

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 8 FEBRUARY 2011**

**PLANNING OF SCHOOL PLACES:  
WILLIAM REYNOLDS INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS**

**MADELEY INFANT AND JOHN FLETCHER JUNIOR SCHOOLS**

**DAWLEY CE PRIMARY – PROPOSED CHANGE OF CATEGORY FROM  
VOLUNTARY AIDED TO FOUNDATION (TRUST) SCHOOL**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

To seek Cabinet approval to consult stakeholders on the possibility of school mergers to establish two primary schools: William Reynolds Infant and Junior, and Madeley Infant and John Fletcher Junior. Also to inform Cabinet of proposals being considered by Dawley CE Primary School's Governing Body to consult on changing school category from Voluntary Aided to Foundation (Trust) School status.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 That the Head of Family & Community Services be authorised to engage in formal consultation with key partners and stakeholders regarding the possible merger of William Reynolds Infant and Junior schools, and the merger of Madeley Infant and John Fletcher Junior schools. A further report on the outcomes of consultation would be brought to Cabinet at its meeting on 19 April 2011.**

**2.2 That the proposed consultation due to be undertaken by the Governing Body of Dawley CE Primary to change category from Voluntary Aided to Foundation (Trust) status be noted. Should the change of category proceed, that the Head of Property & ICT be granted delegated authority, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, to negotiate the terms of the transfer of land to the Governing Body of Dawley CE Primary School, and the Head of Governance be authorised to execute all necessary agreements and documentation relating thereto.**

## **SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	<i>Children &amp; Young People – to consult and involve all stakeholders with a vested interest in children’s education and safety</i>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	<i>Children and Families living within the Wards served by the schools</i>
<b>TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE</b>	<i>Report on outcome of consultation process – Cabinet 19 April 2011. In the case of consultation on possible mergers, any changes to take effect from September 2011.</i>	
<b>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</b>	Yes	<i>The majority of funding for schools is received from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), which is allocated to Local Authorities based on the number of pupils in the Authority’s schools. Thus, the merger of schools does not affect the amount of this Grant received by the Council.  If the schools were merged, ongoing revenue savings would be realised through the mergers, due to the associated reduction in funding required for school management and administration. The full year cost saving would be circa £80,000 for the merger of William Reynolds Infant &amp; Junior schools and £90,000 for the merger of Madeley Infants and John Fletcher Junior. These savings would be reinvested into all schools (the savings would arise in the DSG which is a ring-fenced grant that can only be used to fund schools). The savings would, however, be substantially less in the first year as the schools would merge from September, not from the beginning of the financial year.</i>
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	Yes	<i>Changes to school organisation are governed by the requirements of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Guidance from DfE. The Governing Body is required to follow a statutory consultation process to merge schools or to change the school status. The consultation period should be for a</i>

		<p><i>minimum of six weeks during term time. The Governing Body is required to publish formal proposals. There is a four week representation period for objections or comments to be sent to the Governing Body. The Governing Body is required to consider the representations and decide whether to merge schools or change school status within six months of publishing the proposals. The Council can refer the proposals to the school's Adjudicator if It has concerns that the Governing Body has failed to consult adequately or has not taken account of the consultation, or that the merger of schools and/or change of school status will have a negative impact on standards at the school.</i></p> <p><i>If a referral is made, the Schools Adjudicator will decide the proposals in place of the Governing Body.</i></p> <p><i>If the decision is to proceed with the merger of schools and change of school status the Governing Body will be reconstituted.</i></p> <p><i>A wide range of legal implications arise upon merger of schools and change of school status. These include negotiating the transfer of land; Assets Transfer; Joint Use Agreements; TUPE of Staff and Service Level Agreements for Support Services.</i></p>
<b>OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Yes	<p><i>Depending on the outcome of consultation, there may be implications for the ownership of land at the John Fletcher Junior school site as the school is Voluntary Controlled, although currently the whole site is Council owned.</i></p> <p><i>Dawley CE Primary: A change of category to Foundation (Trust) would necessitate transferring a portion of Council owned land to the Trustees.</i></p>
<b>IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS</b>	Yes	<p><i>The individual mergers would impact on the individual wards within which schools are located. However there is potentially Borough wide impact due to parental preference in choosing which schools children attend.</i></p>

## **PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**School Mergers** - The Council's policy on infant and junior school provision is that reviews take place, where appropriate, whenever particular circumstances emerge such as a pending head teacher retirement or resignation, or significant building issues including excessive numbers of surplus places. In the case of both William Reynolds Infant and Madeley Infant schools, the headteachers' have both submitted formal resignations with effect from the end of the summer term 2011. It is intended therefore to apply the policy in respect of these schools (and their linked junior schools) to consider the options available following consultation with all stakeholders.

**Change of School Category** - The Council has been informed by the Governors of Dawley CE Primary School that they intend to consult on a change of category from Voluntary Aided to Foundation (Trust). The Diocese of Lichfield Board of Education are the Trustees of the school and would continue to be so should the change of category go ahead following consultation.

### **3. INFORMATION**

**School Mergers** - Initial discussions have been held with headteachers and governors to explain the timetable and process necessary for consultation to take place in time for any possible changes to take place by September 2011, the start of the next academic year.

**Change of School Category** - This report is for information only as the Dawley CE Primary Governing Body will make the final decision unless objection is made to the School Adjudicator following publication of a Public Notice by the Governors.

### **4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**School Mergers** – If following consultation a decision is made to merge schools, to avoid lengthy competition rules regarding the opening of new primary schools and changes to school category, the recommendation will be to close each infant school and extend the age range of both junior schools to accommodate infant aged pupils. In the case of John Fletcher Junior, the proposals would need to be published by the Governing Body as it is a Voluntary Controlled school. This would enable final decisions to be made by the Local Authority, subject to any objections being received and considered. It is expected that, should proposals go ahead to merge Madeley Infant and John Fletcher Junior, the land would need to transfer to the Trustees of the School as a Voluntary Controlled school.

If, following the consultation process, it is decided to proceed with any school mergers, the capital implications will be evaluated as part of the consultation with schools, staff and the wider community.

**Change of School Category** – A portion of the land occupied by the school is owned by the Council, and following a change of category to Foundation (Trust), this area of land (mainly car parking) would need to transfer ownership to the

Trustees of the school, the Lichfield Diocese Board of Education (see Appendix 1 to this report).

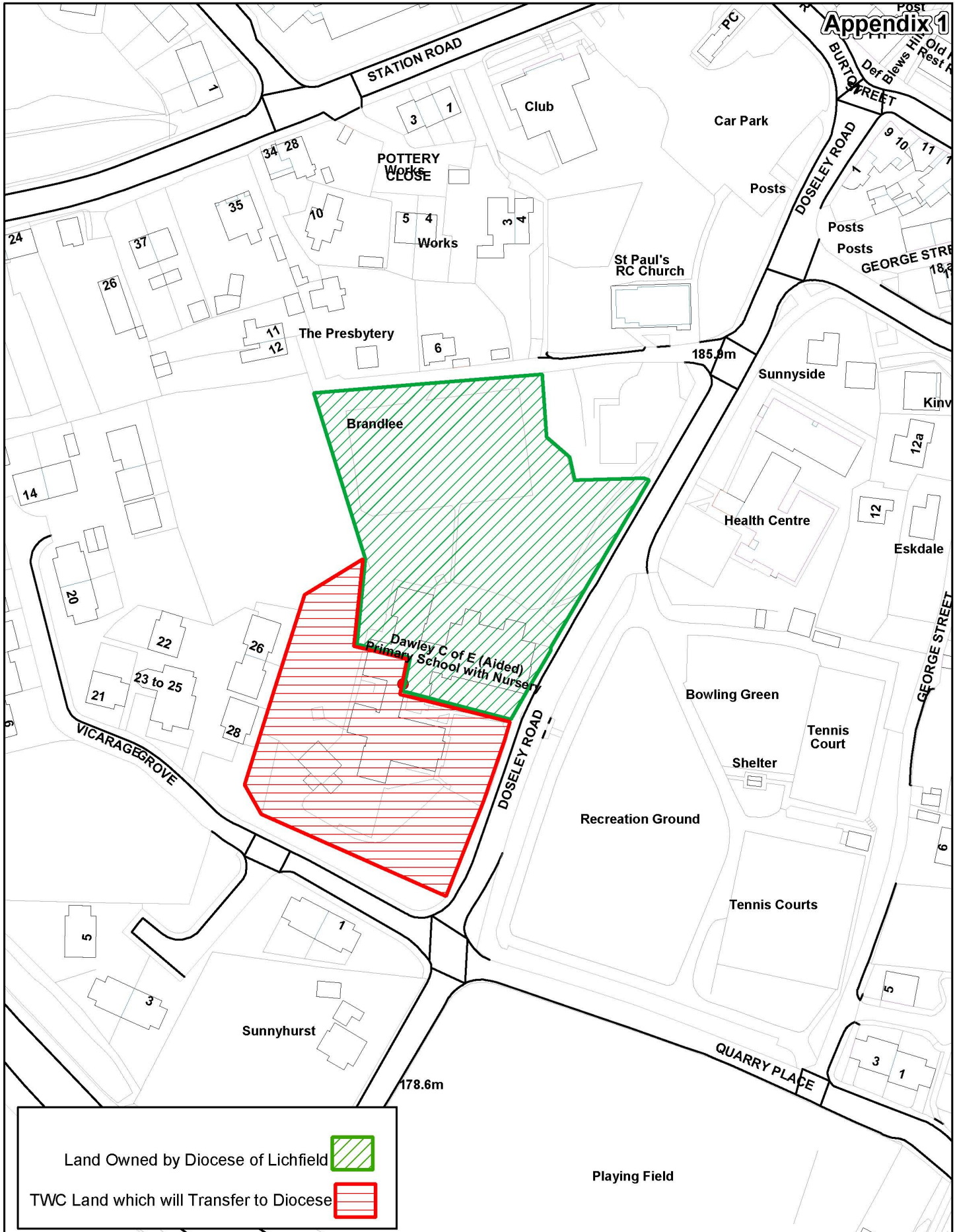
**5. PREVIOUS MINUTES**


Not applicable.


**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**Report prepared by Kathy Swallow, Manager - School Organisation  
Admissions & Planning, Telephone: 01952 380905**



Land Owned by Diocese of Lichfield 

TWC Land which will Transfer to Diocese 



**Telford & Wrekin**  
COUNCIL

School Organisation, Admissions & Planning  
Regeneration & Housing  
1st Floor West Malinslee House  
Civic Offices  
Telford  
TF3 4HD

Appendix 1: Land owned by TWC which will transfer to the ownership of the Diocese of Lichfield following change of category to Foundation (Trust) School

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2011

