

Appendix M

Holt Farm and Olive Hill Primary Schools

Decision Sheet

Decision Sheet

Ref: DCS/14/2006

Decision Sheet Title:

Publication of statutory notices for Holt Farm Primary School and Olive Hill Primary School

Decision Maker:

Councillor David Vickers, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Ward(s) Affected: Halesowen North
Contains Exempt Information? Enter Yes or No:

1.	<p><u>Decision</u></p> <p>To publish statutory notices to close Holt Farm Primary School with effect from 31 August and to increase capacity at Olive Hill Primary.</p>
2.	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Consultation on proposals to close Holt Farm Primary School was conducted from 12 September to 21 October 2005. In response to concerns raised by parents and others about the impact of closure on children, parents and staff, Hurst Green were invited to support the closure by using the Holt Farm buildings as an annexe for a period of time until consolidation on the Hurst Green Site. It was not possible to complete these arrangements.</p> <p>Statutory notices were published on this basis. In January 2006, Olive Hill Primary agreed to support the closure of Holt Farm. This required the statutory notice to be withdrawn and further consultation. The documents and process were planned in consultation with both schools.</p>

	<p>The consultation ended on 17 March. Of the 1000 documents distributed only 46 returns were received. The majority of this very small return were in favour of the proposals although there was a range of comments expressing regret that Holt Farm would close, emphasis on the need to implement the proposals quickly and provision of adequate support. There was also criticism of the process.</p> <p>Holt Farm has lost a significant number of pupils to other schools. In January 2005, there were 187 children on roll (Reception - Y6). By January 2006, this had fallen to 162 and by 28 March to 146.</p> <p>Statutory notices are required to publish the Council's intention. If no objections are received during this 6 week period implementation will follow. Any objections would be considered by Dudley School Organisation Committee.</p>
3.	<p><u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>Education Finance is working closely with Holt Farm and Olive Hill Primary Schools with regard to the implications for revenue and capital budgets.</p> <p>Schools Forum have approved the allocation of funding for a one-off grant of £40,000 to Holt Farm and Olive Hill (subject to a financial decision on closure), a uniform grant for Holt Farm children transferring to other primary schools in September 2006 and a contingency fund for staff salary protection (if needed).</p> <p>The central costs of managing the process are contained within existing Children's Services budgets.</p> <p>The Dudley approved fair funding formula will re-distribute the delegated funds in respect of closing schools to all other schools through the formula methodology.</p>
4.	<p><u>Legal Implications</u></p> <p>The procedures relating to this establishment, alteration or discontinuation of schools are principally contained in Chapter 11 (sections 28-35) and schedule 6 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.</p>

5.	<u>Authorisation</u> Cabinet Member for: Education and Lifelong Learning In consultation with: Director of Children's Services (Signatures attached on original)
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Date: 12 April 2006

Decision Sheet prepared by:

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(Name, position and extension)

Background Papers: