

The Cooper School Bicester



INFORMAL **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

Proposed Change of Status to include **Post-16 Provision**

11th February – 31st March 2008



Science

The Cooper School, Bicester

Change of Status to include Post-16 Provision

Purpose of the Consultation

This informal consultation is about a proposal by the Governing Body to extend the age range of the school from its current 11-16 status to include post-16 students and thereby enable the school to participate in the provision of full educational opportunities for the 11-19 age range through joint working with the proposed 14-19 Learning Centre in Bicester and Bicester Community College.

What are the reasons for the proposed change?

Oxfordshire County Council consulted about the Future of Secondary Education in Bicester during June and July 2007. The responses to that consultation were subsequently analysed and a decision of the County Council Cabinet at a meeting held on 16th October 2007 agreed to adopt Option C as the preferred option by which to respond to and meet the future needs for education in Bicester*.

The following paragraph is copied from the OCC (Oxfordshire County Council) consultation document (Page 4).

OPTION C - New 14+ Learning Centre

‘A new educational Learning Centre which would be purpose built to meet the demands of the future curriculum for learners from age 14. It would accommodate pupils from Year 10 upwards who would be based at either of the existing schools and attend the new Learning Centre for part of the week. A levels and other Post 16 courses would be taught at both schools and the new 14+ Learning Centre’.

From this it can be seen that there is an expectation within the County Council’s preferred but conditional option that The Cooper School would become a secondary school with post-16 provision, with an age range of 11-18 years. Unless this change is made students would not legally be permitted to complete a full-time A level course at The Cooper School, and would need to be registered at a different school.

* Further details about the Consultation and the Cabinet papers in relation to this decision may be found on the County Council’s website at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

The report on the OCC consultation may be found as Agenda Item 8 and report CA8 of the Cabinet papers for the meeting of the 16th October 2007 and the minutes, recording the full decisions may be found at Item CA3 of the meeting of 20th November 2007.

The full OCC consultation document is also on the County Council website but may be more easily found via The Cooper School website at www.cooper.oxon.sch.uk via the link to Secondary Provision in Bicester then read or download the Public Consultation document in PDF format.

What is the procedure for changing the age range of the school?

Changing the age range of a school is a legal process. Firstly there is a requirement to consult through this informal consultation. The individuals and organisations that we are required to consult or are specifically inviting to comment on the proposal are listed at the end of this leaflet. The proposer (in this case the Governing Body) must then consider responses to the consultation and consider any alternative options. The next stage is to publish the Statutory Proposal which must be in a prescribed format to meet the legal requirements. Following the publication there is a period of four weeks for statutory objections to be lodged. *Objections raised during the initial consultation will not necessarily be taken into account unless they are resubmitted during the formal consultation.* The local authority must make a decision on whether to approve the proposal within two months of the end of the consultation or the decision will be passed immediately to the Schools Adjudicator. If the County Council decided against the proposal the Governing Body would be able to appeal to the Schools Adjudicator who would make a final decision - the target date for this is within six weeks of receiving the paperwork. If a decision is made in favour of the proposals, the Age Range of the School is formally changed, which would enable the Governing Body to implement the development of post-16 provision.

What happens next?

This initial consultation will end on 31st March 2008. The Governing Body of the school will review the responses and carefully consider all feedback, which may be in favour of or against the proposal, and any alternative options presented. They will then decide whether or not to proceed with the publication of statutory proposals. If the decision is to go ahead, the statutory consultation period of four weeks will follow the publication date. *You will not receive any further information at this stage so if you wish to object you must look out for the notice in the local press.* During this four week period statutory objections to the proposal could be submitted as described in the published proposal.

If the proposal is accepted the Governing Body would implement a Post-16 Development Plan to ensure that funding and appropriate accommodation are available and high quality teaching staff are in post. Whilst early implementation might appear to be desirable, some phasing to fit in with the development of the proposed 14-19 Centre might be necessary in practice.

How to respond

We want to hear views from as many of you as possible whether you are in favour of, or against, the proposal. It would be a great help to the Governors if you could also state briefly the reason for your support or opposition to the development of Post-16 courses at The Cooper School. We also need to know your status e.g. if you are replying as an individual please state whether you are a parent of pupil in (name of) school; or member of the local community, Parish Councillor etc.

If you are replying on behalf of an organisation we require the name and contact details of the organisation.

Please send written responses by 31st March 2008 to:

Mrs Beverley Munro
Clerk to Governing Body
The Cooper School
Churchill Road
Bicester
OX26 4RS

Circulation list for this consultation:

1. The Director, Children, Young People & Families, Oxfordshire County Council
2. The families of students currently attending The Cooper School
3. All staff at The Cooper School
4. Trade union representatives for the staff of The Cooper School
5. Director for Children and Young People, Buckinghamshire County Council
6. Director for Children and Young People, Northamptonshire County Council
7. The Governing Body and staff and their trade union representatives of
Secondary Schools in the East Oxfordshire 14-19 Partnership:-
 - Bardwell School
 - Bicester Community College
 - Gosford Hill School
 - John Watson School
 - Lord William's School, Thame
 - Wheatley Park School
 - Woodeaton Manor School
8. The Governing Body of other Secondary Schools in the vicinity:-
 - Buckingham School
 - Magdalen College School, Brackley
 - Marlborough CE School
 - Royal Latin School, Buckingham
 - The Cherwell School, Oxford
9. The Learning & Skills Council, The Thames Valley Manager
10. The Principal of the Oxford & Cherwell Valley College
11. The Governing Body, staff and families of pupils of The Cooper School's
feeder Primary Schools:-
 - Charlton-on-Otmoor CE Primary School
 - Finmere CE Primary School
 - Fringford CE Primary School
 - Glory Farm CP School
 - Langford Village Community School
 - Launton CE Primary
 - Longfields Primary & Nursery School
12. The Governing Body of Bicester Community College feeder Primary Schools:-
 - Brookside Primary School
 - Bure Park Primary School
 - Chesterton CE VA Primary School
 - Five Acres Primary School, Ambrosden
 - Fritwell CE Primary (VC)
 - Kings Meadow Primary School
 - St Edburg's CE (VA) School
 - St Mary's Catholic Primary School
 - Southwold CP School
13. Tony Baldry MP
14. Bicester Town Council
15. 32 Parish Councils and Parish meetings in the Bicester Area