

## **CABINET MEMBER DECISION**

### **Decision:**

Petitions

#### **(i) Details of decision**

That the response, attached as Appendix 1, be approved.

#### **(ii) Reasons for decision**

To respond to the petition.

#### **(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

#### **(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report**

None

### **Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted**

**(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)**

None

### **Decision taken by:**

**(i) Name:** David Hodge

**(ii) Portfolio:** Leader of the Council

**Date of Decision:** 31 May 2017

**Date of Publication of Record of Decision:** 31 May 2017

**Date decision effective (This decision cannot be called in):** 31 May 2017

## **CABINET MEMBER DECISION**

### **Decision:**

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE OCKLEY SITE OF SCOTT BROADWOOD C OF E INFANT SCHOOL

#### **(i) Details of decision**

The Leader of the Council agreed that:

1. the Statutory Notice to close the Ockley site of Scott Broadwood C of E Infant School be determined so as to bring about the consolidation of this school on its Capel site, effective from 1 September 2017 and;
2. a letter be written to the Secretary of State requesting that they actively pursue the prospect of repurposing the vacant playing field into affordable housing.

#### **(ii) Reasons for decision**

At its core, the proposal to close the Ockley site and consolidate all of Scott Broadwood C of E Infant School's educational provision on the Capel site is rooted in the need to establish a financially sustainable operating model due to reducing pupil numbers. In addition, it is anticipated that the proposal would have tertiary benefits with respect to the coordination of staffing resource, outcomes for pupils and the quality of teaching and learning.

In line with this, the School's Governing Body has undertaken the requisite statutory consultation to inform the decision making process, with two-thirds of respondents expressing support for the proposal to close the Ockley site and consolidate the school's provision in Capel. For these reasons, it is recommended that the Leader of the Council determines the Statutory Notice (appended to this report as Annex 1), so as to bring the closure of the Ockley site formally into effect from September 2017.

#### **(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

#### **(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report**

None

### **Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted**

**(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)**

None

### **Decision taken by:**

- (i) Name:** David Hodge

(ii) **Portfolio:** Leader of the Council

**Date of Decision:** 31 May 2017

**Date of Publication of Record of Decision:** 31 May 2017

**Date decision effective (i.e. 5 working days after date of publication of record of decision unless subject to call-in by the Children and Education Select Committee):** 7 June 2017

## **CABINET MEMBER DECISION**

### **PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF STARHURST AND CHART WOOD SCHOOLS**

This item was deferred.

**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

Wednesday 31 May 2017

**RESPONSE TO THE PETITION REGARDING THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF SCOTT BROADWOOD C OF E INFANT SCHOOL'S OCKLEY BASE**

**The Petition**

Scott-Broadwood C of E Infant School situated on The Green in Ockley, sadly faces closure if support isn't found quickly. The village school has served the local communities of Ockley, Capel, Forest Green, Walliswood, Okewood Hill and Coldharbour since 1841. Scott-Broadwood has consistently provided a high standard of education, boasting small class sizes that guarantee each child is supported in their learning journey in this beautiful rural setting. Every parent, grandparent and neighbour with a child in this area now and for future generations has the right to continue an education full of inspiration and strong Christian values and this school is one of the best with caring, supportive teachers.

By Mrs Kelly Bundy

Signatures: 123

**Response**

Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on the Council to secure that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population in its area. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in its area. There is a legal duty on the Council therefore to secure the availability of efficient education in its area and sufficient schools to enable this.

The Governing Body of Scott Broadwood C of E Infant School has proposed the closure of the school's Ockley site and consolidation on the Capel site. They have proposed this in the light of increasing financial pressure resulting from being under capacity, as well as anticipated funding pressures that will emerge from the introduction of the National Funding Formula for schools. The school has undertaken detailed financial modelling of the future scenario reflecting maintenance of the status quo, which has been scrutinised by officers within Surrey County Council's Finance Team. From this, it is clear that the school can no longer continue to operate over two sites within its current and projected future financial parameters. To do so would incur a substantial ongoing financial deficit (circa £24,000), which the Diocese is unable to underwrite. The school has also presented a viable financial model (projected annual surplus of £10,000) for a one-site scenario, which also serves to provide augmented educational support for pupils. To provide an equivalent level of support across two sites would incur an annual deficit of circa £99,000. The move to a single site would therefore both secure the financial viability of the school, whilst also augmenting the educational offer to pupils attending the school. This view has been endorsed by both educational and financial officers at the Council and this represents the core reason

underpinning the recommendation to determine the statutory notice in favour of the school's proposal to close the Ockley base. Ultimately, continuing as is would create a real possibility of the school becoming entirely financially unviable, ultimately ending in the closure of the institution as a whole, which would be of greater detriment to the communities of South Mole Valley.

Whilst the petition seeks to oppose the closure of the Ockley base, no alternative sustainable financial solution to the school's budgetary pressures has been proposed. In addition, feedback from the formal consultation on the proposal (undertaken between 13 March 2017 and 24 April 2017) indicates that the mood of the wider school community has shifted since the formulation of the petition, with two-thirds of respondents being in support of the proposed closure. As such, the petition has been noted within (and appended to) the report to the Leader with respect to the proposed site closure, the recommendation is that the Leader approves the school's proposal.

**Mr David Hodge**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**31 May 2017**