Determination of Statutory Proposals: Proposed discontinuances of Our Lady’s RC Primary School and Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School and Establishment of a Single RC Primary School

Report of Assistant Executive Director for Children and Young People

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Jack Hulme, Children and Families

Cabinet: 16 February 2011

Officer Contact: Gill Hoar, Head of Access
Ext. 3150

Purpose of Report

This report seeks final determination of related statutory proposals to:

1. Discontinue Our Lady’s RC Primary School, Moorside on 31 August 2011
2. Discontinue Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Derker on 31 August 2011
3. Establish a single RC Primary School in the Derker area of Oldham on the site of current Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Derker.

Executive Summary

Following a joint statutory consultation process reported to Cabinet in EDRS 10060029, a combined Notice was published on 19 November 2010. This formalised:

- Oldham Council’s proposals to discontinue Our Lady’s RC Primary School, Moorside and Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Derker on 31 August 2011
- A proposal from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford (RCDS) to establish a single RC Primary School in Oldham on the site of the
former Sacred Heart RC Junior, infant and Nursery School, Whetstone Hill Road, Derker on 1 September 2012.

The regulatory six-week Representation Period closed on Friday 31 December 2010 and the proposals must now be determined.

The Local Authority (LA) is the Decision Maker (DM) for all these proposals, in accordance with powers conferred by the Education & Inspection Act 2006.

All three proposals are related and therefore must be considered together to ensure that the decisions are compatible.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to unconditionally approve the proposals to:

1. Discontinue Our Lady’s RC Primary School, Moorside on 31 August 2011
2. Discontinue Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Derker on 31 August 2011
3. Establish a single RC Primary School in the Derker area of Oldham on the site of current Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Derker.
Determination of Statutory Proposals: Proposed discontinuances of Our Lady's RC Primary School and Sacred Heart RC Primary School and Establishment of a Single RC Primary School

1 Background

1.1 The Primary Capital Programme contains a range of proposals for Oldham’s primary schools, some of which require a statutory process to reach decisions on whether or not they should proceed.

1.2 This report is concerned with the related proposals for the rationalisation of RC provision for:
   1. The discontinuance of Our Lady’s RC Primary School, Moorside on 31 August 2011, proposed by Oldham Council.
   2. The discontinuance of Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Derker on 31 August 2011.
   3. The establishment of a single RC Primary School in the Derker area of Oldham on the site of current Sacred Heart RC Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Derker, proposed by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford (RCDS).

1.3 Oldham LA and RCDS jointly undertook a formal consultation on these related proposals in the Spring of 2010. The outcome was reported in the EDRS 10060029, which approved the publication of notices.

1.4 Consequent to the publication of the report there followed a period of extended consultation during which Cllr Hulme and Michael Jameson, together with senior Oldham Council officers, governors from both schools and officers from the Salford Diocese, met with parents and the local MP on a number of occasions, to try to ensure as far as possible that all consultees felt that their views were being taken into consideration.

1.5 A statutory six-week Representation period followed the publication of the Notice. The Decision Maker (DM) must consider any representations received when determining the proposals.

1.6 The DM for all three proposals is Oldham LA, in accordance with powers conferred by the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Where no objections are received, such decisions may be delegated. As one objection has been received, this decision must be made by Cabinet.

1.7 The DM must take account of statutory guidance laid down by the Secretary of State when considering such proposals. The guidance
documents are available from the Department for Education School Organisation unit:
DfE Guide for LAs and Governing Bodies on Closing a Maintained Mainstream School
DfE Guide for LAs and Governing Bodies on Establishing a Maintained Mainstream School

1.8 The DM must consider:
• The completeness of the proposals
• Compliance of the notice with statutory requirements
• Whether statutory consultation has been carried out prior to publication of the Notice
• Whether the proposals are related to other published proposals.

Commentary on each of these is provided in Appendix B

1.9 All proposals should be considered on their individual merits. The statutory guidance contains a range of factors to be considered by DMs. The range of factors applicable to these proposals are:
• Effect on Standards and School Improvement
• Types of Schools
• School Characteristics
• Need for Places
• Specific Age Provision
• Funding and Land
• Impact on Community and Travel
• SEN Provision
• Views of Interested Parties

Some are relevant to discontinuance proposals, others to proposals to establish a new school. Commentary on each of these is provided in Appendix B

1.10 DMs must give reasons for their decision, irrespective of whether the proposals are rejected or approved, indicating the main factors for the decision. A copy of the decision and reasons must be forwarded to:
• The person of body who published the proposals (where this is not the LA)
• Any objectors to the proposals
• The Secretary of state
• The local C of E Diocese
• The local RC Diocese
• The Schools Adjudicator (where determined by the LA).

1.11 The three proposals are related therefore the decisions must be taken together to ensure they are compatible.
1.12 Where the LA is the DM it must reach its decision within two months of the end of the representation period. If this is not possible, the proposals must be passed onto the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for a decision. In this case, the last date by which the LA must have determined these proposals is 28 February 2011.

1.13 Cabinet, as DM, must set a date by which any conditions of approval should be met but is able to modify the date if the proposers, (LA and/or RCDS as appropriate) confirm, before the date expires, that the condition will be met later than originally thought. The proposer should inform both Cabinet, as DM, and the Department for Education, via the School Organisation unit, when a condition is met. If a condition if not met by the date specified, the proposals must be referred back to Cabinet for fresh consideration.

2 Current Position

2.1 A combined statutory Notice was published on Friday 19 November 2010 and the regulatory six-week Representation period closed on Friday 31 December 2010.

2.2 Copies of the Notice were displayed at the entrance to the school premises and in the local Post Office. Copies of the full proposal were circulated to prescribed bodies and were available upon request from the Access Service based at the Civic Centre.

2.3 There has been one representation received which is not in favour of the proposals. This is summarised in Appendix A, together with the response from Oldham LA.

2.4 As an objection has been received, it is necessary for the decision to be referred to Cabinet.

3. Options/Alternatives

3.1 There are three options available to Cabinet with regard to these proposals.

3.2 Option 1: Approve unconditionally the three proposals, which will facilitate on-time completion of the development project and secure capital funds committed for expenditure by 31 August 2011.

3.3 Option 2: Approve the proposals with a modification such as to the implementation date. No modifications are considered appropriate in this case.

3.4 Option 3: Reject the proposals, preventing RCDS from implementing plans to rationalise RC provision and the LA would still be presented with problems in relation to:
• Significant and growing surplus places and the declining viability of the schools in terms of student numbers
• The condition of both premises and the ongoing need for capital investment to address those condition issues
• The sustainability of aging schools, as the curriculum and teaching and learning styles change significantly
• The risk to capital funding income should the committed spend not be in place for 31 August 2011.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 **Option 1**: Approve unconditionally the three proposals, which will facilitate on-time completion of the development project and secure capital funds committed for expenditure by 31 August 2011.

4.2 This option will secure a sustainable future for Roman Catholic education in this area of Oldham and thereby enhance choice and diversity for children and families.

5 Consultation

5.1 All statutory requirements to consult prior to the publication of the Notice have been complied with during the progression of these proposals.

5.2 The previous Cabinet Report, reference 10060029 provides full details of the processes and outcomes.

5.3 The Representation Period is the final opportunity for interested parties to submit comments on the proposals.

5.4 One representation has been received. The points raised were concerning transport arrangements, safeguarding issues and the availability of Roman Catholic education in the area. Appendix A summarises the representation, together with the LA response. The DM is required to take account of representations received when determining the outcome of any proposals.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 **Capital Implications**

The scheme will be capital expenditure and a charge against the People, Communities and Society schools capital programme in 2010/11 and 2011/12. The proposals for the project have been provided by the Diocese of Salford in November 2010. The scheme is fully financed as follows (Liz Caygill)
## Total

| Required | £ |
|----------|---|---|
| 1,560,000 |

### Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme (2010/11)</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>600,000</td>
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### School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Devolved Formula Capital</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>160,000</td>
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### Diocese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LCVAP 2010 allocation</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tr>
<td>250,000</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>LCVAP 2011 allocation</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>350,000</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sale of Land</th>
<th>£</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE

| 1,560,000 |

### Revenue Implications

The table below shows the savings to the dedicated schools grant as a result of moving from 2 schools to 1. The ongoing revenue costs/savings from any increases/decreases in floor area will be met from the Dedicated Schools Grant however at this stage the cost is unavailable as the change in floor area as a result of this work is unknown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher Lump sum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Element of Deputy’s salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other lump sums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to the decrease in pupil numbers there will also be revenue implications as a result of the managing change process but the actual cost to the Premature Retirement Costs/Redundancy Costs budget in the Dedicated Schools Grant is unknown at this stage. (Liz Caygill)

### Legal Services Comments

7.1 The decision-maker in this case will be the LA. If the LA does not decide the proposals within two months, the proposals must be passed to the schools adjudicator for decision.
When a voluntary school is to be discontinued, the governing body is required, under part 2 of schedule 22 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to apply to the Secretary of State to exercise his or her powers in relation to any land held by them for the purposes of the school which was acquired or enhanced at public expense. The Secretary of State may make a direction as to what should happen to such land when the school is discontinued. (Janice Thompson).

8 Human Resources Comments

8.1 There are two catholic primary schools currently servicing the Derker/Moorside areas. Over the past couple of years there has been a steady decline in pupil numbers, this has placed both schools in a difficult position.

8.2 Both the schools have set the their budgets for this financial year, however this is not sustainable in the long term and if steps are not taken it is highly likely that we will be in a position whereby a managing change procedure will need to be invoked, this is a certainty with Sacred Heart school as the situation is more precarious. (Jay Bailey Senior HR Adviser)

9 Risk Assessments

9.1 An analysis has been undertaken of the current demand for places in the two schools in questions and of available places in the locality. It is clear that all children currently attending the two schools could be accommodated in the new school and therefore no pupils would be displaced.

10 IT Implications

10.1 The closure of Our Lady’s would require the decommissioning of the broadband connectivity to the site which would incur a one-off cost however the annual maintenance charges would cease resulting in a saving longer term. Any existing ICT support contracts, alarm maintenance, telephone system contracts etc would need to be cancelled resulting in savings. Although similar provision at Sacred Heart may need to be enhanced to accommodate the needs of a larger school, the costs associated with this are likely to be less than maintaining such contracts at two separate sites.

10.2 There are likely to be ICT implications associated with the remodelling of Sacred Heart to increase the capacity of its ICT network however it is not possible to attach a cost to these without more details of the proposal. Any ICT implications would need to be funded from the finances identified within this report for the scheme. (Alison Heneghan)
11 Property Implications

11.1 Of the 2 school sites, the Council have no ownership of the Our Lady’s RC Primary site, which is wholly within the ownership of the Roman Catholic Diocese. There is an informal, written agreement between the school and Our Lady’s RC church which enables the school to utilise the church hall in order for the children to do PE and also performances, as the existing hall is undersized.

11.2 The site of Sacred Heart is in split ownership. The Roman Catholic Diocese owns the school site and the Council own the detached playing field (freehold) which is close by. This site has no covenants recorded.

11.3 The last recorded capital value for Sacred Heart RC Primary (Asset 166) playing field was £5,975 in January 2009. (Tracey Elliott)

12 Procurement Implications

12.1 There are no procurement implications flowing directly from this report.

13 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications

13.1 There are none directly flowing from this report. The necessary planning application will include environmental implication and travel impact assessments.

14 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications

14.1 The rationale behind the Primary Capital Review programme was developed in June 2007 comprising twelve strategic priorities. One of these was to promote community cohesion.

14.2 The strategic vision for the PCP in Oldham, set out in the Strategy for Change document, encompasses the following concepts:

- In Oldham, every child, young person and family matters
- More learners, learning more
- Standards are rising in our schools but need to rise even more
- All Oldham citizens are entitled to safe, happy, healthy and successful lives
- Further development of community cohesion across schools and communities.

14.3 The PCP has committed Oldham LA to exploring new models of school organisation and governance and new ways of working in well designed, sustainable and inspiring buildings which will pave the way
for new and better ways for children to learn and teachers to teach. It will link the investment to the realisation of our important local priorities: closing the gap in attainment levels between the highest and lowest achieving schools in the Borough and aligning the supply of school places with demand. In so doing it will help us to improve the lives of children and families for many years to come.

15 Equality Impact Assessment Completed?

15.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed in respect of the Primary Capital Programme. As these proposals fall within the scope of the programme, it is not necessary to undertake a separate EIA on this project.

16 Key Decision

16.1 Yes

17 Forward Plan Reference

17.1 Agreement has been obtained from the Chair and Vice Chair of the Management Board under Rule 16 of the Council's constitution to allow the decision to be made as the inclusion of the matter on the Forward Plan was impracticable.

18 Background Papers

18.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

Name of File: School Organisation Guidance and Regulations
Records held in: Access Department, Level 6, Civic Centre
Officer Name: Gill Hoar
Contact No: 770 3150

Name of File: Statutory Proposals for RC Primary School, Derker
Records held in: Access Department, Level 6, Civic Centre
Officer Name: Gill Hoar
Contact No: 770 3150

19 Appendices

19.1 Appendix A: Representation and LA response
19.2 Appendix B: School Organisation Decision Maker's Checklist
19.3 Appendix C: Full proposal
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINATOR</th>
<th>SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATION</th>
<th>Oldham LA RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| RC1 Ol1 Resident | (a) Question about transport arrangements.  
(b) Safeguarding concerns in relation to the distance of the new school from the home address and the location of the new school.  
(c) Concern about availability of a catholic education. | (a) An explanation was given regarding the current Home to School Transport policy.  
(b) An explanation was given about security arrangements included in the plans for the remodelled building.  
(c) Confirmation was given that there will be sufficient places in the new school for all the pupils currently attending both closing schools. |
## APPENDIX B

### SCHOOL ORGANISATION DECISION-MAKERS’ CHECKLIST

**PROPOSED DISCONTINUANCE OF OUR LADY’S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SACRED HEART RC JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A SINGLE RC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN OLDHAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED BY DECISION MAKERS FROM STATUTORY GUIDANCE</th>
<th>COMMENTS OF LA SCHOOL ORGANISATION LEAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is the information provided complete?</strong></td>
<td>The full proposals contain all required information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the published Notice comply with Statutory Requirements?</strong></td>
<td>The Notice is compliant. This is a combined Notice incorporating all three related RC proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Has the statutory consultation been carried out prior to the publication of the Notice?</strong></td>
<td>All statutory requirements to consult prior to publication of the Notice have been carried out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are the proposals related to other published proposals?</strong></td>
<td>These two discontinuance proposals are related to each other and also to the proposal brought forward by the Roman catholic Diocese of Salford to establish a single RC High School in Oldham and all were published on the same combined Notice. They must be determined together and decisions must be compatible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Effects on Standards and school improvement:

- **(a) A system shaped by parents**
- **(b) Standards**
- **(c) Fresh start and Collaborative Restarts**
- **(d) Academies**
- **(e) Diversity**
- **(f) Balance of Denominational Provision**
- **(g) Every Child Matters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects on Standards and school improvement:</th>
<th>Comments of LA School Organisation Lead:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(a) A system shaped by parents</strong></td>
<td>(a) Parents have been fully consulted about these proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(b) Standards</strong></td>
<td>(b) A range of issues has been identified that will contribute to improving standards. These are fully articulated in the proposal at Section 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(c) Fresh start and Collaborative Restarts</strong></td>
<td>(c) N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(d) Academies</strong></td>
<td>(d) N/A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(e) Diversity</strong></td>
<td>(e) The related proposal for a single RC VA Primary School contributes to the diversity of Oldham’s primary provision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(f) Balance of Denominational Provision</strong></td>
<td>(f) The related proposal for a single RC VA Primary School maintains the current balance of denominational provision and the Secretary of State has approved publication of that proposal without the need for a competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(g) Every Child Matters</strong></td>
<td>(g) This proposal will enable better integration of Children’s Services and extended school provision to ensure that all schools in the area can deliver the Every Child Matters agenda.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Need for places:

- **(a) Provision for Displaced Pupils**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need for places:</th>
<th>Comments of LA School Organisation Lead:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(a) Provision for Displaced Pupils</strong></td>
<td>(a) There will be no displaced pupils. All pupils on roll at the two RC schools at the time of their proposed discontinuance will be offered places in the single RC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED BY DECISION MAKERS FROM STATUTORY GUIDANCE</td>
<td>COMMENTS OF LA SCHOOL ORGANISATION LEAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Surplus Places</td>
<td>Primary School proposed as replacement provision. (b) One of the aims of the Primary Capital Programme is surplus place removal. The establishment of a single RC Primary School in the Derker area will rationalise RC place provision. Numbers of RC pupils, and therefore demand for places, is falling and it is financially unviable to maintain two separate RC primary schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact on the Community and Travel:</strong></td>
<td>(a) The new school will bring together existing community cohesion projects and build upon and expand them, enhancing the diversity of educational opportunities. (b) Schools within the extended provision cluster work together to ensure equality of opportunity for a diverse range of groups and individuals. (c) Pupils will be eligible for support to travel to the new school in accordance with the LA’s Home to School Transport Policy in force at the time. (a) None of the proposals relate to single sex schools. (b) N/A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Impact on the Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Community Cohesion and Race Equality</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(c) Travel and Accessibility for All</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Equal Opportunity Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Rural Schools and Sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Types of Schools</strong></td>
<td>N/A. Relates specifically to Boarding Schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Age Provision (where relevant):</strong></td>
<td>(a) Comprehensive details relating to Early years provision is included in the proposal at Section 16. (b) N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Early Years Provision and Nursery School closures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) 14-19 Curriculum and Collaboration and 16-19 Provision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEN Provision (where relevant):</strong></td>
<td>Existing RC Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neither of the existing RC Schools proposed for discontinuance has provision reserved for pupils with SEN. Existing support for pupils with SEN on roll at the schools as the time they are discontinued will continue to be provided by the proposed new RC Primary School with improved provision planned for the new site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Issues: Views of interested Parties</strong></td>
<td>The previous Cabinet Reports, EDRS 10060029, provides full details of all previous consultation processes and outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

JOINT LINKED PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE OUR LADY’S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SACRED HEART RC JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND ESTABLISH A SINGLE RC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN OLDHAM

Extract of Part 1 of Schedule 3 to The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):

Contact Details
1. The name of the proposer or proposers and a contact address.

Diocese of Salford, Cathedral Centre, 3 Ford Street, Salford M3 6DP.
Oldham Council, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1XJ

2. Whether the proposals are being submitted independently or jointly with another proposer or proposers.

The proposal to establish a new school is being submitted independently by the Diocese of Salford. The linked proposals to discontinue Sacred Heart RC Junior Infant & Nursery School, Whetstone Hill Road, Derker, Oldham OL1 4NA and Our Lady’s RC Primary School, Turf Pit Lane, Moorside, Oldham OL4 2NE are being submitted by Oldham Council.

Category
3. The type of school that it is proposed be established (a foundation school and, if so, whether it is to have a foundation, a voluntary school or a community school) and, if required by section 10, a statement that the Secretary of State’s consent has been obtained to publication of the proposals.

The proposed new school will be a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic Primary School. The Secretary of State’s consent has been obtained in order to publish this proposal.

Consultation
4. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals have been complied with.

Statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals have been complied with fully, as described in the guidance documents “Closing a maintained mainstream School” and “Establishing a New Maintained Mainstream School”. These documents were issued by the Department for Schools and Families in September 2009 and continue to reflect the current legal position.
5. 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.

The Diocese of Salford and Oldham Council consulted with the following persons and/or parties before the proposals were published:—

- The pupils from both schools
- Parents of pupils attending the schools and prospective parents
- Members of teaching and non-teaching staff from both schools
- Governing bodies of both schools
- Neighbouring authorities of Manchester, Tameside ad Rochdale
- Trade Unions who represent staff at both schools
- Phil Woolas, former MP, Oldham East & Saddleworth
- Elected Members

Documentary evidence is attached as follows:—

Appendix 1: Consultation documentation. A printed copy of this document was provided to all members of staff, trades union representatives, governors and to all parents with children attending either school. Additional printed copies were available from either school. Copies were included in the documentation sent to all other consultees.

Appendix 2: Minutes of meetings held with staff, union representatives and governors and the consultation events held for parents and members of the local community and a summary of the views expressed during the statutory consultation period.
Appendix 3: Notes of additional meetings held after the statutory consultation period, as part of on-going consultation to address any continuing concerns

Objectives
6. The objectives of the proposal.

The key objectives of the proposal are as follows:
- To create a school that will secure sustainable Roman Catholic education for the children in the locality
- To improve the educational offer for the children of the locality by providing enhanced accommodation through extensive remodelling of the current Sacred Heart School.
- To maximise opportunities through the creation of a single leadership and management structure and greater flexibility created by a single budget.

Extended Services
7. Information on the extended services which it is envisaged will be provided on the site of the school.

The school sits within the Watersheddings cluster of six schools. The majority of extended services activities are planned and take place on a cluster basis; the schools within the group provide a range of clubs run both on and off school sites and all children from the cluster are able to attend everything. The cluster has an Activity Development Worker who coordinates and delivers the activities, and carries out consultation with the children and cluster at local level to make sure activities meet needs.

Below are some examples of ongoing provision:
- Children’s cluster council tolerance sessions
- Children’s cluster council planning and development
- Parent Support Advisor runs a number of workshops including e-safety and parenting courses, healthy eating/lunchboxes
- Activity Development Workers trim trail on Saturdays, developing community sessions, young leaders, martial arts club
- Dance club
- Joint summer and other holiday planning and resource sharing
- Girls football club
- Arts and sports club
- Outdoor arts during holiday
- Arts week in schools
- 1:1 coaching for targeted young people

The schools have a named Parent Support Advisor working with parents of children aged 5 to eleven – PSAs are based centrally but work in schools and parents homes according to need and available space in school. PSAs deliver a number of workshops, as above, and also provide casework 1 to 1 support for parents

All this work will continue until the end of the school year; however with potential reductions in budgets under the new government services may be reduced. In particular funding for the cluster Parent Support Advisor and the Activity Development Worker may cease.

If the school site provides further opportunity for expanding the delivery of extended services there are plenty of opportunities within the cluster and voluntary partner agencies to develop capacity for further provision under the emerging locality model.

Pupil numbers and admissions
8. Information on —
   a) the number of pupil places the school should provide;
   b) the upper and lower age limits of the school;
   c) where it is intended that it should provide sixth form education, the number of pupils for whom it is intended that such education should be provided;
   d) where it is intended that it should provide nursery education, the number of pupils for whom it is intended that such education should be provided;
   e) where it is intended that the school should provide for boarding pupils, the number of pupils for whom it is intended such facilities should be provided;
   f) the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will be implemented or, where it is intended that the proposals should be implemented in stages, the number of pupils to be admitted to the proposed school in each stage that the proposals will be implemented;
   g) whether it is proposed that the school should admit pupils of both sexes or boys or girls only and, in the case of a single sex school where it is
intended to provide sixth form education, whether both sexes or boys or girls only are to be admitted to the sixth form.

The new school will provide education for children between the ages of 3 and 11. There will be places for a total of 210 boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 11. A further 26 full time equivalent places will be provided for nursery age pupils. The admission number for the school on the opening date will be 30.

Ethos/Religious Character

9. A short statement suitable for publication setting out the proposed ethos of the school, including details of any educational philosophy, which it is proposed that the school will adhere to.

The school is founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with canon law and teachings of the Catholic Church, and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Salford and in particular:

1. religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;
2. religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church;

and at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is intended that the new school will provide an effective, memorable and enjoyable learning experience where children are encouraged to become the best they can be, are taught the joy of learning and achievement and being a valued member of a caring community. All children attending the school will be helped to develop the core values of respect for others, respect for the environment and respect for themselves.

10. If the school is to have a religious character, confirmation of the religion or religious denomination in accordance with whose tenets religious education will, or may be required to be provided at the school; and a statement that the proposers intend to ask the Secretary of State to designate the school as a school with such a religious character.

The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with canon law and teachings of the Catholic Church, and in
accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Salford and it is confirmed that the proposer intends to ask the Secretary of State to designate the school as a school with such a religious character.

Area or community that school serves
11. The area or particular community or communities which the new school is expected to serve.

The new school will serve the areas of Derker and Moorside.

Admission Arrangements
12. An indication of the proposed admission arrangements and over-subscription criteria for the new school including, where the school is proposed to be a foundation or voluntary school or Academy which is to have a religious character —
   a) the extent to which priority for places is proposed to be given to children of the school’s religion or religious denomination; and
   b) the extent, if any, to which priority is to be given to children of other religions or religious denominations or to children having no religion or religious denomination.

Admission to the school will be made by the Governing Body in accordance with the stated parental preferences it receives subject to the following criteria which will be used to form a priority order if there are more applications for admission that the school has places available. It is a requirement that a child’s Baptism be verified prior to admission.

1. Baptised Roman Catholic children who are in public care
2. Baptised Roman Catholic children who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission and resident in the contributory parishes
3. Baptised Roman Catholic children living in a contributory parish
4. Other Baptised Roman Catholic children who will have a sibling attending at the time of admission and are resident in another parish
5. Other Baptised Roman Catholic children who are resident in another parish
6. Other children who are in public care
7. Exceptional need
8. Other children with a sibling attending the school at the time of
9. Other children

Grammar schools
13. Where the school is to be established in substitution for one or more discontinued grammar schools, a statement to this effect and a statement that the school may be designated as a grammar school for the purpose of Chapter 2 of Part 3 of SSFA 1998.

N/A

Schools with a religious character or particular educational philosophy — parental demand
14. Where the school is —
   a) proposed to have a religious character, evidence of the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religion; or
   b) proposed to adhere to a particular philosophy, evidence of the demand for education in accordance with the philosophy in question that is not already met in other maintained schools or Academies in the area.

Combined data from the two schools in February 2010 confirms that of the 176 pupils on roll 76% are baptised Roman Catholic children.

Sixth Form Education
15. Where it is proposed that the school will provide sixth form education, how the proposals will —
   a) improve the educational or training achievements;
   b) increase participation in education or training; and
   c) expand the range of educational or training opportunities, for 16-19 year olds in the area.

N/A

Early Years Provision
16. Where the proposals are to include provision for pupils aged between 2 and 5, the following information must be provided —
   a) details of how the early years provision will be organised, including the number of full-time and part-time pupils, the number of places, the number and length of sessions in each week, and the services for disabled children that will be offered;
b) how the school will integrate the early years provision with childcare services, and how the proposals for the establishment of the school are consistent with the integration of early years provision with childcare;

c) evidence of parental demand for additional provision of early years provision;

d) assessment of capacity, quality and sustainability of provision in schools, and in settings outside of the maintained school sector who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage within 3 miles of the school; and

e) the reasons why schools and settings outside the maintained school sector who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage within 3 miles of the school and who have spare capacity, cannot make provision for any forecast increase in the numbers of such children.

The new school will offer early years provision for up to 52 children (26 full time equivalent places) on a part time basis. Each child would access a maximum of 5 sessions per week, each session lasting 3 hours.

This provision is a continuation of existing provision at Our Lady’s and Sacred Heart.

There are 6 maintained providers of nursery class provision within the, 2 PVI’s and 2 Extended Day Playgroup with a total of 584.(p/t)nursery places and around 160 (p/t) vacancies. There we no identified gaps in childcare reported in the last Childcare Sufficiency Assessment published May 2009.

The following table shows provision and vacancies within the area on 9.11.2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider Type</th>
<th>Provider Name</th>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Max No. Children</th>
<th>Max No. Vacancies</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Nursery</td>
<td>Ambrose Nook Nursery</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day Nursery</td>
<td>The Hill Side Nursery</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extended Day Playgroup</td>
<td>Moorside Playgroup</td>
<td>St James</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extended Day Playgroup</td>
<td>Peter Pan playgroup</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>Hodge Clough</td>
<td>St</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Infant and nursery school</td>
<td>James</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Out of school care</td>
<td>Mayfields schools out</td>
<td>St James</td>
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<tr>
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<td>St James</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Scaliwagz OOS club (Hodgeclough)</td>
<td>St James</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school care</td>
<td>Sparkles OOS club</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school care</td>
<td>Smiles OOS club</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school Playgroup</td>
<td>Sparkles Pre school</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>Mayfield CP School</td>
<td>St James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>St Thomas' CE (Moorside) Primary School</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>Stoneleigh Primary School</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>Watersheddings Primary School</td>
<td>St James</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>St James</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>Sacred Heart</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Childminder</td>
<td>Mrs Anne Holtom</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childminder</td>
<td>Mrs Lynda Joyce Austin</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childminder</td>
<td>Mrs Monique Simpson</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childminder</td>
<td>Mrs Ruth Marsland</td>
<td>St James</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specialisms
17. Whether the school will have any specialisms on implementation and whether the promoter intends to apply to the Secretary of State for the school to be a specialist school from implementation.

N/A

Effects on Standards and Contributions to School Improvement
18. Information and supporting evidence on:
   a) how the school will contribute to enhancing the diversity and quality of education in the area; and

   b) how the school will help to raise the standard of education in the area and contribute to school improvement.

- The sharing of whole school policies and influences from each school will positively impact on the children.
- Rich diversity of specialist practice in each school can be shared to enhance the quality of education for all the children.
- The school can bring together existing communities and build upon and expand the diversity of educational opportunities.
- An increase in the consistency of practice drawing on both levels of expertise and knowledge from greater number of staff.
- Pupils learning will be consistent enabling every child to maximise their potential through a range of curriculum and learning opportunities and assessment strategies.
- Budget decisions for the new school can be based on strategic long term planning and flexibility which can be aligned to community priorities.
- Shared expertise across the key stages. Lead Teachers, peer mentoring, key teachers with expertise in a range of subjects which will be increased due to the expansion of the staff.
- Bringing together of two sets of children who will be able to continue to develop peer mentoring, each with a different set of experiences and learning opportunities to date.
- Broader expertise in whole school tracking procedures with a wide range of support for supporting children with SEND and other vulnerable groups.
- Shared ideas on developing current initiatives eg, CC/ Learning platforms

19. Information and supporting evidence on how the proposals will contribute to enabling children and young people to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to the community and society, and achieve economic well-being.

- There will be a settled and more confident set of children in the
new build with a positive learning environment.

- Because of increase range of staff all pupils including those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities and Gifted &Talented will have accessed to continued support and intervention strategies.
- The school will cater well for the Every Child Matters agenda due to shared expertise.
- The one budget will enable improved planning and opportunity to develop a learning environment that offers accelerated progress and attainment.

Community Cohesion
20. The following information relating to the proposals —
   a) how the school will promote and contribute to community cohesion;
   
   b) how the school will increase inclusion and equality of access for all social groups; and
   
   c) how the school will collaborate with other schools, and in relation to secondary school proposals how the new school will collaborate with colleges and training providers.

The new school will bring together existing community cohesion projects and build upon and expand them, enhancing the diversity of educational opportunities.
School within the extended provision cluster work together to ensure equality of opportunity for a diverse range of groups and individuals.

Single sex or co-educational school
21. Where the school is to admit pupils of a single sex —
   a) evidence of local demand for single sex education and how this will be met if the proposals are approved; and
   
   b) A statement giving details of the likely effect the alteration will have on the balance of provision of single sex education in the area.

N/A

Location
22. A statement about —
   a) the location of the site (including, where appropriate, the postal address or addresses if the school is to occupy a split site);
   
   b) whether the school will occupy a single or split site;
   
   c) the accessibility of the site (or if the school is to occupy a split site the accessibility of the accommodation);
d) the current ownership and tenure (freehold or leasehold) of the site and the proposed use of any buildings already on the site;

e) details of the tenure (freehold or leasehold) on which the site of the school will be held, and if the site is to be held on a lease, details of the proposed lease including details of any provisions which could obstruct the governing body or the head teacher in the exercise of any of their functions under any of the Education Acts or place indirect pressures upon funding bodies;

f) whether the site is currently used for the purposes of another school which will no longer be required for the purposes of that school. If so, provide details as to why the site will no longer be required for the purposes of that school; and

g) the estimated costs of providing the site and a statement about how the costs will be met.

- The new school will be situated on the site of the existing Sacred Heart RC Primary School Whetstone Hill Road, Derker, Oldham OL1 4NA.

- The school will occupy a single site.

- Generally the site and buildings are accessible; works will be carried out to ensure DDA compliance and barrier free access to all levels of the site and buildings.

- The site and buildings are in the freehold tenure of Salford RC Diocesan Trustees Registered.

- The site will continue to be held in the Freehold interest of the Salford RC Diocesan Trustees Registered.

- The site is currently used for the existing Sacred Heart RC primary school which will be discontinued and merged into the new school.

- No cost is required to provide the site.

Implementation
23. 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.

- It is proposed that the new school will open on 1 September 2011
24. Where the proposals are to establish a voluntary controlled or foundation school, a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the LA or by the proposers, and if the proposals are to be implemented by both,
   a) a statement as to the extent that they are to be implemented by each body, and
   b) a statement as to the extent to which the capital costs of implementation are to be met by each body.

N/A

Project Costs
25. A statement of the estimated capital cost of the proposals and the extent to which the costs are to be met by the proposers and/or the LA.

The current Gross cost available for the proposal is £1,560,000:00, of which Oldham Council will contribute £600,000 from the Primary Capital Programme.

26. A copy of a confirmation from the Secretary of State or LA or the Learning and Skills Council for England (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

N/A

27. Details of how it is proposed to fund the proposer’s share of the capital costs of implementing the proposals (if any).

The Diocese of Salford will contribute the balance of the total gross cost as follows:

- £250,000 LCVAP (2010 allocation)
- £350,000 LCVAP (2011 allocation)
- £160,000 Devolved formula capital
- £200,000 capital receipt.

Travel
28. The proposed arrangements for travel of pupils to the school.

The Oldham Council transport policy will continue to apply at the new school. Travel Plans are in place for the two closing schools. A new Travel Plan will be developed once the new school is established.

Federation
29. Details of any proposals for the school to be federated with one or more schools (by virtue of section 24 of EA 2002 and section 12).

N/A

Curriculum
30. Confirmation that the school will meet the general requirements in relation to curriculum contained in section 78 of EA 2002 and an outline of any provision that will be in addition to the basic curriculum required by section 80 of EA 2002, in particular any 14-19 vocational education.

The new school will meet all statutory requirements under sections 78 and 80 of the Education Act 2002.

Voluntary aided schools
31. In addition, where the school is to be a voluntary aided school —
   a) details of the Trust on which the site is to be held; and
   b) confirmation that governing body will be able and willing to carry out their obligations under Schedule 3 to SSFA 1998.

The Trust is exclusively for the purposes of:
- The provision, maintenance and upkeep of schools and colleges for the general education both religious and secular or religious or secular of children and young persons of the said Church.
- Generally for any such charitable purpose or purposes as in the opinion of the Bishop may be conducive to the advancement or maintenance of the Roman Catholic Religion in the Diocese.

As such, the governing body will be able to carry out their obligations

Staff
32. Not applicable – removed by amending Regulations.

Foundation Schools
33. Where the school is to be a foundation school, confirmation as to whether the new school —
   a) will have a foundation established otherwise than under SSFA 1998 and, if so, the identity of that foundation;
   b) will belong to a group of schools for which a foundation body acts under section 21 of SSFA 1998; or
   c) will not fall within sub-paragraph (a) or (b).

N/A

34. Where the school is to be a foundation school which has a foundation:
   a) the name of the foundation where known;
b) the rationale for the foundation and the particular ethos that it will bring to the school;

c) the details of membership of the foundation, including the names of the members;

d) the entitlement to appoint charity trustees and the number of trustees to be appointed;

e) the proposed constitution of the governing body;

f) details of the foundation’s charitable objects;

g) where the majority of governors are to be foundation governors, a statement that a parent council will be established in accordance with section 23A of EA 2002;

h) a statement that the requirements set out in the School Organisation (Requirements as to Foundations) (England ) Regulations will be met;

i) a statement of how the foundation will contribute to the advancement of education at the school and how it is envisaged it will help to raise standards; and

j) a statement of how the foundation will contribute to the advancement of community cohesion and the impact the foundation will have on the diversity of school provision in the area.

N/A

Special educational needs

35. Information as to whether the school will have provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for children with special educational needs and, if so, the nature of such provision and the proposed number of pupils for whom such provision is to be made.

There will be no designated specialist provision for children with Special Educational Needs at the new school.

36. Details of the proposed policy of the school relating to the education of pupils with special educational needs.

The two closing schools apply the same policy relating to Special Educational Needs. The policy, which is in line with all statutory requirements, will be adopted at the new school.
37. Where the school will replace existing educational provision that would be recognised by the LA as reserved for children with special educational needs:
   
a) a statement on how the proposer believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for these children;

b) details of the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of —
   
i) improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment with reference to the LA’s Accessibility Strategy;

ii) improved access to specialist staff, both education and other professionals, including any external support and/or outreach services;

iii) improved access to suitable accommodation; and

iv) improved supply of suitable places.

N/A

Relevant experience of proposers
38. Evidence of any relevant experience in education held by the proposer, or proposers (other than a local authority) including details of any involvement in the improvement of standards in education.

The Diocesan Office for Education has extensive experience with 171 primary schools in 13 Local Authorities

Planning permission
39. Where the establishment of the new school involves development for the purpose of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a statement as to whether planning permission has been obtained and, if it has not been obtained, details of when it is anticipated that it will be obtained.

An application for planning permission is to be submitted before the end of the year, therefore it is anticipated that it will be obtained by the end of February 2011.

Independent schools entering the maintained sector
40. A statement that the requirements of section 11 (3) are met.

N/A

41. A statement as to whether the premises will meet the requirements of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 and, if not:
   
a) details of how the premises are deficient; and
b) details of how it is intended to remedy the deficiency.

The premises will meet the requirements of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999.
Dear Parents and carers,

We realise that this is a very difficult time for you, as well as the staff and governors of the two schools. It is sad that things have started as they did do but we cannot change that and we need to move forward.

You will find some information along with this letter about the thinking behind the possible bringing together of the two schools. We now want to hear your views as well as the staff and other groups like the neighbouring schools. Those people who have already written in do not need to repeat their comments as these will be shared with governors, diocese and local authority. If anyone else wants to put their views in writing please send your letter to either Mrs. G. Hoar at Oldham Authority or to Martin Lochery at Salford Diocese.

We would like to meet with individual parents so that they can tell us their views as part of the consultation. We are looking to host a meeting at Our Lady’s school on the 8th March and at Sacred Heart School on the 10th March. All comments would need to be given by the 2nd April. This will allow us time to present the cases for or against the proposal and for the governors and the local authority to consider all views. If the decision is to continue with this proposal than public notices will be published and further opportunities are available for people to express their views.

This would then take us to the end of June or beginning of July for the final decision to be made. If that decision is to proceed then the building work could begin. Realistically we would then be looking to open the new school for September 2011.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Lochery,  
Diocese of Salford,  
3 Ford Street,  
Salford,  
M3 6DP

Ms. G. Hoar  
Oldham Authority,  
PO Box 40  
Level 6 Civic Centre,  
West Street,  
Oldham  
OL1 1XJ
The Proposal to merge together the two primary schools of Sacred Heart and Our Lady’s.
This proposal has come about for a number of reasons and they are set out below. The principal reason is our wish to ensure that there is a sustainable Catholic Primary school in the area. Both schools are judged as good by Ofsted.

Sacred Heart.
There are proposals to regenerate the Derker area but that may be some years away. In the meantime the number of families requiring any school has dropped considerably and the authority will be doing a review of the community provision because there are so many surplus places. Sacred Heart is capable of taking 210 pupils but currently it only has half that number.

Our Lady’s.
This school was built for 105 pupils and it has 100 pupils in it. The building is cramped and lacks a hall which has an impact on the curriculum.

Recent history.
In January 2008 the Governors of the two schools agreed to create a soft federation. This meant that there would be one head for the two schools. The reasoning for this was: the lack of candidates coming forward for the jobs at the school which had gone to advert; the opportunity to attract an existing and successful head teacher; there could be a saving for both budgets.

Primary Capital Programme.
Central government have identified a set of funds that should be used to develop school provision and rationalise, where possible, into units of one form of entry (210 pupils per school) or multiples of this number. The Diocesan authorities and the Oldham authority agreed to look at ways to develop the provision in this area. A total of one and quarter million pounds has now been identified to support this process.

Some other options that have been considered but not possible.

1. Build a new school between the two existing ones.
   The schools are 0.9 mile apart and there is no available land to build a school. A new one form entry primary school is currently in excess of £5 million building costs.

2. Build an extension at Our Lady’s site. To create a one form entry school on this site would cost around £3.4 million pounds. There would also be issues around planning permission.
Possible advantages to the proposal.

a) In the event of any of the staff moving on it is easier to attract good replacements to a larger school, this is particularly true of senior posts. Should the head or deputies move away it is unlikely that we would be able to attract a suitable field as two separate establishments.
b) With other posts the budget allows for ensuring experienced staff as well as new to the profession can be considered.
c) The school would be able to have straight year groups.
d) The facilities would be appropriate for all curriculum areas.
e) The financial position would be more secure.
Dear Parent/Carer

Re: RC primary schools in the Derker/Moorside areas

The Council is constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of the services it provides for the people of Oldham. As part of the ongoing programme of primary school development in Oldham, the Salford Diocese and Oldham Local Authority (LA) are currently consulting on a proposal to amalgamate Sacred Heart and Our Lady’s RC Primary Schools. This would mean that Sacred Heart and Our Lady’s would close and a new RC Primary School would replace them.

A consultation event has been arranged for Wednesday 10 March 2010, at Sacred Heart school, at 3.30pm, so that you can come and talk us and we can listen to what you think. A representative from the Diocese and Council officers and will be on hand to explain the proposal in more detail, answer your questions and take into account your views. This event is open to all parents/carers who have children currently attending Sacred Heart RC Primary School and all members of the local community.

A response pro-forma is attached should you wish to submit your views in writing.

Yours sincerely

Gill Hoar
Head of Access
Direct line: 0161 770 3150
E-mail: gill.hoar@oldham.gov.uk
Dear Parent/Carer

Re: RC primary schools in the Derker/Moorside areas

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A response pro-forma is attached should you wish to submit your views in writing.

Yours sincerely

Gill Hoar
Head of Access
Direct line: 0161 770 3150
E-mail: gill.hoar@oldham.gov.uk
The Salford Diocese and Oldham Local Authority are proposing to close Sacred Heart and Our Lady’s RC Primary Schools and open a single RC Primary School in their place. We are interested in your views on this proposal.

If you would like your views to be considered, please complete this pro-forma and return it, no later than Friday 2 April 2010 to either Sacred Heart or Our Lady’s schools, or send it to:

Access Service
PO Box 40
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1JX
Email: ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk

<table>
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<tr>
<th>I agree with the proposal to establish a single Roman Catholic Primary School in place of Our Lady’s and Sacred Heart Schools.</th>
<th>Yes / No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you would like to comment on the proposal to establish a single Roman Catholic Primary School in place of Our Lady’s and Sacred Heart Schools, please use the box below. Please continue on a separate sheet if you wish.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate which group you belong to by circling the appropriate title:

Parent       Staff member   Governor       Other –
please specify
Dear Colleague

Re: RC primary schools in the Derker/Moorside areas

As part of the on-going programme of primary school development in Oldham, the Salford Diocese and Oldham Local Authority (LA) are currently consulting on a proposal to amalgamate Sacred Heart and Our Lady’s RC Primary Schools. This would mean that Sacred Heart and Our Lady’s would close and a new RC Primary School would replace them.

A consultation meeting has been arranged at Our Lady’s school at 3.30pm on Tuesday 2 March 2010, for all the governors, staff and union representatives of Our Lady’s school. The meeting will be attended by officers from the Diocese and the LA, who will explain the proposal in more detail and answer any questions you may have.

A response pro-forma is attached should you wish to submit your views in writing.

I look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely

Gill Hoar
Head of Access
Direct line: 0161 770 3150
E-mail: gill.hoar@oldham.gov.uk
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A consultation meeting has been arranged at Sacred Heart school at 3.30pm on Thursday 4 March 2010, for all the governors, staff and union representatives of Sacred Heart school. The meeting will be attended by officers from the Diocese and the LA, who will explain the proposal in more detail and answer any questions you may have.

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APPENDIX 2: Minutes of meetings and views expressed during the statutory consultation.

Document 2A: Consultation event at Our Lady’s

Consultation with staff, governors and union representatives of Our Lady’s RC Primary, Moorside.

Venue: Our Lady’s Moorside
Date: 2nd March 2010

Attendees: Number of Attendees: 15 in total comprising 11 staff, 3 governors and 1 union representative

B Key Messages

Martin Lochery introduced the officers and gave a brief overview
- Context of resignation of previous head, difficulties with recruitment, appointment of Maureen Taylor, and decision to appoint executive head. Hard federation was not considered at the time, but might have been anticipated.
- There has been a fall in pupil number in Derker area. DCSF guidance is to create schools with PAN in multiple of 30. Facilities at Our Lady’s are limited.
- Options - Expand Our Lady’s, amalgamate Our Lady’s with Sacred Heart which has falling roles
- Decision - To bring together both schools on one site.
- Funding had to be identified for the development. £1.5m funds provided from Oldham Council/LCVAP. It is not possible to develop Our Lady’s (£3.5m) so amalgamation of schools is the only option. Alternative site could be considered, but would require approx. £6.2m. There is no site anyway so decision has been made to use Sacred Heart site and to remodel with £1.5m.
- Political situation has brought the issue into the public arena. The aim is to provide a secure Roman Catholic primary school with a PAN of 30 and to secure 21st century education and security for staff.

Karen Holmes – Oldham Council Governor Support service
- Description of establishment of temporary governing body further down the line following the consultation and publication and subsequent decision on the proposal.

Elaine Shaw – Oldham Council Human Resources
- Role of HR and process
• Support for school through the change process at invitation of HT and governors.
• Currently there are two sets of employers.
• New school would be new employer.
• TUPE will apply, dependant on staffing structure.
• Consultation and any changes will be subject to discussion.
• LA managing change procedure will be followed.
• Long lead in will support consultation process.
• Changes are linked to budget issues i.e. long term, more security and staff development opportunities.

Gill Hoar – Oldham Council Access Service
• Process for admission would not change for the new school
• It is anticipated that all pupils from the 2 existing schools would be accommodated in the new school
• This consultation is part of the statutory process Once it is complete, and all views have been considered, a decision will be taken on whether or not to publish a notice which has a 6 week representation period. If the proposal goes ahead, then the new school would open in September 2011, in the remodeled building on the existing site of Sacred Heart.

Gail Webb – Oldham Council School Improvement Service
• There are no issues in these two schools regarding standards of attainment and achievement. There are some differences but no significant actions needed.
• Parents questions will be answered at their consultation event
• Greater role is to support Head teacher and staff through the process.
• Long lead in will have an impact, which LA does not underestimate.

B Question and Answer session

Q: Because of the long lead-in parents are removing children. 24 in one class has reduced to 9. What will happen?
A: There is a commitment from the Diocese and the LA which will not be affected by changes in pupil numbers. The school may have to respond to a falling role once the budget situation is known.

Q: There is a fear that Our Lady’s will cease to exist. Pupils continue to leave over time. Staff may leave and need direction?
A: There are no easy answers. The problem with overstaffing does not sit only with OL. The staff at both closing schools will have equal calls on jobs at the new school.

Q: Numbers dropping will have an impact on budget?
A: Staff from both schools will be treated equitably. Both schools will close so all staff will be treated the same at the time of closure.

Q: At which point does the school become unsustainable?
A: Answer is not available today.
Decisions on the viability of a school are made on an individual basis. As the future of Our Lady’s is now linked to this proposal, no decision would be made about its viability as a single establishment.

Opinion: Staff believed that it was known that the numbers would drop. The main issue
is the walking distance from Moorside to Derker.

Q: Would Redeployment be done at an earlier point?
A: It would kick in through the change process.

Q: Would jobs be made available in catholic schools?
A: Diocese would request other schools to give priority to redeployed staff.

Q: Will there be enough children to fill the new school? If there are not enough pupils, will the proposal go ahead?
A: Both schools will have budget problems in the future. It has always been acknowledged that numbers might fall. This will not affect the proposal in principle.

Q: Will you ask the parents if they are going to go to the new school?
A: The consultation process is to ensure that the proposal can securely go ahead. Parents will asked for their views at consultation events to be held next week.

Q: How is Our Lady’s in a deficit if it was full last September? Children leave this school as confident individuals, good things happen, Why cannot Our Lady's carry on?
A: £1.5m is the opportunity. The school is good because of the staff but in the future it would be hard to attract the quality of Head teachers and staff.

Opinion: Visitors say the school is a pleasant place to be.

Q: Why did the building of the hall not go ahead?
A: Funding was not available. Also, the Government introduced the change to PANs of 30.

Opinions: No children have ever left, except to emigrate. All year groups are full. Never lost pupils to Hodge Clough school. Why is that not being taken into consideration?
A: Cannot go back now. Numbers in Year5 / Year6 are keeping the overall number up.

Q: What is the ‘bottom line’ number before which the school would have to close?
A: Decision would be made at the end of the academic year. It is not possible to move all children into Sacred Heart building due to building work that will be starting later this year. Redundancy would not be effective before January 2011. Consultation would have to take place before any redundancy decision was taken.

Q: If there was a redundancy process in the new school, how would a decision be made about who goes?
A: Redundancy selection procedure is based on skills, experience and performance. Copies of redundancy selection process are available to all the staff.

Q: Can Minutes be provided?
A: Yes.

Q: Is there a ‘green’ policy about car usage?
A: the statutory distance of 2 miles for primary pupils applies. Parents make their own decision about how to make the journey.

Q: When Our Lady’s was a single form entry, a bus was provided. Could a bus be
provided?
A: It would be looked into and an answer provided.
A Travel Plan is a requirement for planning applications for school buildings. Also, all schools should have travel plans in place. It is highly unlikely that a journey of 1 mile would be considered a priority for provision of a school bus. According to the Travel Plan for Our Lady’s, about 50% of pupils currently travel to and from school by car. The aim would be to work to reduce that figure over time, not to simply allow a potential increase to happen with no action planning in place.

Opinions: It would be wrong to preempt parents’ response before the facts are known. The Diocese should have produced a follow up article on the Oldham Advertiser. Staff thinks it’s a naive decision to try to amalgamate two such different schools.

Q: Will the parents have plans represented, as they cannot visualize the new building?
A: The building officer will attend parents’ meeting.

Opinion: If the parents have an idea of what the new building will look like, they are more likely to stay.

For preference, this proposal would have been looked at in conjunction with community schools, but funding would have been lost if it is not spent within the time scale.

Q: What would happen to midday supervisors if the school closed and staff had to travel to Sacred Heart?
A: Individual discussions would be held to address concerns. There is an entitlement to transfer. Redundancy would only apply if there were identified economic, technical and organization reasons for not transferring and these were a subject of the consultation. Any staff member who chooses not to transfer would in effect be resigning.

Q: Do all staff have a right to transfer?
A: If all staff go from here to the new school, then all existing staff would be employed. First call is given to existing staff.

Q: Teachers and TA’s would be surplus?
A: Depends on staffing structure.

Q: If more children leave Our Lady’s, there may be redundancies before September 2011. Our Lady’s Staff feels they are loosing out?
A: Both schools have financial pressures; something will have to happen for both schools anyway. Shadow governing body would appoint from the existing staff. There would not be any redundancies before the close of this academic year due to the timescales for consultation and giving due notice.
Opinion: The only reason children are leaving is because of amalgamation

Q: Our Lady’s staff seems to be the ones who will suffer because there are so many children leaving already.
A: Any decision about staff or possible redundancy would be made with the amalgamation in mind. Flexible approach would be adopted.

Q: Would redundancy procedure be done as a joint effort?
A: Decision would be made based on future staffing structure. During the transition the two schools could agree to co-operate.

Q: Is it possible that staff from Our Lady’s might be given a position at Sacred
Heart?
A: If a member of staff left from SH, and there was a member of staff at risk at OL, then the proposal would be taken in consideration before reaching a decision.

Opinion: Individuals have been in the situation before and it has been seen staff being given jobs in the new school, before it opens.

Q: would there be interviews?
A: Only if there are new posts

Q: Why has it taken so long for this meeting to happen?
A: Funding needed to be secure.

Q: The article said funding was in place?
A: £600k Primary Capital Programme funding was in place. Additional needed to be secured for the remainder from LCVAP.

Q: What will happen to the site?
A: The Diocese own the land on which the building sits and Local Authority owns the remainder. Any funds will have to go back into Education. In law, the Government has the right to take it back. Local decision is to invest the money into the Oldham schools.

Q: Concerns that the Our Lady’s site would become derelict?
A: Local District Valuer has to put a value on the land. It will be sold not just left.

C Summary
- Thanks for presence and participation.
- Concerns are heard and understood.
- Answers would be given to outstanding issues and minutes will be circulated.
- Additional feedback can be given before 2nd April 2010.
Consultation with staff, governors and union representatives of Sacred Heart RC primary, Derker.

Venue: Sacred Heart RC School  
Date: 4th March 2010  
Attendees: Number of Attendees: 24 in total comprising 17 staff, 4 governors and 3 union representative

B Key Messages

Martin Lochery introduced the officers and gave a brief overview
- Context of resignation of previous head, difficulties with recruitment, appointment of Maureen Taylor, and decision to appoint executive head. Hard federation was not considered at the time, but might have been anticipated.
- There has been a fall in pupil number in Derker area. DCSF guidance is to create schools with PAN in multiple of 30. Facilities at Our Lady’s are limited.
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• Consultation and any changes will be subject to discussion.
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• Process for admission would not change for the new school
• It is anticipated that all pupils from the 2 existing schools would be accommodated in the new school
• This consultation is part of the statutory process Once it is complete, and all views have been considered, a decision will be taken on whether or not to publish a notice which has a 6 week representation period. Following that, the proposal has to go the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for determination. If the proposal goes ahead, and if it is determined by the OSA, then the new school would open in September 2011, in the remodeled building on the existing site of Sacred Heart.

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• There are no issues in these two schools regarding standards of attainment and achievement. There are some differences but no significant actions needed.
• Parents questions will be answered at their consultation event
• Greater role is to support Head teacher and staff through the process.
• Long lead in will have an impact, which LA does not underestimate.

B Question and Answer session
Q: Why does this process have to go so long?
A: Until funding can be guaranteed, consultation cannot begin. The process was started as soon as the funds were identified.

Q: once it became public knowledge, why has it taken so long to get to this stage?
A: The Diocese needed to establish council financial support, then secure the rest of the funding through the Locally Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP) and agree that the proceeds of any sale would contribute to the pot.

Q: How much money is there in total?
A: £1.5 million in total from sale of land, Primary Capital Programme funds and LCVAP.

Q: When do we start?
A: By summer 2010 we should have confirmation of the proposal. The new school would open in September 2011.

Q: If the numbers continue to fall, can jobs be guaranteed in the meantime?
A: It’s impossible to answer that question. The procedure will be followed. Staffing reductions would be minimized.

Q: Is there no ‘buffer zone’ for schools going through transition?
A: JB agreed to investigate and come back with the answer within 7 days.
Q: When will the design be finished?
A: The basic design is completed. Architects will be in a position to produce draft plans prior to tendering for the project. It will complete for 2011.

Q: What if the numbers keep dropping?
A: It would be the same as for any school with a falling roll. We want to try to reinforce the positive aspects of this proposal.

Q: Could the school run on ‘license deficit’?
A: We cannot guarantee that at the moment, but it would be a council decision.

Q: Is it right that the proposal will go ahead, regardless of falling numbers?
A: This is a committed package that will go ahead once the proposal is determined.

Q: The development of the estate is slower than expected. Trees have been planted on cleared areas?
A: It has not been progressed as expected. The community sector will also have to be reviewed.

Q: What would the staffing structure be for the new school?
A: The new school would have a new structure, determined by the governors and newly appointed head. It’s impossible to predict what the new structure would be. The temporary governing body would create the structure for the 1FE school.

Q: Would we all be made redundant?
A: No TUPE will apply. Posts belong to people who work in the school. All employment rights transfer.

Q: Would everyone need to apply?
A: It would depend on the new structure and if there are more people than posts.

Q: Will the budget increase for the new school?
A: The budget is created from pupil numbers.

Q: Staff from Our lady’s will also be applying. What happens to the person who doesn’t get the job?
A: We would look to reduce redundancy. Redeployment would be considered. Catholic primary schools would be asked to prioritise.

Opinion: Previous redundancy has been poorly handled.

Q: How is the new governing body made up?
A: Equal representation from each school. Head of appointed then the instrument of Governance is created and the staffing structure implemented. The temporary GB remains for the first term.

Q: Will someone impartial be appointed to the GB, to ensure no bias in the recruitment process?
A: Foundation governors will be appointed. It is usual to include ‘new’ governors. Additional support from the Diocese/LA can be made available.

Q: When will the change management process begin?
A: Once the proposal has been determined.
Q: If staff don’t want a redeployment position, what would happen?
A: Staff would be given individual support sessions

Q: Would redeployment be ‘like for like’ jobs?
A: We would always try to find the closest match.

Q: When would building work begin?
A: In the summer, or as soon thereafter as it can. There is a commitment from the governors to make this happen.

Q: A governors meeting in the past has mentioned £3million?
A: The Diocese is not aware of such a figure. There has been an exercise to try to find a neutral site, but £6million to build a new school is not available. Nor is £3million to develop OL Moorside. The PCP draws money towards areas of social deprivation.

C Summary
- Thanks for presence and participation.
- Concerns are heard and understood.
- Additional feedback can be given before 2nd April 2010.
Held at Our Lady’s School
On Monday 8 March 2010
Officers present: Diocese – Martin Lochery, Cannon McBride, Mrs Gerry Bradbury
Local Authority – Gail Webb, Karen Holmes, Wendy Lees, Jay Bailey

Issues raised
- Our Lady’s school serves a local community extremely well and this is appreciated by them, not just the parents and children but the wider community as well. It also means that local families can arrange child care before and after school.
- A significant number of children have already been taken away from the school but none of them have gone to Sacred Heart, Derker which demonstrates that this school does not meet their needs.
- This change would mean additional travel for many families. The Government is keen to stress parental choice, neighbourhood schools, active children and a greener approach to transport and this proposal flies in the face of all these points.
- The education at Our Lady’s Primary school is outstanding in all aspects. In part this is because of the small classes.
- The main road to go from one school to the other is badly lit and has a number of potholes.
- The consultation process has not been well handled and it is having a negative impact on the school now.
- The cost of transport to go from Our Lady’s to Sacred Heart is frightening and more than some people can afford.
- The staff at the school feels insecure, not just the teachers but everyone else, e.g. cook, cleaners etc and this has affected morale.
- Derker is a deprived area where there are problems with vandalism. There is no vandalism at Our Lady’s school.
- Parents with disabilities will not be able to get to Sacred Heart school from any area around Our Lady’s.
- The small school allows staff and pupils to know each other very well. The small size and these relationships have helped to identify SEN issues when other schools have missed them.
- Strongly disagree. The blame for the closure was because school was classed as urban school and funding was therefore reduced and this was main reason for amalgamation with Sacred Heart. Raised issue with Mr. Woolas MP who is going to check.
- This is a successful and happy school but the situation has been badly handled with lack of information. Little information coming from school and it tends to come from other parents.
- Although SATs are not the only measure, all the children were happy and helped each other. This feeling is now being lost because of this process. Do not feel that this is a merger but just a closure which may suit Diocese’s
need.
- The numbers have dropped significantly and it would appear only one child has gone to another catholic school. There is the only catholic school on this side of the town, this covers a significant area of the town. Why merge a successful school which was full with an unsuccessful school which was half empty. We feel that we are being bullied into moving to Sacred Heart, I am not being dictated to as to where my child will go to school.
- It will be more difficult to get as I will need to drive. At the moment I can walk my child to school. The MP is saying when the regeneration of Derker happens there is no way of knowing. How will we know how many children will move into the area. It appears that there is a short term problem for Sacred Heart which is being solved by closing our Lady's. We are well aware of problems e.g. lack of space but we knew that when we put children into school and accepted it because of good reputation of Our Lady's. Why is it not possible to spend money here and build up.
- People live on Sholver and they will not be able to afford the transport costs. The bottom line is that the kids are happy here but so many have left. My son asked if he could go and look at another school which is terrible and this is due to lack of communication from school. My son is very unhappy about this and he was unhappy when children have left and not come back to school after half term.
- It is also unclear as to how many children who attend Sacred Heart are Catholic. Need clarification as to whether it is a rural or urban school. I think that the Diocese will get what they want and this school will close but I still do not think parents will go to Sacred Heart. The two parishes have the same priest and this school closure will lead to the closure of the church. All this is being done to the detriment of the children. Some people need to be held accountable for this with Mrs. Taylor being the main one.
- Achievement of the schools which shows that there are 3 schools in the whole of England which have made into the report – St. Joseph’s, Friezeland and Our Lady’s based on CVA. I can’t understand how they justify closing the school with high standards, even though allegedly it has limited facilities, according to the Diocese and the LA.
- Received a letter from the Bishop if this schools closes there would be no catholic school in Moorside. If school does close then this will have negative impact on the church. Reply from the Bishop, parents thought he sat on the fence and talked about families raising children in the Catholic faith without the support of the school.
- As regards the area, the parents want to find out what the electoral role for Moorside was in relation to the three schools and the regeneration plan with the proposal to close one school there will only be two schools which will not take into account the new housing that has been built and will be built in the future for the Moorside area.
- Looking at the Derker area it has five schools already and many of the existing houses are being pulled down.
- Children are leaving the school which was 105 and is now 75 with more children leaving at Easter and they will not go to Sacred Heart. Why is the money going to Sacred Heart when parents are saying they will not go and the area already has five schools? The location of the school is dreadful, it is 1.2 miles from this school to Sacred Heart and if people travel from
Sholver or already travelling to the school then the distance will increase. I cannot see the justification of asking parents to move from this school and travel further. These are junior school aged children so they cannot travel on their own and that will increase usage. And when we are trying to teach children to be environmentally friendly it is difficult to explain.

- We are concerned about the teachers and of they are going to loose their jobs. We feel as though we have been cheated, when we first applied, with my first child so I had not done this before, we were not given enough information about any future plans. I understand that this is only consultation but there is hearsay and it has been known about this for awhile but are were not told. When asked about the situation we were sent a letter from June last year so we feel that the wool has been pulled over our eyes. We know that parents are taking children out and they are going further a field.

- Has there been any consultation with parish towards the church for space? Has Diocese and LA considered extending this site by building up? With further expansion of housing do they not think we need a school here? We have heard that St Joseph’s have put a block on people from Royton and Shaw going to the school so that is limiting our choice. The absence rate at Sacred Heart is very high and there have not been any problems here. We are worried about my child being led astray. Out of three catholic schools are seen as top schools and they want to close the school with the best results. Numbers are decreasing here and I do not think that the numbers will go to Sacred Heart and therefore it will be a waste of money.

- What happens in 5 years if regeneration is successful what will happen to the catholic children in Moorside? What is the government’s or LA time span for the regeneration of Derker which seems to have come to the halt at the moment? What happens if only small number children go to Sacred Heart will the amalgamation go ahead? I have heard that if the school goes below 40 it will close and the children will be sent elsewhere leaving very poor options for the area and the children in this school with the options being a protestant school or a lot more travelling?

- What is the LA or government gong to do to build up confidence and gain votes when they have closed the school and there is a lack of confidence? What are the plans for this site? Have they approached the neighbours about these proposals?

Parents of child in Reception

- Why revamp a school that has been under subscribed for at least 2 years by approximately 500k in favour of an achieving school with emotionally well adjusted children that want to attend everyday and that are excelling academically too? Is it purely down to the LA and Diocese saving money that our is school is closing!

- With our school numbers falling have you not thought why? The children and parents obviously do not want to go to another school and are prepared to send them anywhere other than Sacred Heart meaning non-catholic schools?

What of any alternatives have you got in place if your proposal does not go ahead?

- Ethically, morally do you think it is right to spend 600k of Diocese money
and 600k of tax payer’s money on a school that no one is prepared to go to?

- Why at the meeting did you use scare tactics by implying it was a done deal hence making parent’s panic and take children out? We were told that if you do not take your children down then the teachers here will lose their jobs. Or is that what you wanted? This was a good ploy to make the school go into your projected deficit. The school was not in deficit at the start. When regeneration work in Derker is complete there will be hundreds of new families moving into the area which schools will those children go to if the proposed school is full this means children will be travelling out of the areas?

- Government policies are that primary school children were to go to schools within easy reach/ walking distance. Do you feel it is right to make a 4 year old child walk at least 1 mile to school and 1 mile home everyday? Not all parents have the luxury of a car and would have to rely on public transport which is an additional cost of which was not budgeted for when placing the child in school initially. By using a car also has emission implications, the government is big on global warming and carbon footprint; this extra travel will not help environmental issues.

- Has the LA and Diocese seriously looked into extending our buildings to provide a bigger hall, and extra facilities which you say we are lacking. You stated we have no hall; we clearly have as we held their meeting, for and parents, council and diocese representatives on the 4th November 2009.

- The church is in the same grounds all be it behind a safe perimeter wall, there is space - can this not be utilised, creating the church and school bonding closer links. Christainity in the UK is on a decline, don’t you feed more involvement from the church would help to increase the number of children and parents being involved with the church. Children are the future, its their education and welfare at stake here and should be taken into account and not totally be down to saving money.

- Do you know how much of the local council’s budget was spent on security and repairs at Sacred Heart last year compared with Our Lady’s?

- What over the last 2 years at Sacred Heart has been done to try and look into the schools and the fact that the school is failing e.g. half full, poor attendance, pupil behaviour and educational results? Where you nor prepared for people to fight to save Our Lady’s? Did you not realise how good Our Lady’s is, with commitment from staff, educational needs? Have you thought how the children’s education and emotions will be affected by your merger? If insufficient children go to Sacred Heart what happens to the excellent staff from Our Lady’s?

- We did take grand daughter out but for 2 months could not settle. I feel that they are not really thinking about these children. We had 2 months of struggle and now we have had to fetch her back. My worry if school closes, and move her to another school, is it going to happen again. It is about up-rooting children and they are not thinking about education just about money. It is a fantastic place to be taught. Teachers know children and family. Everyone is happy to be at the school. They do not miss out on facilities like computers although they say that is going to be high tech at sacred Heart. The small classes are good here.
Questions asked and answers given.

1. **Is this a done deal and are the parents wasting their time even expressing their views?**

   There is a legal process that has to be followed and the consultation is genuine. Some parents are concerned because they have not got enough detail about the new building, what could happen to the Our Lady’s site but these would not be considered until we know that the amalgamation is definitely going ahead. That decision will be taken by the end of the school year when everyone has expressed their view.

2. **If the amalgamation went ahead could there be a school bus between the two sites? Would it be free?**

   There are no plans to introduce a school bus for the Derker/Moorside area. Local Authorities are required to provide transport support where a school place cannot be made available within 2 miles of the home address.

3. **Would the proposed school have a new name?**

   The usual system would be for the Bishop to receive 3 suggestions from the school communities and he would select one of them so the new school would have a new name.

4. **What are the plans for Our Lady’s school site if it goes ahead?**

   Currently there are no plans for the site since we do not know that it will be available.

5. **Why have the local community schools got additional funding from the council during the regeneration period and Sacred Heart school has not got this money?**

   Oldham Council has committed £600,000 from the Primary Capital Programme fund towards the cost of the remodelling of the existing Sacred Heart site in order to accommodate the new school. The balance will be provided by the Diocese.

6. **Can Our Lady’ school be designated a village school and therefore stay as a small school?**

   The designation for the school is listed on Edubase as “Urban .10K – less sparse”. This indicator is based on the Office of National Statistics rural indicator and is not under local control. Therefore, it would not be possible to designate it a village school.
Document 2D – Consultation event for parents at Sacred Heart

This event, held on 10 March 2010 was attended by one parent, who wished to view the plans for new school. A copy was available and was discussed with the parent.
### Document 2E: Summary of written responses

Summary of written responses to statutory consultation on the proposed establishment of a new RC Primary School

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<th></th>
<th>Pro-forma – in favour</th>
<th>Other form of written response – in favour</th>
<th>Pro-forma – against</th>
<th>Other form of written response - against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Comments about the benefits of a larger school</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Letter attached. 30 points detailed and a petition signed by children, parents and others from the area.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Letter detailing 3 main points of objection with supporting information on attainment and location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. No comments</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Comments – reasons given.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Letter from a parent who is also a member of the Diocese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. No comments</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Comments on proposal and process</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. 12 points detailed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. No comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Comments and questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Comments made</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Comments made</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Comments made</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff members</strong></td>
<td>1. No comments</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. With comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. With comments and reasons</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. With comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Governors</strong></td>
<td>1. No comments (parent governor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2. No comments (parent governor)</td>
<td>1. Resident of Royton commenting that the local community has not been consulted.</td>
<td>2. Letter from person not identified as a parent, resident in Moorside, detailed letter enclosing attainment data.</td>
<td>3. Letter from local MP, raising concerns of his constituents together with some of his own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>6 in favour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 against</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Issues raised in written responses during statutory consultation, with frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Written comment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive comments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger school will reduce the need for mixed age classes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative comments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling distance and route from Moorside to Derker</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High standards at OL</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community feel at OL</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less children will receive a RC education</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New school will be in a deprived area</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why close a successful school rather than the one in decline</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of consultation with the local community</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation at OL is not a problem</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of redundancy for the teachers</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of clear information has placed OL at risk and caused turmoil</td>
<td>1 1 1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There won’t be enough school places in Moorside</td>
<td>1 1 1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect on the local nursery</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed age classes are not a problem</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed new homes will require all the current places</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough information about the proposed remodelling of the SH site</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions not answered at the parents’ consultation event</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of links with OL church</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of teaching staff will upset the children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment of staff at OL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation is just a paper exercise</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of choice for Moorside parents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor management of the parents consultation event</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposal is more about addressing the surplus capacity at SH</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Minutes

Meeting with parents from Our Lady’s RC Primary School, Moorside

Thursday 24 June 2010
Level 10, Civic Centre, Oldham
4.30-6.00pm

Present:

Michael Jameson Director of Children’s Service
Chris Hill Assistant Director, learning &
Attainment
Gill Hoar Head of Access
Mr & Mrs Pemberton Parents of a pupil at OL
Mr & Mrs Austin Parents of a pupil at OL
Mr Newton Friend of Mr Pemberton

A SECTION OF MINUTES

1 Summary of discussion
MJ chaired the meeting and began with introductions. After a brief statement on the reason for the meeting, GH was invited to give a summary of events leading up to the current position. This included:-

• The difficulties in recruiting to the headship of firstly Our Lady’s, then Sacred Heart, leading to the current arrangements with one head teacher leading both schools.
• The impact of the Housing Market Renewal scheme and the subsequent downturn in the economic climate on regeneration plans across the Derker and Moorside areas.
• The opportunities within the Primary Capital Programme in terms of the removal of surplus places and the rationalisation of admission numbers.
• The limitations posed by the size and features of the site of OL and the opportunities presented by the SH site.

A number of matters were then raised and discussed including:-
1. The consultation process
2. The process used to inform the school’s Travel Plan
3. The state of Clyde Street
4. The timing of the Public Notice, which may be posted during the summer holidays
5. The minutes of the parents consultation event held on 8 March 2010

A number of actions were agreed in relation to the above points

**ACTION:**

1. GH to provide copies of the letters sent to parents informing them of the consultation
   Copies attached
2. GH to provide an explanation of the process of Travel Planning and a copy of the letter sent to parents informing them that a survey was to be undertaken
   The Travel Plan was developed in November 2008, following a survey conducted with parents, by school. Copies of the newsletters explaining the process and the developments made as a result of funding secured consequent to the delivery of the travel plan are attached. No survey has been undertaken since that time, as the Travel Plan is now in place for the school.
3. GH to find out about the process that would be needed to secure any necessary up-grading of the unadopted section of Clyde Street.
   Any planned up-grade would be subject to a risk assessment of the proposed walking route and would require the permission of the land owner. One other option would be for council to adopt the section in question. This issue will be further investigated and information provided once it is available.
4. GH to ensure that if the notice is published during the summer holidays that it is sent by post to all parents of children at the school and that it is made widely available within the local community.
5. GH to provide a copy of the notes taken at the parents meeting held on 8 March 2010
   Copy attached
Cllr Hulme outlined the purpose of the meeting as an opportunity to focus on how matters will progress following Cabinet approval to issue notices, to parental engagement with the process, and their right to make representations.

Handouts circulated to parents by G. Hoar setting out details of the process being followed jointly by OMBC and Salford Diocese. Key points of emphasis:

- Notices of closure cannot be issued until a decision from S of S for Education is received, waiving the requirement to hold a competition to establish a new school.
- The detailed proposals will be posted on OMBC website following the issue of notices. This is beyond statutory requirements and will allow interested parties to access the documentation conveniently.
- The six week timeframe to receive representations is set by statute and cannot be altered.
- Once notices are published, anyone can request a copy of the detailed proposals and can comment. They are legally entitled to a written response to comments made.
- OMBC will be the decision maker. It has a period of 2 months following the close of the six week representation period to make a decision, with statute determining a wide range of factors it must consider when making the decision.
- Once a decision is made, parents have a right to seek a judicial review of the decision if they believe the correct procedure has not been followed.
- Assuming a decision to proceed is made, significant work will be done with parents, children and other stakeholders to engage them in the implementation of the plans.
- Parents of all children at Our Lady’s and Sacred Heart will be written to by OMBC if notices are issued during school holidays to ensure they are aware this aspect of the process has begun.
Parent's Questions

Parents were invited to ask questions of OMBC or the Diosece. Key points arising included:

- Proposals will not go before the Schools Adjudicator as statute defines OMBC as the recognised decision maker in this context.

- The notice to be issued will be in multiple parts as only OMBC has the power to close a school, and only the Diocese can open a Catholic school. As the proposals are linked, they form part of the same single notice.

- It is impossible to confirm the date notice will be issued at this stage as the decision of S of S for Education has not yet been received.

- OMBC confirmed that to meet legal requirements, copies of the notice need to be displayed outside of the school(s) affected, in local community venues, and published in the local press.

- The joint funding arrangements for the new school were explained.

- The regulations around the required size of schools to be deemed financially viable was explained.

- Confirmed the catchment area for the new school would remain the same as for the present two schools and follow the parish lines.

- Some general discussion took place reminding parents why it was not deemed viable to improve the Our Lady's site or open a new school on alternative land nearer to the Moorside area.

- Agreed that note circulated in the meeting by G. Hoar would be made available to all parents with children at the school, along with a covering explanatory letter.