of WSCB will be kept under review through the normal business processes of the Board, to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and meet additional local requirements as identified by WSCB

7.2 Membership of WSCB will comprise Core Members identified in the Children Act 2004. These members will have roles and seniority that enable them to contribute effectively to the achievement of all the functions of the Board as set out in Section 3, and commit adequate resources to its work

7.3 The Board will include members who have particular knowledge and expertise in specific areas of safeguarding work

7.4 Membership of WSCB will therefore be:

- Representatives at Senior Management level of the Warwickshire County Council
- A representative of the Chief Constable of the local Police Service of at least the rank of Superintendent, with a lead role for child protection
- A representative of the local Probation Board of at least Assistant Chief Officer level

- The Chief Executives or their representative(s) from Warwickshire NHS Primary Care Trusts, including designated staff with a lead role in child protection
- Representative of the Strategic Health Authority
- A Person, or their representative at senior management level, providing services under section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (c.21)
- A Representative of the Regional Manager of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
- The Manager of the Warwickshire Youth Offending Team
- Representative(s) of the 5 District and Borough Councils in Warwickshire
- A representative of the Warwickshire County Council Solicitor
- General Practitioner Representative(s)
- Lead Manager from the Children's Planning Section of Warwickshire County Council Children's Services
- A Representative from services in Warwickshire that work with Domestic Abuse
- Chairs of the seven Sub-Committees of the Board (if not already represented)
- WSCB Development Officer

7.5 Agencies which are not represented on the full Board but which are referred to in government guidance, will be invited to contribute as appropriate and where their input will be beneficial

- 7.6 These and other agencies will be involved in the work of WSCB through an Associate Membership Scheme. WSCB will hold an Annual Standing Conference for organisations affiliated to the Board. Each of these organisations will provide a lead liaison representative as a direct contact point for the WSCB Development Officer
- 7.7 Warwickshire County Council will provide WSCB with administrative support, including facilities for minute taking of its meeting and the distribution of documentation

8. Chair and Vice Chair

- 8.1 Warwickshire County Council is legally responsible for establishing the Board. It will after consultation with partners of WSCB, appoint a person to chair the Board. The Chair will be accountable to Warwickshire County Council through the Director of Children's Services
- 8.2 When the Chair is held by a senior employee of an agency other than Warwickshire County Council, then the Vice Chair will be a senior employee from Warwickshire County Council
- 8.3 The Chair and Vice Chair will not be held by members of the same partner agency
- 8.4 The Chair/Vice Chair of WSCB will be appointed at the first meeting of each calendar year and reviewed annually at that meeting
- 8.5 Chair/Vice Chair will be appointed with the consent of a majority of voting members
- 8.6 If the Chair or Vice Chair are not able to be present at any meeting, a substitute chair, may, with the agreement of the majority of the voting members, be appointed to chair that meeting

9. Meetings

- 9.1 Ordinary Meetings will normally be held every three months

9.2 Extraordinary Meetings:

- The Chair may call an extraordinary meeting at any time;
- A WSCB member may call an extraordinary meeting by submitting to the WSCB Chair a written request, which is supported by the written agreement of any two voting members;
- Such extraordinary meetings will normally be held within 14 days of the request being received by the Chair

10. Chair's Action and Decision-Making

10.1 Any issues which require decisions by WSCB between meetings and which do not, in the opinion of the Chair, require an extraordinary meeting to be convened, shall be decided by the chair and submitted for ratification to the next meeting of WSCB

10.2 In the absence of the Chair, decisions as described in 10.1 will be made by the Vice Chair

11. Voting

11.1 WSCB will, wherever possible, seek consensus on business matters under consideration at its meetings. In the event of a vote, all members of WSCB will be entitled to vote. In cases where there is an equal number of votes cast, the Chair of the meeting will have a second or casting vote

12. Quoracy

12.1 No business shall be transacted at a meeting unless eight members are present, representing at least three different agencies, one of whom must be a representative from the Local Authority

13. Non/Infrequent Attendance

- 13.1 A Board member who is unable to attend a meeting of the Board may appoint a deputy to represent them in their place. The deputy will be of sufficient seniority to make decisions on behalf of their agency at the meeting
- 13.2 If a Board member misses more than two consecutive meetings without sending apologies, then the Chair on behalf of the Board will write to that member. If non-attendance continues then the Chair, on behalf of the Board, will write to the senior person of that agency requesting a replacement. This arrangement will also apply to the subcommittees of the Boards and any specialist working groups that may be established
- 13.3 Each partner agency is responsible for finding a replacement Board member in the event of pregnancy, long-term sickness or infrequent attendance
- 13.4 A record of attendance at Board Meetings over the previous year will be included in the WSCB Annual Business Plan

14. Records

- 14.1 The minutes of the meeting will be entered as a permanent record and submitted for approval at the next meeting
- 14.2 WSCB will lodge a record of its meetings on the WSCB Website

15. Subcommittees

- 15.1 The Board will establish subcommittees to complete its work-plans, which will be defined in terms of the objectives and functions of the Board
- 15.2 The Board will determine the structure and terms of reference of its subcommittees, and review their operation

15.3 Subcommittees will comprise representatives from the partner agencies of WSCB and any other such representation as is deemed necessary to complete work-plans

15.4 Subcommittees will report progress to the Board. An account of work undertaken in the previous year by each subcommittee and an updated work-plan for the year ahead will be included in the Annual Business Plan

16. WSCB Development Officer

16.1 The Development Officer of WSCB is accountable to the full Board for the performance of her/his duties

16.2 The role of the WSCB Development Officer is to advise, assist and support the subcommittees in the achievement of their work-plans and objectives

16.3 In addition the Development Officer will take forward other projects and initiatives identified by WSCB

17. WSCB Business Plan

17.1 The Board will produce a Business Plan each year

17.2 The document will be presented for approval to the September meeting of WSCB

17.3 The Development Officer will be responsible for compilation of the Business Plan on behalf of the Quality and Information Subcommittee

18. Review and Amendment of the Constitution

18.1 This Constitution will be reviewed annually, and may be amended by a clear majority vote of the total board membership, provided that notice of the proposed amendment is given in writing to the Chair no later than 14 working days before the meeting. Amendments may also be made through this process at any other time

Cabinet – 9th March 2006.

Addendum to Agenda Item 4 - Establishment of Warwickshire's Safeguarding Children Board:

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board considered the establishment of the Safeguarding Children Board on 3rd March. Following some discussion the meeting endorsed the establishment of the Board in accordance with the Children Act 2004.

The meeting further endorsed the recommendation tabled before them that the appointment of the Chair of the Board be delegated by the County Council to the Strategic Director for Children Young People and Families.

The Strategic Partnership Board went on to make a number of recommendations for consideration by Cabinet, namely, that the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board provide an annual report to the Strategic Partnership Board (or its successor) and that the Safeguarding Children Board cooperates with the County Council's Scrutiny arrangements. It is possible for these to be incorporated in the Constitution or simply for them to be agreed by the Safeguarding Board with the reporting arrangements added into the annual work programme. It should be noted that the Safeguarding Children Board will be a stand alone statutory body and is not a sub-committee of any other organisation.

Cabinet is therefore recommended to make the additional further resolution:

That the appointment of the Chair of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board be delegated to Marion Davis

And to consider making the following resolution:

The Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board's Constitution be amended in consultation with its member agencies to include requirements that the Board provides a report to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board annually and cooperates with the County Council's own Scrutiny arrangements.

David Carter
Strategic Director of Performance and Development
March 2006

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Cabinet

Date of Committee 9th March 2006

Report Title Integrated Risk Management Plan Year 3
Action Plan - Consultation

Summary This paper sets out the Integrated Risk Management Plan Year 3 Action Plan. The final version of the plan has been produced following consideration of all the feedback received during the consultation period from 1st October 2005 to 31st December 2005.

For further information please contact: William Brown
Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer
Tel: 01926 423231
williambrown@warwickshire.gov.uk

Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? No.

Background papers Fire and Rescue Service National Framework Document 2005 – 2006

Integrated Risk Management Plan

IRMP Consultation Responses

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees IRMP Policy Panel
- Local Member(s)
- Other Elected Members Councillor John Haynes, Councillor David Shilton
- Cabinet Member Councillor Richard Hobbs
- Chief Executive
- Legal Ian Marriott
- Finance Oliver Winters
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils



- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION NO

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council 9th May 2006
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Cabinet

9th March 2006

**Integrated Risk Management Plan
Year 3 Action Plan - Consultation**

**Report of the Strategic Director of Community Protection and
County Fire Officer**

Recommendation

For Members to recommend that Full Council adopts the Integrated Risk Management Year Three Action Plan on behalf of the Fire Authority from 1st April 2006.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 makes it a statutory requirement for Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan [IRMP].
- 1.2 Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority have produced an IRMP that identifies the risk from fire and other emergencies to the communities of Warwickshire. It also examines how effective the current arrangements are in risk reduction through prevention, protection and intervention and then presents opportunities for further improvement. The Fire and Rescue Authority place a strong emphasis on prevention.
- 1.3 The IRMP is underpinned and supported by annual action plans that provide an agenda for improvement based upon meeting the local needs of the community and providing value for money through greater efficiency.
- 1.4 A third annual action plan was produced during 2005 and a consultation exercise involving the community and key stakeholders on the content of the draft plan was held from 1st October 2005 to 31st December 2005. The consultation strategy was developed in accordance with the code of practice on consultation issued by the HM Government's Cabinet Office.

2. Consultation - External

- 2.1 A copy of the action plan along with the full IRMP was placed on the website together with an on-line questionnaire to receive feedback. A copy of the action plan was sent to other public sector agencies, local businesses, District and Borough Councils, Parish Councils, neighbouring Fire and Rescue Authorities, Representative Bodies, MP's and MEP's for Warwickshire inviting them to make a written response.
- 2.2 Five focus groups were held one in each of the District/Borough Council areas. The participants were recruited from the Warwickshire County Council's Citizen's Panel.

3. Consultation – Internal

- 3.1 The draft IRMP Year 3 Action Plan was sent to all Service locations as part of the 'team briefing' communication process by line managers. A number of staff meetings have also been held at Service locations covering Service Headquarters, Fire Safety, Training and Development, Area Risk Teams and Fire Stations.

4. Consultation – A Summary of the Main Findings

4.1 Written Responses

- 4.1.1 During the consultation period a number of written responses were received all of which were supportive of the proposed objectives within the plan. A number of responses stated that they were opposed to the closure of their local fire station and one response expressed their opposition to alterations to the wholetime duty system.
- 4.1.2 The Retained Firefighters Union in its written response having talked about the benefits of the retained duty system commented that *"there is clear evidence that these objectives will present difficulties in combating those barriers to change that will take advantage of the public's desire to limitless increases in the provision of services"*.
- 4.1.3 The Fire Brigades Union in its written response stated that we should wait for the completion of the IRMP Y2 projects on duty systems before embarking on a review of others. In general they raised concerns against all the objectives within their response that focussed on FBU National Policy [on co-responder schemes], limited budgets, data management and duplication of effort with other agencies.

4.2 On-line Questionnaire

- 4.2.1 During the consultation period a total of 58 on-line questionnaires were completed. Analysis of these returns shows that 70% of these respondents were employed by a fire and rescue service. Six out of the nine objectives were supported by a clear majority of respondents.

4.2.2 This pattern differed significantly for Objective 2 “wholetime duty system” were the clear majority of the respondents were opposed to the objective. Objective 3 “officer duty system” only just received a positive endorsement whilst the view on Objective 8 “co-responder scheme” was equally split between those in favour and those who were opposed.

4.3 Focus Groups

4.3.1 The focus groups expressed their satisfaction with the performance of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service. Members of the panels stated that they were unaware of the full scope of the services provided prior to attending the group and expressed their support for the range of intervention, prevention and protection based services that are currently being delivered by Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service.

4.3.2 The consultants who carried out the focus groups have prepared a full report that is available by contacting Area Manager Stephen Haynes.

4.4 Staff Meetings

4.4.1 In general the majority of staff who attended the meetings at their workplace expressed support for Objectives 1, 4, 6,7 and 9 with very few dissenting voices against them. Objectives 2 and 8 were the most strongly opposed. Objectives 3 and 5 received a mix response between staff who voiced support and those who voiced opposition.

5. Amendments to the Draft IRMP Year Two Action Plan

5.1 In order to give feedback to stakeholders regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the approved IRMP Year 3 Action Plan a comprehensive report will be produced and circulated to respondents as well as being made freely available to the Community.

5.2 Following the consultation process the following amendments have been made to the draft IRMP Year 3 Action Plan:

Objective	Change Record	Comments
1	Objective deleted following consultation	Concerns were expressed at staff meetings and by the FBU about the meaning and purpose of this objective. It has been deleted because the process of monitoring project and the ongoing reduction in risk are embedded within FRS performance management processes
2	No Change	Whilst the concerns of respondents and staff are acknowledged there is a need to demonstrate that the wholetime duty system fulfils the needs of the IRMP. WFRS has also demonstrated its commitment to staff engagement in change through IRMP Y2 Projects

Objective	Change Record	Comments
3	No Change	Whilst the concerns of respondents and staff are acknowledged there is a need to demonstrate that the flexible duty system fulfils the needs of the IRMP. WFRS has also demonstrated its commitment to staff engagement in change through IRMP Y2 Projects
4	Objective deleted following consultation	A number of Parish Councils raised concerns about the closure of local fire stations. However there is a need to review fire and emergency cover in order to ensure that the right resources are in the right place at the right time to reduce the risk and impact of fire and other emergencies. This objective has been removed from the plan, as a review will form part of the work to prepare IRMP 2007 – 2010.
5	No Change	The recent major fire at Buncefield Oil Depot provided a graphic illustration of the need to work collaboratively with other FRS.
6	No Change	This objective was generally supported by consultees and will help WFRS to prepare its systems for integration with the FiReControl and Firelink projects
7	Objective deleted following consultation	Staff expressed concern that this objective was a repetition of objective 9 and the FBU raised concerns over the capacity within teams to deliver in a reasonable timescale.
8	No change	The Fire Brigades Union and members of staff all raised concerns about this objective. The subject of co-responders has always been part of the FRS Modernisation agenda and the draft Fire and Rescue National Framework 2006 – 2008 contains the recommendation that FRA's should "...actively review the opportunities for improving community safety by implementing co-responder schemes in partnership with other agencies".
9	No Change	This objective was on the whole supported by consultees with few dissenting voices.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The amendments following the consultation exercise are indicated in appendix 1 to this report. A final version of the action plan has been provided as appendix 2.

- 6.2 The IRMP Year 3 Action Plan when approved will be circulated to key stakeholders and made available on the County Council's website. Copies of the plan will also be available on request from members of the public. In order to publicise the action plan a press release will be prepared.

William Brown
Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer

February 2006

Appendix 1 – IRMP Draft Year 3 Action Plan as amended following consultation:

	Objective	Benefits to the Community
1 1	To ensure that the ongoing reduction in risk achieved through the Year 2 Action Plan is maintained and to ensure that benefits from projects that overrun are realised within Q1 of 06/07 [Deleted following consultation]	
2	To produce a report that examines the business case for potential changes to the wholetime duty system including a full option appraisal within Q2 06/07	An improved level service through the more efficient and effective use of resources within a system that is legally compliant and family friendly for our workforce
3	To produce a report that examines the business case for potential changes to the flexible duty system including a full option appraisal within Q2 06/07	An improved level service through the more efficient and effective use of resources within a system that is legally compliant and family friendly for our workforce
4	To carry out a review of our intervention resource deployment and produce a report that contains an options appraisal for improving the deployment of our fire and emergency cover within Q3 06/07 [Deleted following initiation of project to produce IRMP 2007 - 2010]	
5	To investigate the feasibility of increasing the collaborative use of resources with neighbouring fire and rescue authorities and produce a report that contains a full options appraisal and highlights the expected benefits within Q3 06/07	A reduction in the risk to the community and firefighters through a more effective and efficient response to incidents

	Objective	Benefits to the Community
6	Carry out a review of our process for collecting, storing and retrieving risk based information for our incident tactical planning system. The outcomes of the review will be reported in a business case that contains clear recommendations for improvement and future investment within Q3 06/07	A reduction in the risk from fire and other emergencies to firefighters and the community
7	To collate, check and refine data in order to produce a community risk profile that can be used as evidence for future Integrated Risk Management Plans within Q1 06/07 [Deleted following consultation]	
8	To investigate the feasibility of introducing a formal co-responder service for medical emergencies. The outcomes of the review will be reported in a business case that contains a full options appraisal and highlights the value to be added by this type of service within Q4 06/07	An improved level of service when medical emergencies occur within the community
9	Commission a research project into the fire risk to vulnerable people in Warwickshire and the effectiveness of fire safety programmes. The research findings will be published in a report within Q2 06/07	A more effective approach to targeting fire safety programmes to vulnerable people and a reduction in the risk of social exclusion through the impact of fire within individual communities

Appendix 2 – IRMP Year 3 Action Plan Final Version

	Objective	Benefits to the Community
1	To produce a report that examines the business case for potential changes to the wholetime duty system including a full option appraisal within Q4 06/07	An improved level service through the more efficient and effective use of resources within a system that is legally compliant and family friendly for our workforce
2	To produce a report that examines the business case for potential changes to the flexible duty system including a full option appraisal within Q4 06/07	An improved level service through the more efficient and effective use of resources within a system that is legally compliant and family friendly for our workforce
3	To investigate the feasibility of increasing the collaborative use of resources with neighbouring fire and rescue authorities and produce a report that contains a full options appraisal and highlights the expected benefits within Q3 06/07	A reduction in the risk to the community and firefighters through a more effective and efficient response to incidents
4	Carry out a review of our process for collecting, storing and retrieving risk based information for our incident tactical planning system. The outcomes of the review will be reported in a business case that contains clear recommendations for improvement and future investment within Q3 06/07	A reduction in the risk from fire and other emergencies to firefighters and the community

	Objective	Benefits to the Community
5	To investigate the feasibility of introducing a formal co-responder service for medical emergencies. The outcomes of the review will be reported in a business case that contains a full options appraisal and highlights the value to be added by this type of service within Q4 06/07	An improved level of service when medical emergencies occur within the community
6	Commission a research project into the fire risk to vulnerable people in Warwickshire and the effectiveness of fire safety programmes. The research findings will be published in a report within Q3 06/07	A more effective approach to targeting fire safety programmes to vulnerable people and a reduction in the risk of social exclusion through the impact of fire within individual communities

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee

Cabinet

Date of Committee

9th March 2006

Report Title

Irrecoverable Debt

Summary

The Service is requesting the write off of a debt to the value of £9,926.57.

For further information please contact:

William Brown
Strategic Director of
Community Protection and
County Fire Officer
Tel: 01926 423231
williambrown@warwickshire.gov.uk

Helen Murphy
Financial Services
Manager
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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?

No.

Background papers

None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s)
- Other Elected Members Councillor John Haynes, Councillor Dave Shilton
- Cabinet Member Councillor Richard Hobbs
- Chief Executive
- Legal Marian Shalloe.....
- Finance Oliver Winters
- Other Chief Officers William Brown.....
- District Councils
- Health Authority

Police

Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

Further consideration by this Committee

To Council

To Cabinet

To an O & S Committee

To an Area Committee

Further Consultation

Agenda No

Cabinet – 9th March 2006

Irrecoverable Debt

Report of the Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer

Recommendation

That Members note the report and approve the debt worth £9,926.57 outlined below be written off as irrecoverable.

1. The County Council's Financial Standing Orders state that the approval of Cabinet is required for debts in excess of £1,000 to be written off.
2. Since the 1974 County boundary changes, the Service has recharged another public Authority (herein referred to as Authority X) for pension payments to staff who had retired before 1974 and whom would have transferred employment to the Authority X in the restructuring, had they not already retired. We think there were 40 members of staff, and have charged around 40/250 of our pension costs to the Authority in recent years.
3. The recharges were paid, until 2004/05 when Authority X requested detailed backup to the recharge because their external auditors highlighted the lack of supporting documents when reviewing previous invoices during the audit of the 2003/04 accounts.
4. Our analysis has been unable to find any detailed backup within the Human Resources, Finance or Pensions department. The Service has no records of the original, or indeed subsequent agreements, or details of the pensioners who transferred to the Authority X. We are therefore unable to prove that our charge is valid. It is likely that many of these pensioners are over 80 years old, and it is possible that the Service is no longer making any pension payments to them. If this is so, then the recharge to the Authority X will be incorrect and overstated.
5. The debt was provided for in full within the bad debt provision in our 2004/05 accounts. The write off will not therefore impact on the Services revenue position for 2005/06.

6. The County Solicitor advises that the debt is irrecoverable for the reasons given, particularly that we are unable to support the claim.
7. It is recommended that the debt is written off.

William Brown
Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer
Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Leamington Spa

15 February 2006

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Cabinet

Date of Committee 09 March 2006

Report Title **Warwickshire Arts Service: A Vision for the Future**

Summary The report sets out the results of a major consultation with stakeholders on policy and priorities for the County Arts Service. The report was considered by the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 January 2006.

For further information please contact:

Christopher Jeens Head of Heritage & Cultural Services Tel: 01926 412329 chrisjeens@warwickshire.gov.uk	Ann Mawdsley Senior Committee Administrator Tel: 01926 418079 annmawdsley@warwickshire.gov.uk
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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? No.

Background papers Arts Policy 2002-2005

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Local Member(s)
- Other Elected Members Cllr Dodd, Cllr Haywood
- Cabinet Member Cllr Hayfield
- Chief Executive
- Legal Jane Pollard, Ian Marriott
- Finance Paul Walsh
- Other Chief Officers Noel Hunter - Agreed
- District Councils

- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Agenda No

Cabinet - 09 March 2006.

Warwickshire Arts Service: A Vision for the Future

Report of the Chair of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Recommendations of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

That the Cabinet approve the recommendations within the report regarding:

1. Key Areas (4.1.1 below)
2. Grant Aid (4.2.1 below)
3. Joint Working (4.3.1 below)

1. Views of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the report of the Director of Libraries, Heritage and Trading Standards setting out the results of a major consultation with stakeholders on policy and priorities for the County Arts Service and presenting recommendations based on the consultation.

During the ensuing discussion the following issues were noted:

1. Members agreed that the only way forward in delivering access to and developing the arts was through partnership.
2. The Public Art Steering Group (which is chaired by the County Arts Officer) were considering taking a different approach to public art within Warwickshire by increasing their influence on major developments rather than concentrating on grant applications.
3. In the past most cultural services (eg arts, museum, archives) had had few or no performance measures. Due to the forthcoming expanded culture "bloc" in the CPA, performance measures were now being developed and trialled for the future. The county will need to consider

the way it focuses cultural services in order to prepare for future assessment.

4. The County Arts Service is expected to provide a consistent, co-ordinating role for other stakeholders, who provided a shifting pattern of provision. At present there is only limited joint planning and there is a need for better co-ordination and planning particularly across all County Council services concerned with arts provision.
5. Members agreed that the provision of an arts service was crucial to the quality of life within all communities and there was a need to develop the service on a corporate basis to achieve a greater sense of purpose.

The Committee:

1. Noted the County Arts Service increased reliance on funding from external sources to respond to the priorities agreed.
2. Noted the recommendations regarding Key Areas outlined in 4.1.1.
3. Noted the recommendations regarding Grant Aid outlined in 4.2.1.
4. Noted the recommendations regarding Joint Working outlined in 4.3.1.
5. Agreed to communicate its views on future policy and priorities to Cabinet.

2. Background

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has a responsibility to ensure a good quality of life for those residents within its boundaries. This public service remit includes the provision of the arts - providing opportunities for people to access, engage in and benefit from diverse arts activities. This responsibility was recognised in the Warwickshire Cultural Strategy which Cabinet adopted in 2003 and within which access to and promotion of arts are key components alongside other cultural opportunities. The currently proposed review of the Cultural Strategy would provide another opportunity to consider how best these objectives may be achieved.

The County Arts Service is one means of delivering access to and development of the arts - these services are broadly dictated by the current Arts Policy which also indicates certain priorities - a number of which have been successfully achieved.

In recent years the real value of the budget available to the County Arts Service has eroded. In particular, budgets available for direct funding to voluntary sector organisations have reduced and the emphasis on seeking projects which lever in additional funding for arts has increased. The Table in Appendix 1 shows the approximate pattern of Arts expenditure and external income for the last four years.

It is recognised that, to some extent, this represents a shift from investing in annual contractual agreements for set outcomes on a whole county basis towards a more flexible programme of projects and partnerships partly funded

by other parties. At present both methods remain in play but members are asked to give their views on an approach which increasingly looks to secure funding from external sources and to deploy these to respond to the priorities agreed.

2.1 Evaluation of Current Priorities

During 2005 the County Arts Service has undergone a process of evaluating its services and these priorities. In Autumn 2005 the Head of Arts led this consultation with members of the County Arts Service itself and other Libraries, Heritage & Trading Standards (LHTS) services, other WCC departments, WCC elected members and key partners such as the Districts and Boroughs; Arts Council of England; Government Office West Midlands as well as local and regional arts organisations; community and voluntary sector organisations and individuals with an interest in the arts.

The consultation took the form of face-to-face interviews as well as email, telephone and written submissions. The consultees were asked for their views on twelve questions which were divided into three sections: key areas (of work); grant aid and joint-working. They were also asked for any other comments which fell outside the ambit of these questions. (See Appendix 2)

We received responses from some 48 of the 100 consultees contacted (see Appendix 3). Given the diverse nature of the consultees who represented different sectors, diverse organisations and are working in different disciplines there was a perhaps surprising degree of agreement. This proved extremely helpful when drafting recommendations as clear leads emerged throughout the process and will assist in continuous improvement to the County Arts Service. The consultation has been a very positive process with leads emerging about new ways of working and has proved to be a useful advocacy tool.

This following sections of the report provide an overview of the consultees' responses and attempt to coalesce this information to provide a basis for future priorities. A number of recommendations, arising from each consultation theme, are made which are intended to form the basis for a reinvigorated arts service, appropriate to the modernised, restructured County Council.

3. Current Activities

Before turning to the recommendations it might be useful to provide members with a snapshot of current activity - services are currently focused on the following areas:

3.1 Community Arts

Since 2004 County Arts Service has employed a Community Arts Officer whose role is to engage with communities across the county by undertaking targeted work with priority groups and areas to engage harder to reach communities.

Members may recall the report relating to the programme of work undertaken by the Community Arts Officer which was presented at the November 2005 meeting of this Committee.

3.2 Sub Regional Partnerships

The County Arts Service has a responsibility to maintain a strategic overview of the arts across the County and is also currently involved in Sub Regional Partnerships with a variety of agencies, these are:

- **Visual Arts & Crafts** – by employing a Visual Arts & Crafts Business Development Officer to support the needs of practitioners within the county and in particular the development of the Artsweek initiative.
- **Dance Development** - the role of the Sub Regional Dance Development Officer for Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire is to work strategically promoting and developing all forms of dance practice across the sub-region and act as a focal point for dance development and information.
- **Youth Arts** - the role of the Youth Arts Coordinator is to create a co-ordinated approach to the development and support of contemporary cultural activities with and for young people by working with young people, arts organisations, artists, local authorities, voluntary sector bodies and the formal education sector.
- **Public Art Advocacy** - to increase the scope and quality of art delivered within the public realm across the sub region of Coventry, Solihull and areas within Warwickshire, with a particular focus on the contribution public art can make to regeneration.

3.3 Arts & Health

In Spring 2005 the County Arts Service commissioned an Arts & Health Mapping Project to research and provide information on the current range of arts and health activity in Warwickshire and investigate how this work is being funded, in order to make recommendations on potential demand within the County. This work has informed a development bid being submitted for consideration for the County Council 2006/7 budget.

3.4 Grants Programmes

The County Arts Service manages three grants programmes aimed at supporting the arts in Warwickshire, specifically they are currently:

- **Social Services Arts Fund**, managed by County Arts Service on behalf of WCC Social Services was set up to enable Social Services users to engage in arts activities and involves a broad range of user groups and art forms across the county.

- **The Public Art Capital Fund** is a cross-directorate fund is used to support the commissioning of public arts works across the County. The grant fund is allocated annually and managed by the County Arts Service.
- **Key Clients Fund** – currently supports four professional arts organisations which make a considerable contribution to the arts infrastructure in Warwickshire and work across more than one District or Borough area in Warwickshire.

3.5 Information, advice and advocacy

The County Arts Service offers a range of information and advice to the general public, artists and arts organisations and the voluntary and community sector in Warwickshire.

The County Arts Service is also involved in a broad range of networks and partnerships across the county.

Appendix 4 shows linkage between WCC corporate objectives and current County Arts Service priorities.

4. Results of the Consultation/Recommendations

4.1 Key Areas

There was broad recognition, given the resources currently available to the arts service, that comprehensive coverage would be an impossible task to achieve but that by working with partners a reasonable degree of coverage was possible. A number of those service areas currently supported have been determined in partnership with a variety of agencies. This is seen as the most appropriate response that the County Arts Service can undertake in order to maximize resources and hence impacts. Reviewing these commitments in mid-cycle would be problematic.

However one clear steer emerged as a priority, neatly summed up by the two words 'People' and 'Places' which broadly equate with the community arts and public art key areas. The distinction between these two areas of work is unhelpful. Rather than being seen as two separate disciplines they are in fact part of the same continuum: one valuing quality public places, the other meaningful community engagement and participation. Majority opinion emerged that we should deal with whole communities and not sections of communities in order to address issues of community cohesion and development. Arts involvement in regeneration and spatial planning will prove to be a key part in this process.

4.1.1 Recommendations regarding Key Areas

That County Arts Service continue to work broadly within these areas but there be fine-tuning as to future delivery and new approaches to working being tested so ensuring continuous improvement to the service. Specifically:

- **Community Arts** – as this was identified as perhaps the area of highest priority by the majority of respondents it is suggested that the County Arts Service work to ensure a higher profile of the excellent start already made in this area by the Community Arts Officer. That the County Arts Service should look at staffing arrangements within its current complement to best support this key area of work.
- **Dance Development** - That the County Arts Service continue to provide strategic support to the Regional Dance Development Coordinator in line with its corporate objectives.
- **Visual Arts & Crafts Business Development** – to consider how this area of work might be sustained following completion of the development phase in 2007.
- **Arts and Health** – to act on recommendations contained with the completed audit and initiate closer working links with the health sector, in particular the reconfigured Primary Care Trusts by undertaking a number of pilot projects.
- **Public Art** – to work with the WCC Public Art Steering Group in reviewing how policy and funding might best support the embedding of good public art practice within WCC working structures to ensure the highest standards of design within the public realm.
- **Youth Arts** -That the County Arts Service work with its partners to ensure the long-term sustainability of Warwickshire Youth Arts Network based at the Warwickshire Association of Youth Clubs.

4.2 Grant Aid

There was consensus that the key client approach was an essential element of the county arts infrastructure and should continue – with a number of caveats. In particular consultees resoundingly felt that the current annual agreements made strategic planning and hence delivery difficult.

The degree of support for the key client way of working outweighed support for reinstating the small grants approach. It was felt by a large proportion of consultees that organisations/ community groups wishing to access grants from WCC could approach other WCC sources of funding including those administered by the area committees. This was seen as a valid way of working and would also embed the arts more effectively within community development working, where the arts can offer significant added value.

As well as providing access to its own grant aid, the County Arts Service provides advice and practical support in helping arts and community groups access external funds for arts projects and development work. The Service acts as a key contact in the County for those groups and individual artists wishing to access grant programmes managed by Arts Council England West Midlands (in the period 2002 – 2005 this has predominantly been the Regional Arts Lottery Fund and Grants for the Arts Programmes).

4.2.1 Recommendations regarding Grant Aid

- That the County Arts Service continues to work in partnership with Social Services to deliver the Social Services Arts Fund.
- That the County Arts Service works with the WCC Public Art Steering Group in reviewing how policy and funding might best support the embedding of good public art practice within WCC working structures to ensure the highest standards of design within the public realm.
- That the County Arts Service continues with the Key Client way of working but that a review be undertaken with existing Key Clients to ensure delivery against WCC objectives. As part of this process a scoping exercise be undertaken to ensure the validity of the current key clients as well as an analysis regarding other organisations who could act as Key Clients, with the criteria for support agreed and monitored.
- That consideration be given to 3-years agreements to be signed with Key Clients which would be reviewed annually in order to monitor compliance against agreed performance indicators. The indicators may be designed to support thematic working or targeting specific areas/communities.
- That the County Arts Service creates effective links with Community Development Officers and others to offer arts expertise in assessing applications.
- That the County Arts Service devises a fundraising strategy working closely with the External Funding Team.

4.3 Joint Working

The consultation suggested that particular attention needs to be paid to development in the areas of advocacy, policy development and overall strategic development.

Although a sound foundation has been laid through good links with other departments (in particular the Public Art Steering Group with representatives from all appropriate departments) and joint working on projects (evidenced by the work undertaken by the Community Arts Officer), cross-departmental working needs to be developed much more. Allied to this is the need to address the issue of the perceived low profile of the service. It was generally felt that there was a lack of understanding of what the service currently does. However it was equally felt that there was an enormous and currently under-

fulfilled potential for the arts to work cross-departmentally to assist its own and other departments in delivering against key cross-cutting themes., Those most frequently identified were education and learning , health and well-being; the environment and community involvement.

As regards partnership working a substantial list of existing and potential partners emerged. However, consultees felt that the County Arts Service should concentrate its energies on ensuring the effectiveness of its internal working relationships first and that this process would in turn dictate which external agencies were prioritised. It was felt that this way of working could parallel the growing importance of the Local Strategic Partnerships as these become central to the delivery of the public services and the local government agenda. The opportunity should be taken to ensure that the arts are effectively represented within LSPs and for this to be reflected by a greater focus within the Local Area Agreements.

Finally there was also a growing awareness that the developing 'culture bloc' within the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) regime provides the arts with a golden opportunity which the County cannot afford to miss.

Although the arts are classed as a discretionary service, changes to the CPA in 2008 herald a major step-change. The introduction of a 'culture bloc' within the CPA, bringing with it a basket of new performance indicators across the cultural services including arts, will result in an increased importance being attached to arts services. Indeed authorities who cannot deliver across the range of the 'culture bloc' cultural services will not be able to achieve 'excellent' status. Those that are currently 'excellent' but prove unable to deliver across the range of cultural services (including the arts) will lose that status.

It was felt that the County Arts Service could use the intervening period most effectively by undertaking a repositioning and by establishing appropriate cross-departmental working strategies to deliver against this newly emerging agenda This would enable the Service to demonstrate the impact that Culture (including the arts) can make upon service-users and in particular how the arts can assist other services in effective delivery.

4.3.2 Recommendations regarding Joint Working

- That the County Arts Service contributes to relevant corporate business planning cycles, in particular the County Strategic Plan, Warwickshire Partnership Plan and other key drivers including the new Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships.
- That the County Arts Service works with other WCC CPA 'Culture Bloc' services to ensure that the Authority is fully aware of the forthcoming changes to the CPA regime and takes the necessary actions to succeed within it.
- That the County Arts Service participates fully in the review and renewal of the Cultural Strategy for Warwickshire.

- That the County Arts Service cross-references its work with other sections of cultural services – in particular Libraries and Heritage – by input into joint service-planning meetings to agree annual work plans.
- That the County Arts Service also pursues joint service planning with other services and departments
- That the County Arts Service cultivates closer working relationships with colleagues within newly emerging Directorates and in particular with Children, Young People and Families Services and with Environment and Economy.
- That the County Arts Service works to clarify and formalise the relationship between itself and its internal arts partners working within education - namely ArtZone; Artists in Education and County Music Service.
- That the County Arts Service produces a marketing plan in order to address its low profile both within WCC and externally. In so doing, that it consider a rebranding for the county arts service which better reflects the service it currently delivers as well as the service it aspires to become.

CLLR SID TOOTH
Chair of the Adult and
Community Services Overview
and Scrutiny Committee

Shire Hall
Warwick

23 January 2006

Appendix 1

The following table shows the approximate pattern of Arts expenditure and external income from partnership sources over the last three years.

County Arts Service Budget	2005-06 £000		2004-05 £000		2003-04 £000		2002-03 £000	
Base approved budget (gross)	170		162		151		159	
Nett (less central recharges/fixed costs)	110		127		122		140	
Remaining after staff related costs subtracted	40	Of which 26 allocated Key Clients 4.5 allocated Community Arts	59	Of which 30 allocated Key Clients	68	Of which 40.7 allocated Key Clients	79	Of which 46.2 allocated to Key Clients
Income from partnership sources	28		15		15		2.5	

Appendix 2

Linking the Work of the County Arts Service to WCC's Corporate Themes

Within the County Arts Service's adopted Arts Policy and priorities for action, six areas of development were identified for prioritisation. These priorities are linked to the themes of the County Strategic Plan.

Corporate Theme	County Arts Service Priority
Information & Access to services	1a) Provision of relevant, up-to-date information electronically and in print
	1b) Promotion of information
	1c) Broadening geographical and demographic spread of arts opportunities
Education and Lifelong Learning	2a) Support for training
	2b) Creation of arts training programmes
Economy and Employment	3a) Promotion of Creative Industries
	3b) Maximising resources to support Arts Plan aims and objectives
The Environment	4a) Promotion and implementation of the Public Art Programme and policy
Health & Wellbeing	5a) Promotion of the use of arts in Social Services work
	5b) Promotion of the use of arts in improving physical and mental health
Community Involvement	6a) Development of local communities and intergenerational connections
	6b) A co-ordinated approach to the provision of Youth Arts opportunities (via the Warwickshire Youth Arts Network).

Appendix 3

Consultees for WCC County Arts Service Priorities

Arts & Media Training
Arts Council of England West Midlands
Compton Verney
Coventry CC
Culture West Midlands
GoWM
Hybrid Arts
Motionhouse Dance Company
Live & Local
North Warwickshire BC
Nuneaton & Bedworth BC
Playbox Theatre
RSC
Rugby BC
Solihull MBC
Stratford on Avon DC
Warwick Arts Centre
Warwick Arts Society
Warwick District Arts Consortium
Warwick DC
Warwickshire County Council
 Chief Executives
 Education
 Libraries, Heritage & Trading Standards
 PTES
 Property Services
 Social Services

And 39 individuals

Appendix 4

A Vision for Warwickshire County Council's Arts Service 2006 Onwards

Consultation Questions

Your responses to the following questions will influence CAS priorities for the coming years and how the service is configured to deliver them.

Key Areas:

- CAS works with multiple agencies to ensure a threshold of coverage for the county. Can you **identify significant gaps** in current coverage - whether by sector; audience; artform or geographical?
- Of those **areas currently supported**: Community Arts; Dance development; Youth Arts; Arts and Health; Public Art; Visual Arts & Crafts Development; Grant Aid; Information & Advocacy – what priority would you give to each? Which are secondary or even superfluous?
- In particular we would welcome your comments on the following **emergent issue**: should CAS give greater priority to: Young People? to Older People? to Rural Areas?
- **A big idea** – should CAS identify and champion a single, visionary, developmental idea? Should Warwickshire become a regional/national/international centre and if so, for what?

Grant Aid

- Is the **Key Client** approach the best way of supporting a countywide infrastructure, should all available grant funding be channelled through key clients?
- Should **resources** be allocated differently, year on year – perhaps by theme; artform or geographical area? Is there another way of doing this?
- Should the CAS investigate ways in which to re-instate a **small grants** programme to support small scale/grass roots arts organisations and activity? What importance would you attach to this?

Joint Working

- Should the CAS be developing better links with other WCC departments and if so, which ones should be a priority?
- Are there **other agencies** which CAS should be working more closely with to more effectively deliver its services?
- Are there other **ways of working** we could employ to deliver our services more efficiently?
- Which agencies should we target for our **advocacy** work?
- In which **policies/strategies** would you expect the arts to be visible?

Do you have any other comments you wish to add?