

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Warwick Area Committee
Date of Committee 22nd January 2008
Report Title Woodloes Infant School, Woodloes Junior School and Ridgeway School, Warwick

Summary The report seeks to provide an update for Members on the proposal to amalgamate Woodloes Infant and Junior Schools and to provide new accommodation for Ridgeway School.

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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

- Cabinet report 26.6.07
- School Organisation Framework document 2005/10

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

Other Committees

Local Member(s) Cllr Ken Browne – Warwick North – *“I strongly support these recommendations, which provide an exciting opportunity for all three schools. However, I think it is important to start forming a timetable so all three schools can approach the future with some certainty.”*

- Other Elected Members Spokespersons for information:
Cllr Heather Timms
Cllr Richard Grant – “noted”
Cllr John Whitehouse
- Cabinet Member Cllr John Burton
- Other Cabinet Members consulted Cllr Izzi Seccombe
- Chief Executive
- Legal Diane Nation – no comments to make
- Finance
- Other Strategic Directors
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals Headteachers and governors of Woodloes Infant School, Woodloes Junior School and Ridgeway School

FINAL DECISION **NO**

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS: Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet 31st January 2008
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Warwick Area Committee – 22nd January 2008

**Woodloes Infant School, Woodloes Junior School and
Ridgeway School, Warwick**

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

Recommendations:

- (1) That the Committee note progress concerning a proposal to amalgamate Woodloes Infant and Junior Schools and provide new accommodation for Ridgeway School.
- (2) That the Committee consider any comments it wishes to make to Cabinet on the approach being considered.

1. Introduction

There are two school organisation issues in Warwick District which are outstanding from 2007. Firstly, a proposal to consult on arrangements to amalgamate Woodloes Infant School and Woodloes Junior School to form a new primary school; and secondly, arrangements to renew the newly formed Ridgeway School. This report seeks to outline a strategy for resolving the two issues by linking the two projects together.

2. Background

- 2.1 In June 2007 the Cabinet considered a report seeking formal consultations on a proposed amalgamation of Woodloes Infant School and Woodloes Junior School to form a new primary school, on the current site. Members considered a range of options for developing the new school and in supporting the principle of the proposal asked the Strategic Director to explore whether capital funding could be identified to fund the location of the new school in a single building. This meeting was followed by a Members' site visit to the two schools in September 2007. To date, it has not proved possible to identify capital funding, in the region of £3 million, to carry out the significant building work necessary to enable all of the infant school, pre-school and community facilities to be replicated in the current junior school accommodation and thereby create a single building for up to 420 primary school pupils.

- 2.2 In September 2007, the reorganisation of special schools in Warwick resulted in the creation of Round Oak School, a secondary school serving the needs of pupils with a broad-spectrum of special educational needs on a new site off Myton Road, and Ridgeway School, making similar provision for primary-aged children but in the existing Ridgeway premises in Montague Road, Warwick. The intention had been to refurbish accommodation of the existing Ridgeway School and funding for this purpose is already included in the capital programme. However, facilitating such a major refurbishment without disrupting the education of pupils, over what would inevitably be a considerable period of time, posed a number of challenges, and serious concerns were raised by parents and others and by the Warwick Area Committee who asked that an alternative plan to replace Ridgeway School be devised.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 It is intended that at its meeting on 31st January the Cabinet will consider a proposal to link the two projects above by re-locating Ridgeway School on to the Woodloes site in new, purpose-built accommodation. The proceeds of the sale of the existing Ridgeway site, together with the funding already set aside for Ridgeway refurbishment, not only would finance the construction of the new Ridgeway School but also the additional building necessary for the amalgamated Woodloes primary school. The Ridgeway and Woodloes schools are currently just half a mile apart and already share a number of links.
- 3.2 Initial informal consultations with the three schools has secured support for further consideration of the proposal. Clearly, further detail will be submitted in due course to the Cabinet and the interrelatedness of two projects will add to the many detailed issues to be addressed. Nevertheless, it was considered that, given the importance of the issues involved, members of the Committee may welcome a briefing at this point. Should proposals progress to the consultation stage, the Area Committee would of course be consulted formally again at that time.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the Committee note progress concerning a proposal to amalgamate Woodloes Infant and Junior Schools and provide new accommodation for Ridgeway School.
- 4.2 That the Committee consider any comments it wishes to make to Cabinet on the approach being considered.

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10th January 2008