

# Public Document Pack

To: Members of the Cabinet

## ***Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet***

**Tuesday, 2 November 2010 at 4.00 pm, or on the rising of the County Council meeting which ever is the later.**

**County Hall, Oxford, OX11ND**



Joanna Simons  
Chief Executive

October 2010

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<i>Councillors</i>	<b>Membership</b>
Keith R. Mitchell CBE	- <i>Leader of the Council</i>
David Robertson	- <i>Deputy Leader of the Council</i>
Arash Fatemian	- <i>Cabinet Member for Adult Services</i>
Ian Hudspeth	- <i>Cabinet Member for Growth &amp; Infrastructure</i>
Jim Couchman	- <i>Cabinet Member for Finance &amp; Property</i>
Kieron Mallon	- <i>Cabinet Member for Police &amp; Policy Co-ordination</i>
Louise Chapman	- <i>Cabinet Member for Children, Young People &amp; Families</i>
Michael Waine	- <i>Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement</i>
Rodney Rose	- <i>Cabinet Member for Transport</i>
Mrs J. Heathcoat	- <i>Cabinet Member for Safer &amp; Stronger Communities</i>

*The Agenda is attached. Decisions taken at the meeting will become effective at the end of the working day on 10 November 2010 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. Copies of this Notice, Agenda and supporting papers are circulated to all Members of the County Council.*

*Date of next meeting: 16 November 2010*

## **Declarations of Interest**

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 9.1 of the Constitution for a fuller description.

### **The duty to declare ...**

You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, i.e. where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):

- (i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
- (ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

### **Whose interests are included ...**

"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

### **When and what to declare ...**

The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".

In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

### **Taking part if you have an interest ...**

Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

### **"Prejudicial" interests ...**

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

### **What to do if your interest is prejudicial ...**

If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

### **Exceptions ...**

There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

### **Seeking Advice ...**

It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies for Absence

## 2. Declarations of Interest

- guidance note opposite

## 3. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2010 (**CA3 (to be circulated separately)**) and to receive for information any matters arising therefrom.

## 4. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am on the working day before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

## 5. Petitions and Public Address

## 6. Oxford School - Statutory Closure Notice (Pages 1 - 34)

*Cabinet Member:* Schools Improvement

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2010/157

*Contact:* Roy Leach, Lead Officer, School Organisation & Planning Tel: (01865) 816458

Report by Director for Children, Young People & Families (**CA6**).

The replacement of Oxford School with an academy requires the formal closure of the school. Cabinet agreed on the 10 August 2010 to the issuing of a formal statutory closure notice which was published on the 6 September 2010. The period in which

representations could be made by interested parties closed on the 18 October 2010 and these are summarised in the report. A formal decision by Cabinet to close Oxford School would allow the replacement academy to open in the existing school buildings on 1 January 2011.

***The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:***

- (a) ***consider the representations made in response to the statutory closure notice with particular reference to the legal issues detailed in paragraphs 15 and 18 ; and***
  - (b) ***determine whether or not to approve the closure of Oxford School with effect from midnight, 31 December 2010, subject to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools signing the funding agreement for the replacement academy.***
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Division(s): East Oxford, Cowley & Littlemore , Leys & Lye, Barton & Churchill, Headington & Marston and, Isis

## CABINET – 2 NOVEMBER 2010

### OXFORD SCHOOL – OUTCOME OF FORMAL STATUTORY CLOSURE CONSULTATION

#### Report by Director for Children, Young People & Families

#### Introduction

1. Cabinet agreed on the 10<sup>th</sup> August to the publication of a formal statutory notice advising the public of the proposed closure of Oxford School in order that it might be replaced by an academy. The statutory notice (attached as Annex 2) and statutory proposal (attached as Annex 3) were published on 6<sup>th</sup> September with a 6 week period allowed for representations which closed on the 18<sup>th</sup> October.

#### Summary of representations made.

2. The first representations were received on the 6<sup>th</sup> September and by the close of the statutory six week period on the 18<sup>th</sup> October a total of 13 had been received, of which 11 were objections. Representations by category of respondent and support or opposition to the proposal are summarised in the table below (correct as of 15<sup>th</sup> October. Any further responses will be reported orally to the meeting.)

Category of respondent	Number	%	Opposed to the proposal	Not opposed
Parent/carer of child at Oxford School	2	15	1	1
Parent/carer of child at another secondary school AND a child at primary school	1	8	1	0
Parent/carer of child at primary school	5	38	5	0
Parent/carer of child at primary school AND teacher/governor at another school	1	8	1	0
Teacher/headteacher/governor at Oxford School	2	15	2	0
Teacher/headteacher/governor at another school	1	8	1	0
Trade union	1	8	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>

3. The following concerns/issues were raised by respondents:
- Loss of parental/staff/community involvement in governance
  - Credibility and experience of sponsor
  - Role of local authority as co-sponsor
  - Education should be the local authority's responsibility
  - School already improving/successful
  - No (independent) evidence that academies improve standards
  - Academy status not necessary/useful in order to further improve
  - No significant additional resources are guaranteed
  - Inadequate consultation/short timescale
  - Proposal is politically motivated
  - Other options – federation - not sufficiently explored
  - Academies are poor value for money
  - Academy not wanted by local community/parents/staff/students
  - Negative impact on staff morale and recruitment; worse terms and conditions for staff
  - Will weaken collaboration between schools/tensions between schools
  - Concern about admissions policy
  - Reduction in choice as there is already an academy

The full comments made are attached as Annex 4.

### **Next steps**

4. The outcome of Cabinet's consideration of representations made in respect of the proposed closure of Oxford School will be reported to the Department for Education (DfE). If Cabinet agrees to the closure of Oxford School then DfE officials will recommend to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools that a 'funding agreement' be signed. This is the legal contract between the DfE and the academy trust which sets out the conditions under which an academy is established (e.g. formal compliance with the admissions code of practice) and the level of funding that it will receive.
5. The new academy (proposed name Oxford Spires Academy) would open in the existing school buildings on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 with, it is expected, minor capital works (redecorating, new signage etc.) having been undertaken over the Christmas holiday period.

### **Financial and Staff Implications**

6. The Council has agreed, inter alia, to indemnify the academy in respect of all employment costs relating to the period prior to the transfer from the existing school to the academy. It has also agreed to meet all severance, redundancy and associated redundancy costs associated with specified situations and to contribute 50% of such costs for all other situations. As the staff are legally the responsibility of the governing body of Oxford School as it is a foundation school, this means that we are taking on a liability that we would not otherwise have. However, the Department for Education *would have been unlikely to consider* this expression of interest without the Council entering into such obligations.

7. Under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (which applies to this academy project) the balances of a closing school will revert to the Local Authority Schools Budget. The school currently has a deficit budget plan and the LA is working with the school to ensure that this is minimised.
8. The running costs of the academy will be met from the General Annual Grant (GAG) which it will receive on an academic year basis, and is an amalgamation of the school's School Budget Share and Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG). This latter amount is a per pupil figure to fund the academy for functions that the council currently provides centrally for its schools. It includes elements for Special Educational Needs, and some support services such as Home to School transport and Education Psychology Service.
9. The usual policy has been to try to meet any costs at a closing school from available balances of that school.
10. The impact of not paying School Standards Grants to Oxford School in the year the academy opens will affect the school's ability to maintain its deficit budget position; it will worsen the deficit position. Any balance at a closing school is inherited by the council and has to be dealt with from within Dedicated Schools Grant. A school closing may be inclined to spend up balances to avoid returning the monies to the council. Therefore, close monitoring of the school's budget is being undertaken.
11. The most significant financial impact is likely to be costs relating to staff that do not transfer to the academy and where the council will be expected to meet the termination costs. Longer term may include the financial impact on existing schools in the area, in particular if an increasing number of pupils are attracted to the academy. No redundancies have yet been confirmed and it is therefore not possible to quantify their potential costs.

#### Current financial position of Oxford School

12. Budget monitoring to period 6 (September) is forecasting a deficit of £170,604 at year-end (March 2011). However, the balance at 31 December 2010 is projected to be £231,700. This latter figure assumes that the school will receive only the relevant proportion of the academic year funding for the Moderate Learning Difficulties unit and National Challenge for the period September to December 2010.

#### **Legal Implications**

13. As this is a proposal to close a school it is subject to statutory procedures, as established by The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendments)(England) Regulations 2007 which came into force on 21 January 2008).

14. Section 16 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 establishes the consultation procedures for statutory proposals, and local authorities also have a duty to have regard to statutory guidance, in this particular case 'Closing a Mainstream School: A guide for Local Authorities' ("the Guidance").
15. The Cabinet should consider the views of all those affected by the proposals or who have an interest in them. This includes statutory objections and comments submitted during the representation period. These are summarised in paragraph 4, and contained in full in Annex 4. The Cabinet should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view when considering representations made on the proposal. Instead the Cabinet should give the greatest weight to representations from those stakeholders most directly affected by the proposal.
16. The Cabinet must be satisfied that the consultation meets statutory requirements. If some parties submit objections on the basis that consultation was not adequate, the Cabinet may wish to take legal advice on the points raised. If the requirements have not been met, the Cabinet may judge the proposal to be invalid and should consider whether they can make a decision on the proposal. Alternatively the Cabinet may take into account the sufficiency and quality of the consultation as part of their overall judgement of the proposal as a whole.
17. Details of the consultation carried out prior to the publication of the notice are included in the proposal (Annex 3), and the results were summarised in the report to Cabinet 10 August 2010 (Annex 1). On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2010 the statutory notice (Annex 2) was published on the OCC website and in the Oxford Mail, and displayed at the entrances to Oxford School and in local libraries; the full proposal was sent to Oxford School's Interim Executive Board. As required by the statutory guidance, the full proposal was sent to the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses, the Young People's Learning Agency and the Secretary of State within a week of publication. The representation period lasted the statutory 6 weeks until 18<sup>th</sup> October 2010.
18. The statutory guidance on considering proposals for school closures contains the following factors, which should not be taken to be exhaustive:
  - (a) **The effect on standards, school improvement and diversity.** The government's stated aim is to create a dynamic system shaped by parents that delivers excellence and equality, closing weak schools and encouraging new providers and popular schools to expand. The Cabinet should be satisfied that the proposal will contribute to raising local standards of provision and attainment and consider the impact on choice and diversity. It should pay particular attention to the effect on groups that tend to under-perform including children from certain ethnic minorities, children from deprived background and children in care. These matters were considered in the Equalities Impact Assessment included as an appendix to the August 2010 Cabinet report. The Cabinet should also consider how the proposal will help deliver the 'Every Child Matters' principles.



- (b) **The need for places.** The Cabinet should be satisfied that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils in the area. As in this proposal Oxford School will be replaced by an Academy on the same site, pupils will not be displaced. The statutory guidance states that local authorities should take action to remove empty places at schools that are unpopular with parents and which do little to raise standards or improve choice.
- (c) **Impact on the community and travel.** In considering proposal for the closure of schools, the effect on families and the community should be considered. Community cohesion, race equality, accessibility and equal opportunities issues should be considered. As in this proposal Oxford School will be replaced by an Academy on the same site, there will be no negative effects on the local community.
- (d) **Specific age provision.** The Cabinet should consider the effect of the proposal on opportunities available to the 14-19 age group, including collaboration between local providers and employers. This proposal is intended to strengthen such collaboration by replacing Oxford School with an Academy in which Oxford and Cherwell Valley College will be a partner.
- (e) **Academies.** As an Academy is to replace an existing school, the proposal indicates that pupils currently attending the school will transfer to the Academy. As provision for pupils at a school proposed for closure is dependent on the establishment of an Academy, approval of the closure proposal should be conditional on the Secretary of State making an agreement for an Academy, but there should be a general presumption in favour of approval.

## RECOMMENDATION

19. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- (a) **consider the representations made in response to the statutory closure notice with particular reference to the legal issues detailed in paragraphs 15 and 18 ; and**
- (b) **determine whether or not to approve the closure of Oxford School with effect from midnight, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, subject to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools signing the funding agreement for the replacement academy.**

MEERA SPILLETT  
Director for Children, Young People & Families

Background papers: Nil

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October 2010

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**CABINET - 10 AUGUST 2010**

**OXFORD SCHOOL – OUTCOME OF CLOSURE CONSULTATION**

**Report by Director for Children, Young People & Families**

**Introduction**

1. Cabinet agreed in September 2009 to support the feasibility stage of a proposal to replace Oxford School (number on roll 1019, January 2010) with an academy. Delays in securing ministerial approval, and a late stage change of lead sponsor for the project, resulted in the commencement of the feasibility stage being deferred until April 2010, with funding confirmed by the Minister of State for Schools and Learners on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010. The proposed opening of the academy has been put back from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010 to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011.
2. A project management company was engaged by the Department for Children Schools and Families (now the Department for Education, DfE) in early May. Monthly Project Steering Groups involving the sponsors Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) Education Trust, Oxford & Cherwell Valley College and the Council, and the DfE are being held as are a number of working groups dealing with the educational vision, personnel, finance, estates/legal etc. are taking place.
3. An essential element of the feasibility stage is consultation with a wide range of individuals and groups who have an interest in the current Oxford School and the proposed academy. This consists of two parts: the Council leading on a two stage consultation about the closure of Oxford School and a parallel consultation about the vision for the replacement academy led by the Project Management Company. These two elements are being run together closely to ensure that there is absolute clarity that the proposed closure is an essential legal process which has to be completed in order that the proposed academy can be created. The next stage, if Cabinet decides to proceed, will be the publication of a Statutory Notice to close Oxford School.
4. The consultations opened on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June and closed on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July. A variety of media were employed to enable the maximum possible engagement with interested parties: two public meetings; printed literature and questionnaires; on-line consultation via the Council's and sponsors' public websites; primary 'school gate' meetings with parents; shopping centre stall etc. as detailed below.
5. Consultation leaflets were sent to Oxford School students' homes via students, and letters posted to parents, and consultation leaflets were posted to parents of Year 6 pupils from feeder primary schools. Consultation leaflets were also sent to local primary schools, other secondary schools, local

councillors and MPs, users of the Oxford School site and other stakeholders, as well as being available in local libraries. The consultation was covered by local newspapers and radio.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Venue</b>
18/06/10	Oxford School	Existing pupils	Student Council
21/06/10	Oxford School	All Staff	Oxford School
24/06/10	Oxford School	Parents and Stakeholders	Public meetings - Oxford School Library
29/06/10	ISIS Cluster	Primary Heads	Four Pillars Hotel
29/06/10	SE Oxford Cluster	Primary Heads	Westwood Hotel
02/07/10	St Mary & John Primary	Prospective Parents	School gate
02/07/10	St Christopher's Primary	Prospective Parents	School gate
02/07/10	Oxford School	Parents / Y6 pupils	Transition Day
06/07/10	Larkrise Primary	Prospective Parents	School gate
06/07/10	Church Cowley Primary	Prospective Parents	School gate
08/07/10	St Francis Primary	Prospective Parents	School gate
08/07/10	East Oxford Primary	Prospective parents	School gate
09/07/10	Oxford School	Existing pupils	Student Council
15/07/10	Templars Square Centre	Stakeholders	Shopping Centre
19/07/10	Oxford School	Parents	Progress Day

### **Consultation participation and responses**

6. The closure consultation received the following responses:
- 74 returns of the online or paper questionnaire.
  - A 599 signature petition.
  - A vision statement developed by a group of parents, ex-pupils, staff, teachers, educationalists and community organisations as part of the 'Save Oxford School' campaign.
  - A response from the local branch of the National Union of Teachers.

- A paper from the OX4ED Group of educationalists making the case for a 3-19 educational campus, or federation with Cheney School as alternative options.
  - A letter from one of the sports clubs currently using Oxford School's facilities, requesting that consideration be given to the needs of such users when planning any future capital works at the school.
7. Responses are summarised below, and original copies are available as background papers.

In addition, there were two public meetings held at the school. A summary of issues raised at these meetings is attached as an Annex .

## 8. Summary of questionnaire responses

74 people responded via the online or paper questionnaire [copy available], of whom 22% were parents/carers of pupils at Oxford School and 38% were parents/carers of pupils at primary schools. Below is an analysis of the 74 responses:

15 respondents (20%) agreed with the proposal. Of these, 4 were parents/carers of children at primary schools, 5 were parents/carers of children at Oxford School, and 1 was the parent/carer of children both at primary school and Oxford School.

There were significant differences in levels of agreement among different sub-groups of respondents:

Category of respondent	% agreeing with proposal
Parents of pupils at Oxford School	38%
Parents of primary school pupils	18%
Teachers/headteachers/governors	24%
Local residents/others who are not parents of children at primary school or at Oxford School	15%

Those agreeing with the proposal considered that it would give the school a better chance of further improvement; would attract more resources; would create useful links with partner organisations; and help "rebrand" the school to encourage recruitment.

58 respondents (78%) disagreed with the proposal. The reasons given are summarised below:

<b>Issues of accountability and responsibility:</b>	<b>39 (53%)</b>
○ Lack of parental/staff/community influence in governance	19 (26%)
○ Schools should be locally accountable	15 (20%)
○ Credibility and experience of sponsor	13 (18%)
○ Education should be the local authority's responsibility	13 (18%)
<b>Issues of school improvement</b>	<b>40 (54%)</b>
○ School already improving/successful	27 (36%)
○ No (independent) evidence that academies improve standards	16 (22%)

○ School already doing /could do everything suggested in the brochure	9 (12%)
○ Proposal not sufficiently innovative	4 (7%)
○ Academy status not necessary/useful in order to further improve	1 (1%)
○ Sponsors' interests may skew the curriculum	1 (1%)
<b>Issues of cost and resource use:</b>	<b>19 (26%)</b>
○ No additional resources are guaranteed	10 (14%)
○ Land will be sold to finance project/given away to private sponsor	2 (3%)
○ Proposal is just cost-cutting	4 (5%)
○ Closure would be more cost-effective	1 (1%)
<b>Criticisms of the decision making process</b>	<b>19 (26%)</b>
○ Inadequate consultation	14 (19%)
○ Other options not sufficiently explored	9 (12%)
○ Academy not wanted by local community/parents/staff/students	4 (5%)
○ Lack of information from sponsors	1 (1%)
<b>Impact on specific groups</b>	<b>10 (14%)</b>
○ Academy status will worsen staff conditions	5 (7%)
○ Reduced provision for special needs	4 (5%)
○ Exclusions will rise	2 (3%)
<b>Impact on wider education provision</b>	<b>9 (12%)</b>
○ Will make collaboration between schools harder	7 (9%)
○ Schools opting out of local authority services will make those services more expensive/less effective	4 (5%)
○ Replacing local authority services from private providers will be more expensive	2 (3%)
<b>Choice and diversity</b>	<b>5 (7%)</b>
○ Don't want a religious school	4 (5%)
○ Reduction in choice as there is already an academy	1 (1%)

15 respondents (22% of those expressing an opinion) agreed with the proposal to include 3-11 year olds, for the following reasons:

- Continuity of education, ethos and care
- Making maximum use of site
- Shared facilities between primary and secondary school
- Convenience for families with children at both schools.

54 (78%) disagreed with the proposal to include 3-11 year olds, for the following reasons:

- Young children need their own space and environment (16%)
- School would be too large, e.g. intimidating for young children (16%)
- Inappropriate to mix such a wide age range, e.g. primary and secondary schools have different focuses; safety concerns (14%)
- Good for children to "move on" and experience different schools (12%)
- No evidence that all-through schools improve outcomes (9%)
- Adverse impact on other schools (9%)
- School site would not be big enough/would lose green space (8%)
- Traffic/noise impact on neighbours (7%)
- Management issues, e.g. too large for efficient management/communications (5%)
- Additional primary school places not needed in this area (4%)
- Only proposed as a money-saving tactic (5%).

## 9. Summary of the contents of the Petition

The petition contained the signatures of 599 people, of whom 23 (3.8%) were parents/carers of pupils at Oxford School, and 158 (26.4%) parents/carers of children at an Oxford primary school.

The petition registered disagreement with the closure of Oxford School and its reopening as an academy on the following grounds:

- The process has been found by parents and local residents and local community to be undemocratic and not considerate in its duty to engage with them. The local community consists of high numbers of minority ethnic people many of whom English is not a first language.
- There was a failure to give the full statutory period of six weeks required for consultation.
- The potential impact on the local community, which includes high levels of minority ethnic people, has not been appropriately assessed.

It also registered disagreement with the proposal to increase the age range to also make provision on the site for 3-11 year-olds on the following grounds:

- In many circumstances it will be very inappropriate to combine such a varied age range of children in such large numbers.
- The impact of increased traffic, people, vehicle and noise on the local community and residents is unwanted.
- There will be diminished relative comfort to local residents. There will be diminished value of property.
- The potential impact on the local community, which includes high levels of minority ethnic people, has not been appropriately assessed.

## Financial and Staff Implications

10. There are none arising directly from this report. However, should Oxford School be replaced by an academy, it would receive the current Oxford School share of the Dedicated Schools Grant plus a proportion of non-delegated expenditure incurred by the Council on behalf of schools. The figure calculated if Oxford School became an academy is £338,707. This is a full year calculation. If the resulting academy opened in January 2011 the figure would reduce to £84,677.
11. The academy would also receive additional resources in respect of local authority functions funded from the local authority budget rather than from the Schools Budget. Initially this additional resource is to be provided by the Department for Education (DfE), however they are reviewing with the Department for Communities and Local Government ways in which Revenue Support Grant allocations to local authorities can be reduced in order to meet this cost in future. Accordingly there is anticipated to be a further cost to the Council which cannot yet be confirmed; DfE estimates are based on an average additional cost of £160k per annum.
12. In addition if, as part of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) process, there are redundancies, then the costs of

these will fall to be met by the Council. At present it is not possible to determine whether there will be any redundancies nor to quantify the potential cost of these. Officers will work with sponsors and the Department for Education to avoid, or if not possible, to seek to minimise the scale and cost of any redundancies.

## Equality and Inclusion Implications

13. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and is available from the Children, Young People and Families Directorate. The replacement of Oxford School by an academy would not, in and of itself, have a direct impact on equalities. Changes to the curriculum are likely to be incremental and the pattern of parental preferences for education at the school will reflect the perception of the relative success of the academy which, in turn, may gradually change the schools' student and family profile. Possible capital investment in an academy could significantly enhance accessibility and have a positive impact on student outcomes.

## Summary

14. The responses from parents and carers of children attending Oxford School and those from parents/carers of other children at local primary schools and all of their individual comments on the questionnaire have been read, considered and their comments will provide useful information should Cabinet approve the recommendations in this report. The time parents and carers have taken to complete the questionnaire, and respond to the Council, is appreciated.
15. The issues raised by the petition, particularly the assertion that the Council had failed to provide the full consultation period of six weeks, have been considered. Section 16 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 establishes the consultation procedures and local authorities also have a duty to have regard to statutory guidance, in this particular case 'Closing a Mainstream School: A guide for Local Authorities' ("the Guidance"). The period of consultation is not prescribed by legislation, although the Guidance recommends a minimum of 6 weeks. The consultation period was in line with the Guidance having run from 7<sup>th</sup> June and closed on 19<sup>th</sup> July, thereby meeting the six week requirement in relation to those that have raised concerns.
16. The Guidance also lists interested parties who 'should' be consulted. The word 'should' means it is a recommendation rather than a requirement in legislation. The Guidance lists the LSC as an interested party which *should* be consulted '*if the proposals affect the provision of full-time 14-19 education.*' As the LSC was disbanded in April 2010 and its functions transferred to Local Authorities, when the consultation commenced it was considered that the recommendation to consult the LSC was no longer applicable. However, Officers have since become aware that the YPLA has taken over the consultation duties of the LSC and as such, has been invited to respond to the consultation.



17. The Council's Legal Services confirm that the consultation period in relation to those that have objected was in accordance with the Statutory Guidance and that all interested parties have been consulted.
18. Should the Secretary of State for Education give final approval to the replacement of Oxford School by an academy, this will be through the signing of a funding agreement and Memorandum and Articles of the Academy Trust. This will set out legally binding conditions (e.g. the Admissions Code of Practice) to be complied with should an academy be opened following the closure of Oxford School.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

19. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**
  - (a) **consider the outcome of the consultation on the proposed closure of Oxford School to enable its replacement by an academy; and**
  - (b) **decide whether to proceed with the publication in September 2010 of a Statutory Notice for the closure of Oxford School, to be determined following a further six week period of representation.**

MEERA SPILLETT  
Director for Children, Young People & Families

Background papers: Responses to public consultation  
Equalities Impact Assessment

Other Documents: Oxfordshire County Council Consultation document on  
the closure of Oxford School (in members' resource  
room)  
CfBT consultation document (in members' resource  
room)

Contact Officer: Roy Leach, Strategic Lead, School Organisation &  
Planning Tel: 01865 - 816458  
[Roy.leach@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Roy.leach@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

July 2010

**Oxford School – consultation on closure and replacement with an academy**

Questions and issues from public meetings 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010

**CfBT as Sponsor**

**How was CfBT chosen as an academy sponsor?**

Track record of success in school improvement services.

**How much money is CfBT putting in?**

CfBT is not putting in money, but provides staff time, expertise and experience.

**Will CfBT still want to sponsor Oxford School even without government funding?**

Yes.

**Couldn't CfBT support the school without it becoming an academy?**

Sponsorship guarantees commitment. Without a sponsorship agreement, support could be offered but not guaranteed in the longer term. CfBT would not want to be in the position of public assumption of responsibility but without enough authority to drive forward change. It is desirable for parents to know who is responsible.

**CfBT track record as an academy sponsor of St Mark's Academy, Surrey**

CfBT was initially a minor sponsor of St Mark's, and had little influence. Following an unsatisfactory Ofsted report, CfBT was asked to become lead sponsor. Latest Ofsted visit (March 2010) found that "the academy is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising students' achievement" and that "Governors rigorously monitor the academy's work. They ensure that all policies are ratified and have a programme of continuous review in place." From this experience CfBT has learnt that they would not again want to be a minor sponsor, as this creates a public assumption of responsibility but without enough authority to drive forward change.

**Will CfBT walk away?**

Being a sponsor is very exposing – if the academy fails the sponsor's reputation and future prospects are harmed. Therefore CfBT is fully committed to ensuring success.

**How many academies do CfBT intend to run? Are they just trying to increase their economies of scale?**

There will be an optimum number of academies for a group, to maximise shared knowledge and experience, but the size of that is not yet known. Not enormous aspirations – don't want to grow too fast.

**OCVC as sponsor**

**How will OCVC's involvement differ from the way they already work with secondary schools?**

As sponsor, could do more to integrate the vocational programme into the school curriculum to raise broader standards.

**Shouldn't OCVC be providing this level of support to all schools, without being a sponsor?**

OCVC does not have sufficient resources to work at this level with all schools.

**Funding of the proposed academy**

**Where is the £20m that was promised? Will the academy get new buildings?**

This academy project was launched before the general election, under the previous academy processes and policies. As such, there is still a reasonable expectation of capital investment, and a visit from DfE and Partnerships for Schools to assess capital needs is expected before the summer holiday. Although there are now doubts over continued capital funding for academies, there are greater doubts over funding for the academies proposed after the election, and also for other secondary schools through the Building Schools for the Future programme. We will not know anything definite until the autumn. However, if a decision is delayed there is reduced likelihood of capital funding.

**If there's no more money, where's the extra resource to improve and attract students and staff?**

- Academies receive a start-up grant for 2 years.
- CfBT is a substantial organisation which can afford to put staff time into the academy on a charitable basis.
- CfBT and OCVC provide added expertise, and new insight to help staff see how to improve.
- Rising student numbers will increase budgets.

**Can we see the draft funding agreement?**

The funding agreement gets drafted at a later stage, and is between the lead sponsor and the DfE.

**If a primary school is added, how would that be funded?**

By OCC.

**Is the land given to the sponsors?**

The land will be on a 125-year lease.

**The consultation and decision making process**

**Not enough information on the pros and cons of academies.**

Links will be provided on the OCC consultation website to further information (subsequently added).

**Insufficient publicity for consultation**

The consultation process has not been ideal. There was a false start when an earlier sponsor dropped out. This consultation has been available online since 6<sup>th</sup> June, when there was an item in the Oxford Mail about it. Leaflets were delayed by a week due to a technical problem, but were then distributed via students at Oxford School, as well as to stakeholders such as other local schools. Letters have been sent by post to parents of children due to start at Oxford School in September. Additional events will be held at local primary schools.

Consultation on closure will have a 2<sup>nd</sup> phase in the autumn. Consultation on the nature of the academy will continue.

**What would it take to stop the decision? If a majority of people in the consultation oppose the academy, will the proposal be dropped?**

The final decision will be taken by the County Council Cabinet. The decision will be informed by consultation responses, but will not be based on a simple count of responses. However, the more opposition there is, the more closely Cabinet members will scrutinise the arguments.

**If the proposal is not agreed, what will OCC do?**

Reopen analysis of other options for Oxford School.

**The reasons for change**

**What will the sponsors do to improve standards?**

- Sponsors and school leaders are discussing what changes will be needed to the curriculum, including the vocational courses offered by OCVC.
- Training and development for staff – CfBT exists to provide professional support for teachers.
- Clarity and rigour of expectations in lessons.

**Freedom to innovate given as an advantage, but why can't all schools innovate?**

Innovation can happen under current structure, but CfBT would be able to share extensive experience of innovation. Sponsors would be able to commit more resources to working with the school.

**Falling numbers are given as a reason – but numbers have fallen because of the uncertainty about the academy proposal. How can you be sure of increasing numbers?**

Numbers have been on a falling trend since 2005 (with one peak in 2008, probably related to difficulties at a nearby school). Certainty is essential to attract more students to the school. The academy will develop a reputation for consistent, high quality teaching; motivated teachers; a focus on basics (including time on task) and knowing pupils (through rigorous assessment); engagement with parents. Accelerating improvement will attract more students. Evidence of other local academies is that numbers rise after conversion.

**Falling numbers reduce the school's budget, which restricts the choices it is able to offer, e.g. for GCSE courses. It creates a downward spiral, reducing staff morale. Uncertainty is one of the biggest problems – need to secure a permanent future for the school quickly. What will sponsors do to attract and retain quality teachers?**

CfBT exists to provide professional support for teachers. Highly motivated and supported teachers are their essence. Having 3 sponsors widens the numbers of opportunities for development and progression.

**The academy proposers are undermining the progress made by Oxford School, under difficult circumstances.**

School has achieved progress in the last year, but has not yet made sustained progress. The executive head, IEB and staff have all done a good job, and it is not impossible for the school to continue to improve, but the sponsors can help.

**The other Oxfordshire academies haven't improved attainment since conversion.** GCSE results at one of the academies have improved (doubled), and both are expected to improve this year.

### **Staff concerns**

**Majority of school staff are against the proposal. Can you guarantee terms and conditions for staff? Can you guarantee that staff will not be pressurised into changing their job descriptions? Will classes be supervised by unqualified cover staff?**

- TUPE applies, protecting staff terms and conditions.
- The sponsors are committed to ensuring the quality of staffing; they are not organisations who manipulate staff.
- Policy on cover and supervision has not yet been discussed.

**Why is the headteacher already being appointed? Will there be staff, student and parental involvement in the decision? How much will they be paid?**

The post of principal has been advertised, and the recruitment process is underwritten by the DfE in the event of the academy proposal not being approved. A "competitive package" is offered, through negotiation with the selected candidate, with a 6-figure salary likely to recruit the best person for this challenging post. Staff and student panels will be involved in the recruitment process.

**What short-term plans do you have to ensure good staff in place even before the academy starts, e.g. January 2011?**

Need to convince staff that sponsors care about their motivation, and that they will be well-supported with training and development plans. OCVV staff can help with short-term staff gaps in areas where they are suitably qualified.

### **The nature of the proposed academy**

**Will it still have a comprehensive admissions policy?**

Yes, admission policy will not change.

**Governance - how will parents/staff/students/local community have a voice?**

- There will be one elected parent governor, but the sponsors are also considering establishing a parent/carers' forum to engage more parents in the running of the academy, and act as a conduit of parental views to the governing body.
- There will be one staff governor, but staff have different ways of influencing schools.
- OCVV and OCC as sponsors bring the local element. Sponsors are currently identifying other local community groups to include.
- Inclusion of a student governor was considered, but DfE advice was that only over-18s can be governors.

**How will the sponsors be accountable?**

- The governing body is accountable for children's education. CfBT Trust hold the governing body to account.
- Parents concerned about their child's education would, as now, first approach the headteacher, and if dissatisfied then the governors. As OCC will be a sponsor, will still have the option of referring concerns to OCC, as for a community school.

**Will there be full commitment to special educational needs?**

CfBT, as a charity, works extensively with disadvantaged young people and is committed to being as inclusive as possible. A strength of the school now is its provision for vulnerable children with SEN, and that will not change. Admission policy and systems of support will stay the same.

**Curriculum changes – will 6<sup>th</sup> form courses continue? What does “stage not age” mean?**

- Courses already underway or offered by this September will be completed.
- Stage not age means matching the curriculum to children’s needs. Separate pathways will be offered so that some children can fast-track to GCSEs early, while others will be able to receive more intensive support with the transition from primary.

**Currently, some relationships between staff and students are too equal. Will there be assertiveness training for staff to increase their authority?**

Consultation process has not yet reached this level of detail. A considerable degree of formality is likely.

**Other concerns/comments**

- Increased privatisation of schools will lead to local authority support services collapsing. Alternative providers of these services will be more expensive.
- Choice and diversity – if this school becomes an academy, there will be no local offer of a secular community school.



# PUBLIC NOTICE

## Closure of Oxford School

Notice is given in accordance with section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND intends to discontinue Oxford School, Glanville Road, Oxford, OX4 2AU on 31 December 2010.

Oxford School will be replaced by an Academy on the same site. All pupils currently at Oxford School will automatically transfer to the new Academy, unless they choose to move to another school which has available places.

As educational provision will continue on the same site at the new Academy, there are no transport implications.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation) (click on "Consultation Calendar"); by emailing [oxfordschool2010-manager@myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:oxfordschool2010-manager@myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk); by writing to Barbara Chillman, School Organisation, FREEPOST, Oxfordshire County Council; or by calling 01865 816459.

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Barbara Chillman, School Organisation, FREEPOST, Oxfordshire County Council.

**Signed: Meera Spillett, Director for Children, Young People & Families**

**Publication Date: Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

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**ANNEX 3**

**MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 15 PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL**

**Extract of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):**

**Contact details**

1. The name of the LA or governing body publishing the proposals, and a contact address, and the name of the school it is proposed that should be discontinued.

Proposal published by Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND  
 Proposal to close Oxford School, Glanville Road, Oxford

**Implementation**

2. The date when it is planned that the proposals will be implemented, or, where the proposals are to be implemented in stages, information about each stage and the date on which each stage is planned to be implemented.

31 December 2010

**Consultation**

3. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with.

All applicable statutory requirements to consult have been complied with.

4. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including:

- a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted;
- b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- c) the views of the persons consulted; and
- d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how these were made available.

a) Informal consultation for this school's closure was run in parallel with the consultation on the nature of the subsequent academy. Consultation was carried out with the following stakeholders:

<b>In School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Support Staff</li> <li>• Admin staff</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IEB</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing</li> <li>• Prospective (feeder schools/catchment area)</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing</li> <li>• Prospective (feeder schools/catchment area)</li> </ul>
<b>Politicians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Oxford Labour MP</li> <li>• Other relevant MPs</li> <li>• County Councillors</li> <li>• East Area Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Unions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NUT</li> <li>• COTO</li> <li>• ATL</li> <li>• NUT</li> <li>• NASUWT</li> <li>• NAHT</li> <li>• Unison</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<p>Oxford City Secondary Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheney School</li> <li>• St Gregory the Great</li> <li>• The Cherwell School</li> <li>• Matthew Arnold School</li> <li>• The Oxford Academy</li> </ul> <p>Local primary schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Oxford Primary</li> <li>• Larkrise Primary</li> <li>• SS Mary &amp; John Primary</li> <li>• St Christopher's Cowley Primary</li> <li>• Wood Farm Primary</li> <li>• Windmill Primary</li> <li>• St Andrew's Primary, Oxford.</li> <li>• St Francis CoE Primary</li> <li>• Orchard Meadow Primary</li> <li>• Windale Primary</li> <li>• Pegasus Primary</li> <li>• Church Cowley St James Primary</li> <li>• Rose Hill Primary</li> <li>• St Ebbe's CoE Primary</li> </ul> <p>Local Higher Education Establishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxford University</li> <li>• Oxford Brookes</li> <li>• Oxford Business School</li> </ul>
<b>Pressure Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Save Oxford School</li> <li>• Anti Academy Alliance</li> <li>• Independent Working Class Association</li> </ul>
<b>Local Employers and Representative groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BMW (UK)</li> <li>• Unipart Group</li> <li>• Oxfordshire PCT and local health centres</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Economic Partnership;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Business Enterprises;</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Chamber of Commerce;</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Co-Operative Development Agency;</li> <li>• CONNEXIONS;</li> <li>• Community Action Groups (CAGs) Oxfordshire</li> </ul>
<b>Interested parties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Mark's Academy, Merton</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Secondary School Headteachers Association</li> <li>• The Children and Young People's Trust Board</li> <li>• East Oxford and Cowley Community</li> <li>• Oxford City Council</li> <li>• Family Support Workers</li> <li>• YPLA</li> </ul>
<b>Sponsors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CfBT Education Trust</li> <li>• Oxfordshire County Council</li> <li>• OCVV</li> <li>• DfE</li> </ul>

b) There were two public meetings held, and issues raised are summarised in Appendix 1.

c) Those agreeing with the proposal considered that it would give the school a better chance of further improvement; would attract more resources; would create useful links with partner organisations; and help “rebrand” the school to encourage recruitment.

Reasons for disagreeing with the proposal are summarised below (percentages are of written responses to the consultation):

<b>Issues of accountability and responsibility:</b>	<b>37 (56%)</b>
○ Lack of parental/staff/community influence in governance	19 (29%)
○ Schools should be locally accountable	15 (23%)
○ Credibility and experience of sponsor	12 (18%)
○ Education should be the local authority's responsibility	12 (18%)
<b>Issues of school improvement</b>	<b>37 (56%)</b>
○ School already improving/successful	26 (39%)
○ No (independent) evidence that academies improve standards	15 (23%)
○ School already doing /could do everything suggested in the brochure	8 (12%)
○ Proposal not sufficiently innovative	4 (6%)
○ Academy status not necessary/useful in order to further improve	2 (3%)
○ Sponsors' interests may skew the curriculum	1 (2%)
<b>Issues of cost and resource use:</b>	<b>19 (29%)</b>
○ No additional resources are guaranteed	10 (15%)
○ Land will be sold to finance project/given away to private sponsor	4 (6%)

○ Proposal is just cost-cutting	4 (6%)
○ Closure would be more cost-effective	1 (2%)
<b>Criticisms of the decision making process</b>	<b>18 (27%)</b>
○ Inadequate consultation	14 (21%)
○ Other options not sufficiently explored	8 (12%)
○ Academy not wanted by local community/parents/staff/students	4 (6%)
○ Lack of information from sponsors	1 (2%)
<b>Impact on specific groups</b>	<b>9 (14%)</b>
○ Academy status will worsen staff conditions	4 (6%)
○ Reduced provision for special needs	4 (6%)
○ Exclusions will rise	2 (3%)
<b>Impact on wider education provision</b>	<b>8 (12%)</b>
○ Will make collaboration between schools harder	6 (9%)
○ Schools opting out of local authority services will make those services more expensive/less effective	3 (5%)
○ Replacing local authority services from private providers will be more expensive	2 (3%)
<b>Choice and diversity</b>	<b>5 (8%)</b>
○ Don't want a religious school	4 (6%)
○ Reduction in choice as there is already an academy	1 (2%)

d) The consultation leaflets provided by the county council and the academy sponsors are attached as Appendices 2 and 3. These were sent via pupils to parents of existing pupils at the school, and posted to parents of incoming pupils for September 2010. Copies were also sent to other local schools and stakeholders, as above. The leaflets were also available on the county council's website and the specific website for the Academy consultation.

## Objectives

5. The objectives of the proposal.

It is intended to close Oxford School on 31 December 2010 to enable an Academy to open on 01 January 2011, initially in the same buildings and on the same site continuing to serve the local community.

The new academy would be an independent state-funded school run jointly by the CfBT Education Trust, Oxford & Cherwell Valley College and Oxfordshire County Council.

The sponsors have the following vision for the Academy:

- International focus
- Uncompromising expectations
- Mastery of core skills
- Development of the whole person
- Guaranteed progression for every individual.

### Standards and Diversity

6. A statement and supporting evidence indicating how the proposals will impact on the standards, diversity and quality of education in the area.

Oxford School is currently large enough for 1279 pupils but the number on roll at the January 2010 pupil census was only 1015. The total number of pupils at Oxford School has been falling for several years, from a peak of 1151 in 2006. The current published admission number is 210, but in Year 7 there are 113 pupils, of whom 80 chose the school as their first preference. For September 2010, 65 pupils have chosen Oxford School as their first preference. The number of families making Oxford School their first choice has fallen from a peak of 142 in 2006.

In 2008, Oxford School was included by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in a list of "National Challenge" schools, because the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C (including English and Maths) had been consistently below the 30% minimum target set for schools, dropping to 23% in 2008. As a National Challenge school, Oxford School has since benefitted from additional support, and in 2009 GCSE results (including English and Maths) rose to 35%. Initial results for 2010 are that GCSE results fell back to 31%.

Although the school has made progress in improving the education offered to its students, the county council believes that a radical change in structure is needed to sustain this improvement, and to reverse the trend of declining student numbers. This is why we are now proposing that Oxford School should be closed and replaced with an academy.

### Provision for 16-19 year olds

7. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, how the proposals will impact on:

- a) the educational or training achievements;
- b) participation in education or training; and
- c) the range of educational or training opportunities,

for 16-19 year olds in the area.

16-19 provision will be reprovided in the new Academy. The involvement of Oxford and Cherwell Valley College as a sponsor will allow for a broader offer of courses to this age group.

### Need for places

8. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

The places currently provided by the school will continue to be provided by the new Academy. Secondary pupil numbers across Oxford city are expected to start rising again after a number of years' decline, and it is important that high-quality provision is available.

9. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

n/a

### Current School Information

10. Information as to the numbers, age range, sex and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is made at the school.

The school is currently large enough for 1279 pupils but the number on roll at the January 2010 pupil census was only 1019. The school is co-educational and provides for the 11-19 age group. In 2009 12.3% of pupils had an SEN statement compared to an LA average of 2.6%; 44% of pupils had English as an additional language compared to an LA average of 7.0%.

### Displaced Pupils

11. Details of the schools or FE colleges which pupils at the school for whom provision is to be discontinued will be offered places, including:

- a) any interim arrangements;
- b) where the school included provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for children with special educational needs, the alternative provision to be made for pupils in the school's reserved provision; and
- c) in the case of special schools, alternative provision made by LAs other than the authority which maintains the school.

Provision will be continued through the new Academy.

12. Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or FE college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

n/a

### Impact on the Community

13. A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

This closure will have no adverse impact on the local community, as provision will continue through the new Academy. In strengthening educational standards, the new Academy will have positive impact on its local community.

14. Details of extended services the school offered and what it is proposed for these services once the school has discontinued.

Extended services will be continue and enhanced by the new Academy.

**Travel**

15. Details of the length and journeys to alternative provision.

n/a

16. The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how they will help to work against increased car use.

n/a

**Related Proposals**

17. A statement as to whether in the opinion of the LA or governing body, the proposals are related to any other proposals which may have been, are, or are about to be published.

This proposal is related to the proposal to open an Academy on the same site.

**Rural Primary Schools**

18. Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15, a statement that the LA or ghe governing body (as the case may be) considered:

- a) the likely effect of discontinuance of the school on the local community;
  - b) the availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools;
  - c) any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase;
- and
- d) any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school,

as required by section 15(4)

n/a

**Maintained nursery schools**

19. Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out:

- a) the consideration that has been given to developing the school into a children's centre and the grounds for not doing so;
- b) the LA's assessment of the quality and quantity of alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and
- c) the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.

n/a
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**Special educational provision**

20. Where existing provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the LA or the governing body believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children.

n/a
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**Full list of representations made in response to the publication of the statutory closure notice**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Parent/ carer of a child at Oxford School	This has been a very poor consultation. Many parents/carers do not know about the proposal, why were documents not posted to parents and carers?
Parent/ carer of a child at Oxford School	I wish to see my child's school remain under local authority control along with most of the other Oxford secondary schools. There is no evidence that the new academy can offer anything that is currently available to the school or that it can improve the education provided by the school. It is also now clear that the academy will not bring any significant new financial contribution towards much needed infrastructure improvements. At the same time the ability of parents and other interested groups to influence the running of the school, either through the local authority or as governors, will be severely diminished. I think it is a travesty that my daughter's education should be put in jeopardy in pursuit of an ideological dogma that has proved a failure in schools elsewhere in the country.
Parent/carer of child at another secondary school AND a child at primary school	Making Oxford School an academy will reduce choice in the area as there is already an academy nearby. I am not convinced by the academy model and don't think that academies necessarily raise standards (Oxford School is improving on its own, anyway). I worry that if Oxford School becomes an academy then parents and staff will have less say in how the school is run. Also terms and conditions for staff may change for the worse.
Parent/ carer of a child at primary school	The closure is inappropriate and politically motivated.
Parent/ carer of a child at primary school	For all the reasons in my original objection, I do not wish Oxford School to be replaced with an Academy. I believe Academies are not good for the community - I want schools to work together under the local authority, particularly secondary schools, to share expertise, not compete for

	<p>funding. I also am unsure about the admissions policy of the new Academy - I want to be reassured that the school will admit children with a range of abilities. I have no trust in the body running the Academy - they have no experience of running state Academies (apart from one which is in special measures), so why have they been chosen? Finally, I'd like to ask why we have to restate our reasons for objecting - this seems un-necessary, and makes it over-complicated. Do our original objections not count - is this why it has gone through?</p>
<p>Parent/ carer of a child at primary school</p>	<p>This is not an objection on the grounds of principle. I have worked in and around education, as a teacher, in policy, and in the private sector - but as a local parent I want not only the best for my kids, but for the community in which they live. My main objection to this proposal is that the proposal does not include local representation in the running of the school. I am prepared to accept all the vague statements, failings, and mistakes (of which I believe there are many) in the proposal if I knew that when the details are to be worked through, there will be a way for me (and all those who this school would serve) to contribute and to have influence to make this a great school. I believe that a commitment to local representation (not just the local councillors! Local politics is important but must not dominate), through elected parent, pupil, teacher, support staff and community representatives is essential. Furthermore, online tools (through any VLE that the school might use) provide simple ways for these groups to be involved in decision making without having to attend regular meetings. This key aspect to the running of the school must be resolved for me to accept this decision. I am not a fan of the existing school I am not involved in local politics I am not (any more) a member of a teaching union I am not impressed with the level of debate on this proposal so far I am worried that this is another 'done deal' and that this consultation is not authentic I know enough excellent teachers and school leaders who work in academies to know that when one is set up well - everyone benefits I am a local parent of two kids - 3 and 5 year olds I want the same as everyone else - a great school for them to thrive in Please help my kids, and the city they live in by making a smart decision. Reject this proposal.</p>
<p>Parent/ carer of a child at primary school</p>	<p>I have responded to two consultations on this now, and my reasons remain the same. I do not think that replacing Oxford School with an Academy is the solution. I think that this change will not address any issues which would help the school, and is actually likely to prove detrimental. The change</p>

	<p>is viewed negatively by much of the local community and so will not in itself help with recruitment. The whole process has been badly managed so that the period of uncertainty has been very detrimental for the school. I am very concerned about the change to academy status having a detrimental effect on staff morale which in turn may endanger the quality of education provided. I am entirely unconvinced that the new Academy, with its lack of accountability, will be in a position to improve the situation for students at the school.</p>
<p>Parent/ carer of a child at primary school</p>	<p><a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-11229213">http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-11229213</a> [News report 10th September 2010, "Spending watchdog warns over academies' finances"]</p>
<p>Parent/carer of child at primary school AND teacher/ governor at another school</p>	<p>Oxford School does an outstanding job of responding to the specific needs of its local community. Ofsted does not have a tick box which adequately reflects this. Becoming an Academy will mean that the school can no longer respond to the community of which it is a vital part and will no longer be able to do what it does best. I think you will find that children will be withdrawn and sent to specialist faith schools which will cause community division and increase racism and marginalisation.</p>
<p>Teacher/ headteacher/ governor at Oxford School</p>	<p>The change of status of the school is already massively <b>NEGATIVELY</b> affecting the state of the staff within the school. Staff are working in uncertain conditions, which are creating unacceptable levels of stress. The proposed changes would prolong this time of stress for staff, as there are so many changes proposed - NOT necessarily taking into account the positive things about the school. The change of status would mean that the foundation status of the school would be for nothing - and the sponsors would gain valuable assets (in terms of land and building space). The proposed change in status has already upset so many staff that there are a number of high quality and high caliber staff who have already left. Many staff who said that they would not leave are now considering it - as the environment that this proposal has created is such that noone wants to stay working there. This is an environemnt that the council has created by making this proposal. Students are already picking up on this and it will negatively affect the results they are able to achieve. This years and last results have shown that the school is capable of making changes and supporting it's students in making those changes, as well as the interventions that are already in</p>

	<p>place for new year 11 students which suggests that this coming year 11 will have the best years results yet. The proposed changes, in the middle of a year, are set to jeopardise this.</p>
<p>Teacher/ headteacher/ governor at another school</p>	<p>Oxford School is the most successful secondary school in the county on progress measures. This is hardly indicative of a failing school. Its 2010 inspection confirmed its progress and capacity to improve. While parental choice is an issue, one that the previous governing body fully recognised, maintaining the school under local authority auspices gives the community better avenues for developing a cost effective and still distinctive school. Evidence shows that insufficient local people knew of the consultations that were deemed to have started on June 9th. The prospectus for the new Academy contains nothing that the current school is not currently doing or could not do as a LA school. If the proposal goes ahead, Oxford School will get no significant new resources - but it will be 'owned' by people with no local accountability and who will be given precious public assets for nothing. Closure should be rejected because inadequate attention has been given to how a strategy for school improvement should be developed across the city as a whole; the relative cost efficiencies of a more federated secondary school structure in the city have not been thoroughly investigated. • A new Education Act has fundamentally changed the terrain • BSF funding has been withdrawn (particular impact on Cheney school) • Cherwell has difficulties in recruitment • Oxford Academy has poor results ... (lowest A-G in the county) • Consultation showed overwhelming opposition to Oxford School becoming an Academy If piece-meal changes across city schools result in 3 or 4 different Academies, while lip service can be given to collaboration between them, in reality the 'survival of the fittest' will remain as the dominant culture - to the disadvantage of pupils and parents. The school should remain open and continue as a local authority school; the community should be fully consulted on properly researched alternative options on the best way of reenergising the school's image</p>
<p>Union</p>	<p>NASUWT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Welcomes the opportunity to participate in this consultation NASUWT members are affected by these proposals both directly and the association will continue to represent these members at all stages in this Academy process.</li> <li>○ Will continue to participate in all available local democratic</li> </ul>

opportunities to support members at Oxford School, including meetings of COTO and Teachers Joint Committee NASUWT recognises the huge progress that has been made at Oxford School in recent months, marked by an improvement in exam results in 2010. Such improvement is thanks to the hard work of the whole school community, particularly teachers and teaching assistants working in the classroom.

- Recognises that there has recently commenced a formal dialogue with teacher representatives to negotiate how the transition to Academy status can be managed and the negative impact on current employees minimised.
- Has concerns about the ability of the local authority to engage with a consultation process on closure when permanent changes are already being implemented within the school in preparation for Academy status in January 2011. It would not seem possible for the authority to respond to contributions, amend plans and strategies and move forward in such a short space of time.
- Has already made clear the concern about the rushed nature of the transition to Academy status and the pressure this has placed upon all members of staff involved. This makes it more difficult for the Academy to open in a calm, positive manner in January 2011.
- Is concerned about the capacity of CfBT and OCVC to sustain current progress at Oxford School. CfBT does not have a proven, national track record of work in Academies. OCVC is facing its own considerable challenges in the light of current budget pressures. NASUWT is not yet convinced that these organisations will be able to effect dynamic and sustained change at the school.
- Is concerned that one key factor in placing the current school under so much pressure has been the proximity of another Academy in the city. There is a risk that opening a second Academy creates further tensions within a school system that has undergone significant change over the past few years.

The Academy proposal involves Oxfordshire County Council as one of the key partners. It is not clear how far the support/role of Oxfordshire County Council will differ from that currently provided to Oxford School. If the current support has not succeeded in sustained a fast enough rate of improvement, what is the authority seeking to change about its own service offer that will help lead the Academy in a new direction? The precise role of the local authority is not clear.

Oxfordshire NASUWT looks forward to reading the results of

	<p>the consultation process and studying the next, more detailed proposals when they are available. NASUWT will continue to provide positive critical feedback on any forthcoming proposals through COTO meetings and our Negotiating Secretary.</p>
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