

COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR ALLERDALE
Meeting date: 1 July 2022
From: Executive Director – People – John Readman

PROPOSED CHANGE OF AGE RANGE AT WIGTON INFANT SCHOOL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 *This report provides background on the current formal consultation being undertaken by the county council on the proposed change of age range at Wigton Infant School from 2 to 7 years to a new range of 3 to 7 years.*

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 *This will be supportive of the Council Plan vision of ‘A Council that works with residents, businesses, communities and other organisations to deliver the best services possible within the available resources’, by allowing children the opportunity to access a broad, high quality education in a sustainable setting.*
- 2.2 *An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) (attached as Appendix B) was completed prior to the consultation being undertaken. This is a dynamic document which will be updated during the consultation process as issues arise. The EIA is available on the county council website.*

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 *That the Local Committee notes the contents of the report and makes a response as members feel appropriate.*
- 3.2 *Note that the Cabinet will consider feedback from the consultation, including any response made by the Local Committee, before deciding on next steps.*

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In September 2020 Wigton Infant School changed its age range to 2 to 7 years in order to allow it to take on the former Longthwaite Road Pre-School.
- 4.2 Following a review of the facility since that date, and a temporary change to concentrate on 3 year-olds, it is now proposed to permanently amend the age range of the school to 3 to 7 years of age.
- 4.3 There are other providers in the Wigton area that offer 2 year old places.
- 4.4 Wigton Infant School is a community school, and it is the responsibility of Cumbria County Council's Cabinet to make the decision on whether to publish notices following the consideration of responses received during the consultation process.
- 4.5 The consultation on the age range change started on 6 June 2022 and runs until 15 July 2022. Letters were sent out to consultees including parents, staff, governors, schools with abutting catchment areas and other Early Year providers. The consultation letter is attached as Appendix A.
- 4.6 Wigton Infant School is rated Requires Improvement by Ofsted.

5.0 OPTIONS

- 5.1 Members have the option to make a consultation response to the Cabinet if they so wish.

6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Free entitlement to Early Years provision for 2,3 and 4 year olds in both the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector and in primary schools is funded on the same basis through the Early Years National Funding Formula via the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Additional income is also generated from fee paying parents.
- 6.2 If the proposed reduction in age range from 2 to 7 years to 3 to 7 years is implemented the removal of 2 year olds from the school will result in a corresponding reduction in Early Years DSG funding and parental fee income where relevant.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 As per part 2D 5.1.1 (d) (i) of the terms of reference for Local Committees, Members are able to note the content of this report and make a consultation response to Cabinet if they wish.
- 7.2 Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on all English Local Authorities to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of childcare is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to enable them to take up, or remain in, work or to

undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 This paper provides background on the formal consultation that is being undertaken by the county council on the potential change of age range at Wigton Infant School. This change is aimed at providing a sustainable and well subscribed maintained nursery facility for children in the local area.

8.2 Any change to a school has the potential to impact on the quality of education on offer, and it is important that the Cabinet is able to take account of local views before deciding whether to proceed. Allerdale Local Committee is invited to take part in the consultation process, and its views will be considered by the Cabinet and the school governors before they decide on the next steps.

John Readman
Executive Director People
Date 2022

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Consultation Document **Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

Electoral Division(s): Wigton

** Please remove whichever option is not applicable*

Executive Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key Decision	Yes*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A*
Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? If so, give details below.	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?	Yes*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?	Yes*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

N.B. If an executive decision is made, then a decision cannot be implemented until the expiry of the eighth working day after the date of the meeting – unless the decision is urgent and exempt from call-in and necessary approvals have been obtained.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS
[including Local Committees]

No previous relevant decisions.

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Not considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.

REPORT AUTHOR

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