

Customer Focus Appraisal

Directorate	County Treasury	Section	Capital Unit and Special Projects	Mike Wilson		
Name of the Policy/Strategy/Service/Function to be assessed		Planning Rother Valley Schools for the Future		New and Existing	Date of the assessment	21.5.08
1. What are the objectives for the service or proposal?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To undertake statutory consultation during Summer Term 2008 with local schools, the public and partner agencies with a view to final Cabinet Member decision being made in September 2008. These would be about the future pattern of school provision in the Rother Valley, from September 2009. 				
2. Who are the main customers for or who will be most affected by the proposal? What are the main sources of data you considered to reach this conclusion?		<p>Children aged 3 to 18 and their parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic research into pupil numbers and projected school populations. Comparative attainment data, nationally and locally, relating to two-tier and three-tier education systems. Outcomes of initial phase of consultations in November and December 2007, indicating support from schools and 78% of respondees to the principle of one age of transfer at the end of Key Stage 2. Outcomes of February to March 2008 school-by-school consultation. 				
3. How have you engaged with customers to understand their views of the proposal?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation meetings in the principles of a change in the age of transfer took place on 20th and 27th November and at the North Chichester Local County Local Committee on 11th December 2007 and then at 12 schools in Spring 2008 and further CLC surgery. Some 4,500 consultation booklets were made widely available in the local communities and to partner agencies, including parish councils in the Autumn and again in Spring. Officers met with each school to consider local issues such as extended school provision and accommodation requirements. Meetings with governors, heads and action groups to discuss alternative options. 				
4. From that engagement (or any other data) is there any evidence that particular customers will find it harder to access the service or will be disadvantaged by the proposal? Are there any key groups of customers that you want to attract to the service or whose involvement the policy needs to be a success?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No primary schools are earmarked for possible closure. Access to rural provision is maintained. The removal of surplus places will reduce the scope for some parents to succeed with preferences for schools beyond their own community, thereby reducing private home to school trips each day. At the heart of any future proposals will be the aim to reduce the high levels of children in the Rother Valley where parents place them 		List date(s) when engagement occurred, where appropriate.	All dates are listed in the Phase 2 consultation document	

		elsewhere for their education. The introduction of a two-tier system with improving and visionary secondary provision combined with fewer, more viable primary schools would assist in improving parental confidence in the pattern and quality of local maintained schools.			
5. What adaptations to the proposal have you considered to ensure all customers can fully benefit from the proposal? Are there any adaptations you have considered but have rejected, e.g. on grounds of cost?	<p>Adaptations have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of Guiding Principles, specifically aimed at the challenges facing the dispersed pupil population of this rural area, which will inform options brought forward by CYPs officers. • Reviewing initial options in the light of feedback from schools, the Church of England Diocese and consultation respondents. • Considering the current levels of over-provision of pupil places in reviewing future needs in four areas within the Rother Valley (western, northern, central and eastern). • Adaptation of primary school sites to allow Year 6 to remain in rural schools closer to home. 				
6. How will you monitor the affect of the proposal to ensure it benefits all customers and particularly those you want to attract to the service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By reviewing the range of practical issues raised in the Summer Term 2008 and beyond during consultations about proposed reorganisation options. • By analysing the responses to the proposals overall and school specific options by September 2008. • By maintaining close links with the 20 Rother Valley schools about the views and concerns of parents, pupils, staff, governors and others to the proposals for change set out in the statutory notices. • By monitoring trends in relation to parental preferences within the next admissions round for September 2009. This will relate to pupil admissions to Rother Valley and neighbouring schools. • Identifying local community needs for extended services and pre-school provision. • Identifying targeted groups which may need support in relation to 'choice advice' over school admissions and wider family support needs. 				
7. What are the arrangements for reviewing the proposal in the light of this monitoring?	<p>The outcome of the statutory notices will be analysed and shared with the Cabinet Member. The proposals and the responses they elicit from the public, schools and partner agencies will then be reviewed by officers. The Cabinet Member will then be asked to take any final decision by September 2008 on proposals in statutory notices concerning future school provision in the Rother Valley.</p>				
Signed (completing officer)	Mike Wilson	Signed (Strategic Director)	Colin James Head of Capital	21.5.08	Comments: