

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER**

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

The form must be completed and passed to the Head of Members' Services no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Head of Members' Services has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

**1. Description of decision**

To approve the publishing of statutory notices for the closure of Beauchamp Middle School and expansion of Scott Lower School on 14th October until 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

**2. Date of decision**

7<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**3. Reasons for decision**

To to create one Primary School across the two school sites.

**4. Alternatives considered and rejected**

Not to issue this notice - this would mean there would not be a 2 Tier offer in the Scott/Beauchamp area.


**5. How decision is to be funded**

N/A

**6. Conflicts of interest**

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).


The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Signed  Date 7/10/2016 Name of Decision Taker CLLR VANN

**This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Head of Members' Services as soon as it is completed.**

Date decision published: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Date decision can be implemented if not called in: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....YES or NO.....)

**Bedford Borough Council – Portfolio Holder**

**Date of Decision: 7 October 2016**

**Report by the Assistant Director for Education and Early Help (Chief Education Officer)**

**Subject: Statutory Notices for Scott Lower School and Beauchamp Middle School**

**1. Executive Summary**

This report is requesting a Portfolio holder decision on whether to publish the following statutory notices;

- One relating to the closure of Beauchamp Middle School following public consultation.
- One relating to the extension of age range at Scott Lower School.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Portfolio Holder is requested to consider the consultation and, if satisfied to continue, approve the publishing of a statutory closure notice for Beauchamp Middle School and expansion notice for Scott Lower School. The notice should be published for 4 weeks, published on 14 October 2016 and closing on 11 November 2016.**

**3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To create one school across the existing Scott and Beauchamp schools.**

#### 4. Key Implications

##### 4.1 Legal Issues

The process for school alternations is found in the Department for Education **Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers (April 2016)**.

##### Policy Issues

4.2 The Executive agreed a policy for two tier education in Bedford Borough on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

##### Resource Implications

4.3 Full Council approved the capital budget for two tier conversion works on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016.

4.4 The continuing Primary School will move into the Beauchamp Middle School site so the site and facilities are still on offer for the school and the community.

##### Risk Implications

4.4 The risk of this not being approved is that Beauchamp Middle School would continue within a two tier school system.

##### Environmental Implications

4.7 There are no environmental impacts.

##### Equalities Impact

4.8 In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

4.9 The equality analysis is being conducted throughout the statutory process and will be finalised and acted upon towards the end of the process.

## 5. Details

- 5.1 In the emerging two tier system the proposal is that one school exists across the current Scott Lower School and Beauchamp Middle School with one school registration number.
- 5.2 To achieve one school with one school registration number across the two sites one school must close with the other extending their age range. For the avoidance of doubt there is no intention to close either of the school sites. This is about merging both sites into one school.
- 5.3 The proposed statutory notice period is outlined below;

7 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	Portfolio holder to review consultation and decide whether to publish statutory proposal to close school and extend age range of school remaining open.
14 <sup>th</sup> October	Publish statutory proposal with a 4 week representation period
11 <sup>th</sup> November	4 week representation period ends
By 18 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2017	Executive decision (post consultation and statutory notice period) to consider whether to submit paperwork to School Adjudicator on school closure and to agree to the age range expansion of Scott Lower School.

- 5.4 This enables the portfolio holder to review the consultation (responses outlined in Appendix A) and make a decision on whether to continue the process by issuing the statutory notices. The submission of the proposal to the school adjudicator would be subject to an additional decision.

## 6. Summary of Consultations and Outcome

- 6.1 The following Council units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:

Children's and Adults' Services Senior Leadership team  
Scott Lower School  
Beauchamp Middle School

6.2 A summary of the consultation responses received is appended in Appendix A

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*File Reference:* Fosterc/REPORTS/Portfolioholder/BMSSLS

*Background Papers:* None

*Appendices:* Appendix A

## **Appendix A**

### **Beauchamp Middle School Closure – Overview of consultation issues**

As individual responses identify persons this document is a summary of the issues raised and answers given,

Representatives from Bedford Borough Council have discussed how best to provide two tier education with Governors from both Scott Lower and Beauchamp Middle Schools. The council has also invited consultation responses and held a series of meetings with parents plus one meeting with Beauchamp Middle School staff.

There were 23 written responses received. 2 responses were in favour of the change, 14 responses were against the change and 7 responses were neither for nor against.

Below is a summary of the points raised and the responses given;

### **Why is this change happening?**

It has been proposed by the Borough Council that a single Primary School is formed across the two sites of the existing Scott Lower and Beauchamp Middle Schools. This means that all the facilities at both schools merge for the benefit of the pupils and the wider community. This will also mean the primary school can accommodate a larger number of pupils, maximising existing facilities. This is preferable to one school building closing and potentially being sold.

In July 2015 the Council wrote to all schools regarding the school system in Bedford moving to a primary and secondary system with a single transfer at age 11. This would bring schools in Bedford in line with the vast majority of schools elsewhere in the country. Primary schools and a secondary school already exist in some parts of the Borough and several Upper Schools in Bedford already admit some pupils at age 11. After schools had submitted their thoughts the Council consulted on the principle of a two tier education system in November 2015. The principle received widespread support across the Borough; in January 2016, the Council's Executive agreed that the structure of education in Bedford should change to two tier from September 2017. The consultation document originally suggested a change at Beauchamp in 2019. Post consultation based this was amended to form this proposal.

### **What will be the benefits of this proposal?**

Schools in Bedford are moving towards a two tier education system with transfer to secondary school at age 11, which is how virtually all schools in the country are organised.

Both Scott Lower and Beauchamp Middle Schools were judged to be 'Good' in their last Ofsted inspections, both of which took place in 2013. To enable one school on one site the formal closure of one school must take place.

### **What will happen to existing pupils?**

This means that pupils currently in years 5, 6 and 7 would transfer to a secondary school in year 7, 8 and 9 for their education in September 2017. An admissions process will be implemented from September 2017 for admission in September 2017.

Current year 4 pupils will automatically transfer to the roll of the primary school for year 6 in September 2017 and will have the benefit of the Beauchamp site and facilities.

### **What will happen to pupils at Scott Lower School?**

Pupils will stay at the school and will continue into Year 5 in 2017. No application will be required.

### **What size will the new Scott Lower school be?**

The consultation for Scott Lower becoming a primary school shows the Published Admission Number (PAN) as 90 for its Reception Year from 2017. Year groups will grow incrementally.

### **Will any of the school site or buildings be sold?**

There are no plans to sell any of the buildings or playing fields; all facilities will still be accessible for pupils of the primary school.

### **How will the decision be made?**

Following this consultation, the Council will carefully consider all responses. If it decides to proceed it will then publish a statutory proposal to close Beauchamp Middle School. That proposal will be finally decided by the independent Schools' Adjudicator.

### **Key dates**

13 June 2016 – Consultation started

21 June 2016 – 22 July 2016 - Meetings with parents at Lower Schools and separate meetings for parents and staff at Beauchamp middle school

9 September 2016 – Consultation closed

7 October 2016 – Council decide whether to publish a statutory proposal

14 October 2016 – Statutory Proposal published

11 November 2016 – 4 week representation period ends

Council Executive consider the decision

Statutory proposal submitted to the school adjudicator