

## Update on the consultation on the future school provision in the Crewkerne and Ilminster area

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Cabinet Member: Cllr Faye Purbrick – Cabinet Member for Education and Transformation

Division and Local Member:

Cllr Mike Best - Crewkerne

Cllr Linda Vijeh - Ilminster

Cllr Mark Keating - Coker

Cllr Adam Dance – South Petherton & Isle Moor

### 1. Summary

- 1 On 21 October 2020 Cabinet agreed to publish a formal consultation on a proposed two-tier model. The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on how this consultation is being conducted.
- 1 The vision in the Children and Young People's Plan is for all Somerset children and young people to be safe, healthy, happy, ambitious and successful. This consultation is designed to support deliver of the aim that children 'Learn well and develop skills for life'. A high-quality education can only be sustained in a school that has the financial means to provide excellent curriculum and teaching.

### 2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 1 The Children and Families Committee is requested to:
  - 1) Review the proposal for change in Crewkerne and Ilminster, including the associated detailed information accompanying the proposals
  - 2) Make recommendations for additional supporting information that, subject to a further non-key decision, could be provided alongside the statutory notices
  - 3) Advise on opportunities to raise the profile of the proposals and reach segments of the community who might otherwise be missed

### 3. Background

- 1 The driver for change is securing the high-quality education including a broad

curriculum, particularly in Key Stage 4, in the Ilminster and Crewkerne area. This objective is put at risk by the long-running and increasing, budgetary overspend at Wadham Upper School as a result of low pupil numbers. The County Council has previously written off accrued debt, but since that time the school has continued to accrue debt and on current projections is likely to reach £1.8 million by the time these proposals would begin to take effect. The LA-maintained middle school has accrued smaller but significant budgetary overspends in recent years.

#### **4. Consultations undertaken**

- 4 In September 2020, a single new two-tier model was developed in the light of feedback from earlier consultation in summer 2019. It was shared with locally elected members, staff, governors, and parents and carers at affected schools, trade unions, the Regional School Commissioner, Diocese of Bath and Wells and Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust. Feedback from this process informed the report presented to Cabinet on the 21 October 2020.
- 4 The consultation launched on the 12 November 2020 and runs until the 10 December 2020. The consultation documents are available here: <https://someset.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/CISP/consultationHome> .
- 4 Due to the pandemic all consultation events have been organised using Microsoft Teams Live Events. In total 7 individual school staff surgery events will be staged. A further 4 public sessions have been scheduled and chaired by Cllr Faye Purbrick. The timings of these live events were different with the intention of giving those wishing to express and view or ask questions the opportunity to attend at a time to suit them. Questions posted during the live events have been added to a comprehensive frequently asked questions document that forms part of the consultation pack.

#### **5. Implications**

- ! The council has a primary statutory duty to provide sufficient good quality places and the purpose of these proposals are to ensure that all schools have a sustainable and manageable staffing structure, staff expertise and pupil group in each year of transition as well as ensuring that parent are very clear about the pathway for their child or children.

#### **6. Background papers**

- € Future Provision of School Places in the Ilminster/Crewkerne Area – Cabinet 21 October 2020.
- € The consultation includes the following supporting documents:
  - [Summary guide](#)

- [Detailed information pack](#)
- [HR principles](#)
- [Financial principles](#)
- [Transition table](#)
- [Outcomes of consultation](#)
- [Published Admission Numbers \(PAN\) modelling summary](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)