

DRAFT

The Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust

Including

Baskerville School

Dame Ellen Pinsent School

Fox Hollies School

Longwill School for Deaf Children

Hamilton School

The Pines School

Uffculme School

Report on the Consultation

Full Governing Body Meeting

Tuesday 6th February 2018

INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the feedback from the Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust public consultation exercise for Baskerville School; Dame Ellen Pinsent School; Fox Hollies School; Hamilton School; Longwill School for Deaf Children; The Pines School and Uffculme School. This consultation report was produced on behalf of the seven Governing Bodies by Deb Bacon who also facilitated the consultation.

Copies of the consultation documents were published on the school websites and distributed widely to consultees including parents/carers, students, staff, teacher associations and support staff trade unions, local Headteachers and Governors, the appropriate Local Authorities and elected members in the defined community areas of the schools.

A series of consultation meetings were held across the schools for parents, with separate meetings to which all staff were invited across the schools for Unions, staff and their representatives, as well as two meetings for interested members of the public. These meetings were well publicised locally.

The views of students were sought via separate meetings with the Student Councils which were supportive of the proposal.

This document summarises the responses received for the consultation as a whole. Included within this report are a summary of the views and comments received from individuals. All responses will be made available to the Governing Bodies for examination when they consider this consultation. Individual responses are also available for examination by contacting the appropriate school.

1. Executive Summary

A great deal of consultation has taken place with regard to these proposals.

- i) A summary information leaflet together with a covering letter and a response questionnaire were issued to all the required consultees. Booklet One, which contains a detailed explanation of the proposals, the rationale behind them, as well as information about the partners and the implications of becoming a foundation school, was made available to anyone who requested a copy. It was made clear in the summary explanation leaflet how to obtain copies of booklet one – and also Booklet two, which was a question and answer document, (hard copies of these documents are available as well as electronic pdf copies)
- ii) The consultation documents were made available on each of the school websites and additional copies were also available from the schools for collection.
- iii) The consultation was promoted widely and approximately 1560 consultation packs were distributed when consultation officially opened.
- iv) Staff, parent and public meetings were held with a series of specific meetings for parents across the schools as well as six joint meetings for staff. Representatives of the local teacher associations and trade unions were invited to attend the staff.
- v) Simultaneously with the public consultation, students and pupils in the schools

were consulted via their School Council or equivalent method and there was general support for the proposals from learners.

- vi) There were 304 response forms returned of which 265 were wholly supportive, 29 were unsure and would like more information and 8 did not think the schools should change category and acquire a Trust. Of the eight respondents that did not support the proposal three of them provided further comment and as can be seen from the response summaries these are areas that can be responded to and provide reassurance for the concerns the respondents have.
- vii) There were no written responses to the consultation.
- viii) A letter to obtain the required assurances will need to be sent to the LA.
- ix) The Trust has identified key partners to support the aims of the Trust. In the first instance the partner will be Calthorpe Academy; Wilson Stuart School (both of which are special schools within the Birmingham LA area); University College Birmingham; University of Birmingham and Hays. The Co-operative Movement initially represented by Central Co-operative Learning Trust. It is anticipated that the Trust and the partners (as appointed), as well as the mutual co-operative membership dimension, including the proposed Stakeholder Forum are likely to have a positive impact on the schools.

2. Overview of the Consultation Feedback

In most consultation exercises responses (particularly written), tend to be made by those who are concerned about aspects of the proposals and not by those who accept the proposals being put forward. In this case the level of responses was comparable to similar consultation exercises.

Of the responses received the majority, 87.17% support the proposals. 9.54% of respondents would like further information and the percentage who do not support the proposals is 2.96%. The respondents who were unsure have identified concerns around finances; buildings and maintenance; conditions of staff and the structure of the Co-operative model. A respondent has also replied to say that they felt rushed to make a decision, as Governors are aware this is the informal period of consultation to gauge whether there is generally support for the proposals. There are some misconceptions about the proposals and I would therefore recommend that a joint response to the concerns is drafted and sent to all stakeholders.

Further in order to reassure staff it would be prudent to circulate the protocol within this document confirming that the schools will continue to work with our Trade Union colleagues and that terms and conditions of employment are subject to the relevant staffing handbooks (Green and Burgundy books) as is the case for all maintained schools. It will be important to ensure the necessary arrangements are put in place by the Local Authority and Governing Body to protect the rights of employees as outlined in the assurances letter. Assurances for staff have already been developed in Birmingham.

There were some responses that commented that they would like further information on the proposed partners. As well as several supportive comments and suggestions made in response to the consultation with regard to additional partners to engage with the Trust. Each school will retain its own Governing Body

and continue to run the school in the same way as any other LA maintained school. Additional opportunities arise from the charitable nature of the trust and there may be benefits in working together for some projects to access additional resources.

Going forward it will be important to demonstrate to parents and other stakeholders, how by formalising and strengthening partnerships within the Trust, as well as forging new ones, the Trust will make a real difference.

This will be achieved in a number of ways as follows:

Joining and developing the Trust will focus the minds and energies of all partners on the task of raising achievement so that all learners can realise their full potential.

By bringing coherence and continuity to lifelong learning at a time when Local Authority services are diminishing and schools increasingly find themselves working alone, the Trust provides the means of bringing schools together to serve a common purpose and to provide continuous pathways to enjoyment, learning and achievement from early years to adulthood and beyond.

By making efficient and effective use of resources, the Trust will provide schools with significant collective bargaining power in their negotiations with suppliers of goods and services. This will enable them to secure best value and prioritise funding for teaching and learning. It will also encourage schools to pool expertise and resources to enable them to maximise the benefits for staff and learners.

The Trust will extend the offer of membership to parents/carers, learners, employees and local community groups and individuals. This will have the value not only of identifying specific benefits for each of these groups, but also enlisting their support in achieving the aims of the Trust.

As can be seen from the summary above all the statutory requirements were met or exceeded and it was clear how further information (including Booklet 1 & 2) could be obtained. This information was available well in advance of the public meeting to allow people to consider the proposal and decide whether or not to attend meetings and ask questions.

Each individual governing body will continue to run its own school and will be strengthened by the addition of two trust appointed governors. The Trust will be a mutual co-operative membership trust which will be democratically accountable to its members consisting of pupils, parents, staff, local organisations and others interested in supporting the schools. This membership base will strengthen the links with the local community and lead to greater involvement with the local community through the co-operative nature of the trust.

3. Recommended Action

It is clear that the view of the majority of those responding to the consultation support the proposal for adopting the Trust. Indeed, the majority of parents and staff who responded are supportive of the proposal.

It is recommended that no alterations are made to the proposal and that the Statutory Proposal be issued, with a statutory period from noon on Monday 26th February 2018 to noon on Monday 26th March 2018.

There is no need to hold additional consultation.

It is also recommended that:

- the Governing Body communicate to staff that the written assurances from the Local Authority regarding pay and conditions (including pension arrangements) for support staff and also regarding the application of existing policies around potential redundancy costs and related matters have been sought and that arrangements are in place to complete, on behalf of each Governing Body and agreement of a protocol on staffing matters with the Birmingham teacher associations and trade union representatives of both sets of school staff.
- That an explanatory letter is sent to stakeholders to respond to key points raised in responses.
- Each Governing Body formally confirm its reconstituted composition if it is to go ahead and become a foundation school with a trust as its legal foundation.
- That the name of the proposed trust as 'Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust' be confirmed in the Statutory Proposal.

Appendix A – Summary of response forms

A total of 304 questionnaires were received following over 1560 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. These broke down as follows – 107 from parents; 165 from staff; 7 from Governors; 12 from Others; 3 from 'don't know'. There were no written responses. Copies of these responses are available for governors' perusal.

In addition all pupils were consulted via the School Council and the response from the School Council was positive.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	99	145	7	7	7
I am not sure and would like more information ...	10	17	1	0	1
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	1	4	0	0	3
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	1	0	0	0	0

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q2. These are the right partners	100	145	8	6	6
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	3	10	0	0	4
I think the school should also think about working with ...	5	4	0	0	1

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q3. This is right for the school	101	145	9	6	10
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	3	2	0	0	2
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	1	0	0	0	0

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea	100	150	7	6	7
Yes, but I am concerned about...	6	8	2	0	1
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	2	2	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	1	2	0	0	4

Summary of response forms – Baskerville School

A total of 59 questionnaires were received following over 270 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. The completed questionnaires received broke down as follows – 14 from parents; 39 from staff; 1 from governor, and 5 from 'others' including those who did not indicate to which category they belong. In addition there were two written responses. Copies of these responses are available for governors' perusal.

In addition all pupils were consulted via the School Council and the response was from the School Council was positive.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	11	29	0	2	2
I am not sure and would like more information ...	2	8	0	0	0
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	0	1	0	0	0
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

- I think it will be a positive move for all the schools involved. (Parent)
- We are not sure and would like more information particularly on how Baskerville staff and other parents feel about the proposals. (Parent)
- I support because this should help improve the standards in school and develop a good relationship between school and community. (Parent)
- I am not sure and would like more information on the financial implication for the school and the teachers. In particular, how would teachers' pay and conditions be affected in the future. (Parent)
- What are the negatives? (Staff)
- I am not sure and would like more information on the way people work with other schools. (Staff)
- If it is not broken – don't fix it! (Staff)
- I am not sure and would like more information on the structure of the co-operative. (Staff)
- I prefer the proposal to academisation. (Staff)
- I am not sure and would like more information on whether it will change the way the governors work internally. (Staff)
- I am not sure and would like more information on the drawbacks. None were outlined. (Staff)
- I would like more information on outcomes 10 years down the line. (Staff)

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
These are the right partners	11	29	0	2	2
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	1	4	0	0	1
I think the school should also think about working with ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

- No explanation of who. (Don't know)
- I am concerned about the school working with Longwill – but only as I thought they were part of the Victoria Foundation. (Parent)
- I am concerned about the school working with outside agencies because the welfare and right of the children must come first, unlike AC academies, where super heads earn huge wages at the expense of books and equipment. (Parent)
- I am concerned because don't know enough about them. (Staff)
- Don't know enough about the proposed partners yet. (Staff)
- I am concerned because we have been told very little about the nature of other schools. Also only one other senior school. (Staff)
- I think the school should also think about working with other specialist schools such as Braidwood in the interests of maintaining the standards and policies of so many otherwise vulnerable schools. (Staff)
- More information on partners, meetings between schools? (Staff)
- I don't know enough about individual partners to comment on them being the best partners for us. (Staff)
- Unsure about individual partners at this stage. (Staff)
- Like all SEN. (Staff)
- These are suitable partners. I would like to see other Birmingham special schools joining where possible / appropriate. (Staff)
- 10 years projection where is it going to be (clarity). (Staff)

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
This is right for the school	12	26	1	2	3
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	0	1	0	0	0
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

- Collaborative working will raise standards in teaching and learning which will ensure optimal learning opportunities for our students. (Don't know)
- Schools are able to share services such as finance, payroll and human resources; it is also easier to transfer between schools when needed. (Other)
- Working in partnership allows for stronger relationships, specialist knowledge transfer and the opportunities for wider participation for children, parents and staff. (Other)
- It is a very inclusive vision statement. (Don't know)
- It will avoid changes for the students and keep the good teaching and ethos of the school. It could protect the school from being pushed into being an academy. (Parent)

- I support moving forward and having the best support for my child's education. (Parent)
- The pupils are being placed at the forefront of the trust thinking processes. Working in partnership will enhance achievements for all, whilst also taking into account teaching skills and being able to share resources of those skills. (Parent)
- We agree in principle that building on the strength of existing partnerships would be beneficial. (Parent)
- It brings together key providers of autistic and special schools for a common purpose with advantage to all. (Parent)
- I feel sometimes if you can look at 'others' within your team you can see things 'differently' and learn to further experience for school. (Parent)
- Surely it can only be a positive thing to do. (Parent)
- This vision is greatly valued by parents too. We are hopeful that such improved resources and expertise will only further the great work already carried out by the school. (Parent)
- More schools to support each other so stronger together. (Parent)
- This is right for the school because it will allow best practice across numerous schools, but I'm concerned that not all schools are equal and there is the fear that schools with huge deficits will drag down the better performing schools. (Parent)
- To move forward and get ideas from each other and resources. (Staff)
- This is right because it provides access to additional resources and skills. (Staff)
- It protects us from becoming an academy. I'd rather a trust led by educators instead of a school run by a business. (Staff)
- It is said if we don't (schools) become part of a trust we (schools) will be forced to become an academy. On that basis I feel this is right for the school. (Staff)
- It places Baskerville in a forward moving direction that suits the current educational landscape. (Staff)
- It closely matches the school's current ethos / working practices. (Staff)
- We can work collaboratively with the partners, look at the practice of other schools, buy in services together etc. (Staff)
- Change is always good. It can help students and teachers develop. (Staff)
- It is right for the school because it remains focused on student interests. (Staff)
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket. School appears to be good without joining a co-operative. (Staff)
- I am currently unsure whether it is appropriate. (Staff)
- We have the security of not being forced to become an academy. There is support for the Heads – opportunity for collaborative working. (Staff)
- I am pleased that we can be protected by Birmingham LA terms and conditions etc. (Staff)
- We are still protected and terms and conditions for staff remain the same. Gain support from partners security of not being an academy school. (Staff)
- I agree with co-operative principles. (Staff)
- This is right for the school providing that the necessary protocols are in place to see if it's right for us in the long run. (Staff)
- The vision is in line with the school's vision. (Staff)
- It works well in conjunction with our current vision. (Staff)
- It works well in conjunction with our current vision. (Staff) (Note: This is from another questionnaire.)

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Yes – this sounds like a good idea	13	32	0	2	3
Yes, but I am concerned about...	0	4	1	0	0
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	0	1	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

- We don't lose any of our existing governors. (Governor)
- The school would have close links to the trust and it would be easier to share ideas and knowledge through all the schools. (Parent)
- This sounds like a good idea but would the governors be parent governors to support the views of children, rather than outside influences. (Parent)
- What are the downsides? (Staff)
- I am concerned with working with other schools. (Staff)
- I would prefer the trust to appoint more governors because 2 governors can disagree with no majority. (Staff)
- If it were to go through then that connection would be good. (Staff)
- I am concerned about what influence they will have. (Staff)
- I am concerned about who they are and if we can elect who they are. (Staff)

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about

before we publish formal proposals?

Comments received:

- Really I would like to hear from the school itself about your co-operative trust because I think we parents depend solely by the school information about our child's and so on. Really I find it very difficult to give my consent. (Parent)
- As an HE institution we have always valued the supportive nature of the school in offering our students the opportunities to learn through experience given by your dedicated staff. We have good partnership with the other schools cited in this document and look forward to our continued partnership. If there is anything further we can help with please do not hesitate to contact me. (Other)
- I fully support the move to a co-operative trust / foundation status). (Governor)
- I feel this is a positive move for all the schools, pupils and staff involved. It will help all the schools, and the ability to share training and knowledge will benefit everyone. (Parent)
- Responsive decision making: this was highlighted to be much faster decision making process to that of the local authority bureaucracy; Ability to attract sponsorship and donations: As a trust private finances could be looked much easier as several schools working together. This in turn help each school to fulfil goals / dreams for the pupils; We were very happy with the information

shared at the meeting 26th January 18. Question: would the name of the school change? To add foundation or trust to it? (Parent)

- In principle we agree with the proposals and vision put forward. However, to answer all the questions with an honest and full response and make a value judgement on the other partner schools and the Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust itself would require us to have more information and know the views of other parents and staff at Baskerville and the other proposed partner schools. It would also help and be very useful to know how the vision has been applied in other groups of schools and the outcomes and opinions of those who have already made the move to a trust / foundation status. (Parent)
- All I care is my daughter continues to get the high standard of education she receives. As she attended another school within the trust I believe this can happen. (Parent)
- Any steps taken to further improve the health and education of children is always a good idea. We hope this move will greatly improve the lives of all those concerned. (Parent)
- I would love to be kept informed of the progress of the process! Thank you. (Parent)
- What's the major advantage of this proposal, if it is to get money into the school by streamlining, service and better buying power for a larger organisation, I'm on board, but if it is a way to marginalise teachers' rights and pay, I'm against it. A co-op by definition should be run for the benefit of all members. (Parent)
- Throughout the briefing you mentioned there would be 'no changes', 'no changes', 'no changes'. If there is so little change what's the point? (Staff)
- What are the negatives and if everything remains the same (as said in meeting) why aren't all schools part of a trust (those that aren't academies)? (Staff)
- As an agency worker I feel these comments and ideas are not applicable to me. (Staff)
- I am unclear at the reason school merging with a trust and I am unsure about the potential disadvantages. (Staff)
- I currently feel it could be something that is necessary due to the pressure of 'academisation'. If this structure makes jobs secure and increases possibility of pooling resources it could be suitable. (Staff)
- I approve. (Staff)
- Will we stay as part of the Oaks? No drawbacks were highlighted to give a balanced view... What are the drawbacks from previous schools that have turned into trusts? (Staff)

Summary of response forms – Dame Ellen Pinsent School

A total of 41 questionnaires were received following over 220 set of consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. These broke down as follows – 15 from parents; 18 from staff; 2 from 'others'. In addition there were no written responses. Copies of these responses are available for governors' perusal.

In addition all pupils were consulted via the School Council and the response was from the School Council was positive.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	15	16	0	2	3
I am not sure and would like more information ...	0	2	0	0	0
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	3
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

Funding – is the school being funded independently as now, or is there some top slicing from the trust. Will there be any changes to support staff terms & conditions. Will there be any centralisation of support functions.

I generally do support but would like more information on the interested parties; BILD, CBU and Bham Uni.

But I feel the decision I had to make was rushed.

Seems that we have only been given the positives and nobody was willing to tell us any negatives so not getting the full picture of what it entails.

I don't think we've been given the full picture. We were only given a sales pitch and all the positives.

On the whole I support as I think sharing resources is a good move, however, I would like more information on job descriptions and new expectations that may arise.

It seems to be the safer option.

I feel it would be good for the school to be united with other schools.

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q2. These are the right partners	15	18	0	1	2
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	0	0	0	0	3
I think the school should also think about working with ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

Don't really know these schools but it would appear they are similar to DEP. It would be good to know their latest Ofsted status.

I do not know enough about them and their interests – can see why they benefit us but what is in it for them? Are the parties definite? Can other organisations become partners? How many max? All linked to education? One way or another or anyone eg a big corporate concern? I do know a bit about Bham Uni as I did my PGCE there and regularly receive Alumni magazine.

Glad the partners do not belong to businesses.

Not all the partners would seem to have any interest in special needs schools. I would be worried that they would have input into things that would not be appropriate for our school.

Three partners who have no interest in special needs education. I'd be worried in them having a say in our school.

I do not know a great deal about the other schools to make comment.

Hayes – as a recruitment agency I believe that Hayes would act if its own private interests rather than the interests of the school.

We will support each other and have a common ground of all been special schools.

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q3. This is right for the school	15	18	0	1	4
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	0	0	0	0	2
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

100% agree with the vision but would like to know how this would be implemented across the partner schools

It benefits our children

The expertise and knowledge we could all gain to further support the pupils. Integrating with other children from different schools could develop our pupils. Training sessions for the schools to support each other.

SEN education needs to be seen in a positive light by the local community and in my opinion the 'vision' will support this.

As a school we already aspire to promote our school values to inspire our children. Adopting these values will only strengthen our hard work.

It is in line with what we already do and believe.

It will strengthen our partnerships with other SEN schools to ensure that our great practice is shared, support / advice available and our ethos continued.

Alone we are vulnerable and all of the above.

It will create opportunities to develop and extend knowledge and expertise.

I am hoping that every child and their family will always come first in any decisions regarding their wellbeing as this is very important to me.

It increases our buying power for services / training and makes us more secure for the future.

I think this is the only way forward and the lesser of the evils / best option available in the current 'educational landscape' (to quote the speaker from Burton). As long as we all benefit (children, parents / families and staff) then it should be a good thing.

I feel it matches the schools ethos. I liked the ethos of the schools co-operative.

DEP is all about supporting pupils with their education and supporting families in lots of different ways.

It will provide an opportunity for a stable community of schools.

Hopefully it will offer a lot of opportunities to the children within the school and help ensure they get the most out of their education. It will allow for sharing of ideas and maybe more access to training.

The vision has not been told to us on a long term basis. We just keep being told it would be better for our school.

We haven't been given a vision. Only that the school will be better.

It is child and family focussed but reference to staff and others who form a bit part of the school could also be mentioned.

It will strengthen current links and provide further opportunities to share outstanding practice. It will enable the school to have stronger foundations and a larger voice as part of a foundation.

I believe these values already exist and can only move forward positively.

I believe these are the values that we all hold for the school already.

It can only be good for each other's school; wider support for our communities and opportunities for the staff.

It can only strengthen the school.

It has the children's needs for growing more important than other schools.

It's a great way to ensure local schools can share teaching & learning between each other.

This will allow Dame Ellen Pinsent School to form partnership with other special education schools and partners to achieve aims for the school.

The school support the families.

It's to improve support teaching and learning. Might not be right for school as a lot of the children won't like change but if nothing in school appears to be changing I don't see a problem.

It will help John to get the help he needs.

It will benefit the children, staff and other further support to families / carers of the children.

This is beneficial for both child and family.

All the schools have the best interests of our already disadvantaged children, we can only become stronger.

This will allow pupils and staff to enrich their experiences, share practices, motivate and improve.

We are already working towards the above.

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea	14	17	0	1	2
Yes, but I am concerned about...	1	2	0	0	1
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	0	0	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	0	0	0	0	3

Comments received:

More information needed about the governorship / management of each school and the co-operative trust, management model, structure and control.

I think all areas of our school staff should be represented.

We have a strong governing body that I feel confident will continue to do so both on our own governing body and on the trust.

But staff need good representation.

As a staff I am not sure if we really know our governors at the moment. Yes there are pictures of them in school but what are their roles and interests in our school.

Do not know who the governors are on the board or their interest in the school.

Ensuring that the appointment of these two individuals are appropriate for all schools involved.

I think better communication is required 'step by step' to reduce the anxiety of the overall work force. Ensure and support support staff in the 'guarantees' of work and contracts etc. Will support staff experience a change / changes in their job descriptions? Will we have opportunities to train / learn from other schools. Or to further our education – degrees for example.

We were told in the co-operative trust presentation that our governing body would not change. It seems this was a misrepresentation.

Will two governors be enough?

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals?

Comments received:

I would like more information on the Trust model and how the structure works and how it will affect each school.

I am excited for the development and skills we can all gain from each other to improve our practice, understand the children's needs further and support them.

It sounds like this could be a positive option for our school (both staff and children).

We have had a strong reiteration of the fact that it will all pretty much stay the same – at the moment – so does that mean conditions / terms could change after a certain period? Or is this the case anyway as it stands ie unpredictability of education in England – we just don't know?

Would like assurance that support staff won't lose out financially and a more definite decision with regard to pay and conditions staying the same is made.

I am still not convinced the land going into a trust is a good idea. In the short term it might be fine but I am concerned for the long term. Have been told that the land can't be sold but still not sure. It is the children and staff will suffer if they decided to sell.

I think it's the can / cannot questions about what is the difference between standing alone and being part of a group. The positives have been highlighted which are worthwhile but are there any negatives?

It would be interesting to know more about the current informal partnership and what it has achieved and more about how it would look practically in terms of the detail of what the benefits of the foundation will potentially look like. How much integration of, and sharing with staff from other schools will there be and what opportunities could / will that provide? Were there any schools which have opted out before the informal consultation stage? If so, are we allowed to know how many and why please?

After the meeting and talks with the head teacher, I feel more assured that this is correct move for our school.

No, I think the school knows the best about future learners because school has the best Head Teacher and staff.

Summary of response forms – Fox Hollies School

A total of 33 questionnaires were received following over 171 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. These broke down as follows – 9 from parents; 24 from staff; 0 from 'others'. In addition there were no written responses. Copies of these responses are available for governors' perusal.

In addition all pupils were consulted via the School Council and the response was from the School Council was positive.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	8	19	0	0	0
I am not sure and would like more information ...	1	5	0	0	0
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	1	0	0	0	0
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

Once you change there's no turning back.

Security of jobs and pensions etc.

Would my job role change how much scope would there be to move from a level 2 to level 3?

Unsure as when it comes into place it could be different to what has been proposed. Finding it hard to form an opinion until it happens (if it happens)

For me our hand is forced, I am always sceptical of change. I go with this because the alternative seems less desirable. This seems okay. Where is it leading us to. What is the long game? Ugghhhh

I'd like more information on sharing skills across schools.

Security of our job and if our hours can be reduced changed.

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q2. These are the right partners	8	19	0	0	0
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	0	2	0	0	0
I think the school should also think about working with ...	0	1	0	0	0

Comments received:

Very happy as I am a parent to children in two different schools and there is so much to benefit from each school.

Midland MENCAP an excellent charity that enhances the lives of students and young adults with learning difficulties.

I trust the judgement of others on this. I am not overly aware of the others involved.

I don't know enough about suggested partners however I do have faith in SLT making good choices. (don't disappoint me)

Who are the other stakeholders and what input will they have. Recruitment agency?? How much will this cost us.

In my time at Fox Hollies I don't feel any external change has had students or staff at heart. Usually it is an exercise in lessening funds for the school, and so it goes. I can never be optimistic on such concerns in the long game. This appears the best option of the two, but I have concerns as to where this will lead further in the future. Cut backs are all over the public sector for anybody who cares to look can easily see.

"other stakeholders" I am not sure that private enterprises would work in the interest of education – not running it as a business. Recruitment agency surely work for their own interests?

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q3. This is right for the school	8	19	0	0	0
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	0	0	0	0	0
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

1 unsure comment – Once again unsure. Attending the meeting highlighted positive points for the school but no negatives. What negatives are there?

Building partnerships with other schools wil strengthen resources and knowledge to benefit pupils and staff.

It opens up participation from a wide scope of pupils.

To get more support and help for the children.

I agree with your opinion for further development in the future.

If all of the above is achieved that would be great.

They are doing well.

It would be good for the school to keep it open forever.

All the proposed partners together will give the trust more power to get things cheaper.

It will help improve the outcomes for all pupils due to knowledge and skills shared amongst each member of the co-operative, this strengthens and increases learning potentials which is always a good thing.

I BELIEVE IN COLLABORATIVE WORKING PARTNERSHIPS WITH SHARED VISION.

It is putting the needs of children first, which is what it should do.

It holds all the trust together for the now and the future.

By being part of a bigger picture it allows the school to offer more support in the future of the young people.

I think our natural partners are other schools similarly minded/others, special schools not mainstream. I believe that our school is a community primarily focused on values, and that all staff would agree with those. I think there is a lot of potential for further development and learning between the schools – befitting individually and across the potential trust.

It is in the best interest for the pupils learning.

We will have stronger relationships with other schools. X2

It gives pupils what is needed and they could get more out of this.

If feel job roles will be safer and ultimately our pupils will benefit due to expansion of services + shared picture. Also opportunities for staff development seem better.

Potentially wider resources and training.

With trustees and partners all working towards this common vision there is potentially greater opportunity to widen the education of our SEN pupils.

Hopefully we can learn from each other for the benefit of the students and staff professional development.

The people who make the decisions will be those who have the best interests of pupils and staff at heart.

We can begin to work more with partner schools hopefully for a supportive community.

It is the right thing to do

Putting needs of children first.

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea	8	22	0	0	0
Yes, but I am concerned about...	0	1	0	0	0
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	0	0	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

Provided the final vote on issues do not go to the trust.

Trust Governors having a say in how FH is run.

It sounds like a brilliant idea.

Many thanks for your idea.

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals?

Comments received:

Would my job be safe? How could my job be moved up the payscales? Would the pupils benefit from more resources? Would the atmosphere change in our school? Just hope it is the best for staff and students.

I feel that this is an exciting time for Fox Hollies School, and that moving forward with the proposal would benefit the education of the school children. The security a trust brings is also a big factor underpinning my decision. The uncertainty of being a sole school in the future is not a realistic choice.

It all sounds positive to me.

I think it would be a good move for the school.

I do understand that this is an indirect action of 'positivity' and not a direct action or response to government.

Sharing of skills does this mean that staff might be moved to other trust members?

I believe that this is necessary for Fox Hollies to keep us safe I don't have enough knowledge of other foundation trusts to truly know if it would affect our ways of teaching and our values.

Completely understand why the school is considering becoming part of a co-operative trust. Concerned that the process is very quick + hope that nothing has been missed. School currently shares facilities with Queensbridge – will this change?

The idea of joining other similar schools makes sense. I am wary of the 'Trust' overseeing + changing things to suit the 'Trust' and not each individual school. Although all have their say, how do we know that this will count and not be ignored. How does F.H stand as being owned by a trust when we are joined to and stand on ground owned by another school?

I think it is a good idea to have other schools involved because you can use each others facilities.

Everything is fine.

It don't matter what we say you do it I'm not going to the meeting theres no point. Since my daughter been at school you do thing whats right or wrong – don't get me wrong you done a lot with my daughter its a great school. I believe it should stay as it is because it works does this mean change and have more pupils?

Summary of response forms – Longwill School For Deaf Children

A total of 34 questionnaires were received following over 115 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. These broke down as follows – 4 from parents; 21 from staff; 3 governors, 2 parent/governor, 3 staff/governors, 0 from 'others'. In addition there were no written responses. Copies of these responses are available for governors' perusal.

In addition all pupils were consulted via the School Council and the response was from the School Council was positive.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	6	22	4	0	0
I am not sure and would like more information ...	2	1	0	0	0
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

What would happen if the trust fell into liquidation and/or bankruptcy? (Parent).

Education programme – would the curriculum stay the same and the BSL curriculum continue? I would support it if the education stays same as standard (Staff).

I support ...depend on the pupils needs, will it affect their education? I would like more information on another school and pupils' targets. Not sure about children with additional needs, School needs to keep focus on one area (parent/staff)

I would like more knowledge (staff).

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q2. These are the right partners	6	21	4	0	0
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	1	2	0	0	0
I think the school should also think about working with ...	4	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

I am concerned because...would they encourage more special needs children come to this school? It would affect other children's education? (staff).

I am concerned because...will additional needs affect education of children?
(staff/parent)

I am concerned because...need more TA and help for children, need support always time 1:1. Deaf people and hearing people have equal rights to carry work (staff).

I think the school should also think about working with ...because BSL is important (parent).

I think the school should also think about working with ...mainstream schools, e.g. University of Birmingham School, but also primary mainstream schools (parent/governor).

The school already works with these partners informally (parent/governor).Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q3. This is right for the school	7	23	4	0	0
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	0	0	0	0	0
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	1	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

Because...the schools share the same values as Longwill. It will mean enlarging the capacity for greater professional development. This will have positive impact on achieving the best outcome for our Longwill pupils (staff).

Because... it is directly aligned with Longwill's own vision (Governor).

Because...we are different to mainstream and we need to support the parents and pupils to help them be included and to fulfil their potential (Staff).

Because...all the individual special schools have areas of expertise that are beneficial to all the special schools (staff).

Because...it encompasses all the values that Longwill represents and puts children and families at the centre (Governor).

Because...it sounds like an improvement (Staff).

Because...I think it will value to support each other from another school, have a plenty of opportunity of training. (Staff)

Because...the children will benefit from more experts. (parent)

Because...we share the same vision and targets as long as the education is standard to all schools in UK, not years behind (parent/staff).

Because...it will allow for sharing of resources and ideas creating a wider scope for learning (staff).

Because...it gives the opportunity to share practices bith in Education and Non-Education (finance, premises etc) (staff)

Because...we need to be involved in a community of schools who understand our unique nature and who have similarly unique, specialist needs. We have important skills and expertise to share, but can also understand the need for each school in the Trust to maintain their own policies, procedures and aims. It is the best option for us out of all available ones. (Governor/staff).

Because...the right to good life, education etc. (staff)

Because...good helping for improving learning school (staff).

Because...we can share resources and expertise. We will still have the freedom to teach deaf children in a way we know works and not told what to do by a CEO (staff).

Because...this may help us in the future, financially (staff).

Because...it will secure the schools future as an excellent provision for the West Midlands Deaf children (staff).

Because...I know well Longwill school is good support and understand their children's parents. Good join work well with staff. It little difficult behave risk – need aware 1:1 and need support, need strong person and sensible well work in classroom (staff).

Because...ethos of special needs (staff).

This is not right for the school because...it's a bit wordy and unclear, however the sentiment is right. I'd like to see it (and section 3.1.3 of the consultation paper) refer to supporting a child to reach their own potential (reflects the SEN code of practice nicely). Vision: To develop and strengthen our schools in partnership and create an outward-looking learning community for pupils and staff which seeks to further improve teaching and learning, raise achievement and aspirations and ensure all children and families are safe and supported to reach their full potential. The values of the Trust are underpinned by the co-operative values and a shared commitment to equality, inclusion and supporting the wellbeing of every child and family in our schools (parent/governor).

Because...by working together more can be achieved which will in turn benefit the children (staff/governor).

Because...I do not want to be an academy (staff).

Because...the principles and values are in line with those already well established at Longwill School. This enables the special schools involved to continue to collaborate as they have been doing for some time. The staff and children can only benefit from this formalising of existing links (governor).

Because...sharing resources and skills will be beneficial to our school and others. Main thing is that we have our own identity, SDP etc. (Parent/governor).

Because...we are in the culture of measuring schools against each other this will give us a good idea of where we are and where we may need to improve (parent).

Because...there is a lot of benefits to becoming a Trust – more support – no-one coming in to tell us how we should be working. Better to be in a Trust than in an academy. Everything will stay the same and there won't be any changes – our ethos will still be intact (staff).

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea	6	20	4	0	0
Yes, but I am concerned about...	2	1	0	0	0
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	0	1	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

No comment given (staff)

No comment given (staff)

I am concerned about...that trust's governors. Does they support and protect pupils use BSL to learn? (parent).

I am concerned about...deaf representation on our Governing Body (parent/governor).

Although we would like to see more deaf people join the team – on look out for suitable people (parent/governor).

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals?

Comments received:

I am in favour of the proposal but will seek clarity regarding the Trust Forum and the disposal of land during the scheduled discussions (staff).

I wholly support the school and am happy for it to proceed (Governor).

I think that joining the Trust can only be considered as advantageous in the current educational climate – sharing expertise, INSET, scales of economy, links with partners will all work to Longwill's benefit and will provide a new dimension to enhance an already stimulating learning environment (Governor).

My concerns is how we contact HR person (like a problem with payslips), who? As we need to know who the person to contact. If contact to business management but herself are always too busy. Also I would like to see if the education taught sae as standard, depend on the child, not have to be year behind because their deafness (staff).

I have concerns that I don't want to see school continue to have pupil who have additional needs, that's not right for this school because it affects another pupil education and wasting staff time (parent/staff)

It sounds like a good idea that will benefit school in many ways (staff).

I would welcome regular meetings with the Business Managers from each school. This would enable us to share more in depth information and help with our buying power and benchmarking (staff).

I am fully in support of this model (Governor/staff).

I think it sounds great! As long as we can retain our individuality and autonomy as a school (staff).

The aims, values, partners and member of the proposed trust can collaborate within this model – on a more formal basis – securing benefits such as 1)staff training, 2)support for the school, when there is less LA capacity, 3)financial benefits – buying – group purchasing power (staff).

I would like to see links with mainstream schools (not as Trust members but external partners). I think this is particularly important for our Deaf children. I want to ensure links with the local Deaf community are maintained and strengthened, and that we don't become a Special School that has Deaf children, but maintain our identity as a Deaf school. I also think that safeguarding does not have a clear enough presence in the consultation documents. We need to make sure it is front and centre in the vision/values (parent/governor).

Having listened to the presentations and being aware of the position of special schools with respect to the dwindling powers of the Local Authority, I consider this is the best way to preserve the identity of an outstanding school for the Deaf (governor).

Summary of response forms – Hamilton School

A total of 46 questionnaires were received following over 227 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. These broke down as follows – 29 from parents; 14 from staff; 3 from ‘others’. In addition there were two written responses. Copies of these responses are available for governors’ perusal.

In addition all pupils were consulted via the School Council and the response was from the School Council was positive.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	27	14	1	3	0
I am not sure and would like more information ...	1	0	0	0	0
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	1	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

1. Because there will be more support for Birmingham Special Schools.
2. As long as the schools budget and funding is not restricted.
3. I do trust the cooperative because we can have the knowledge to move on.
4. Having attended the meeting and my questions answered I feel that this is a good idea.

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q2. These are the right partners	27	13	1	3	0
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	1	1	0	0	0
I think the school should also think about working with ...	1	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

- 1 You should also consider other schools to help ex pupils also.
- 2 I do not have a lot of knowledge about the partner schools.

- 3 I think you should go ahead with it.
- 4 I am particularly pleased that there are other autism specific schools are partners in the trust. I would also like to have seen the Brays Unit in tile Cross which is ASD specific and Oscott Manor additionally as partners, as it would be nice for all ASD specific schools to stick together.
- 5 Uffculme - I feel we have been in their 'shadow' for quite a while. I feel that we now stand strong on our own. I hope Uffculme feel the same.
- 6 Some mainstream schools in a federation type model, because I feel that it would be more beneficial for our cyp were social inclusion is concerned.
- 7 These are the right partners and more can be included to give a wider scope of the school.

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q3. This is right for the school	28	14	1	3	0
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	1	0	0	0	0
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

1. The aspirations are all positive, it'll be the implementation that will be the challenge in order to achieve the vision.
2. The school needs to gain its control and needs. If this is the way forward then it's a good change.
3. It will help to improve the school.
4. It will help the school to further improve itself thus creating a better learning/teaching environment for everyone.
5. It will help the school rise and achieve more.
6. This ensures our children are receiving the right support and education.
7. Hopefully working with other schools will help each other, with getting funding for more equipment and educational items.
8. As long as the visions are met at a high standard and our children's future will always come first.
9. It will help improve the school.
10. To help with better funding gives the school more of a chance to keep doing their good work and pupils more of a chance.
11. It will enable the school to reach higher heights and empower the student's ability towards excellence.
12. Working with other schools, will improve the strength of the school with the trust.
13. It can only support children more and improve learning and teaching (always room for this).
14. I think this is the right vision for my daughter's education.

15. This would benefit both the school and partnership to make improvement and development on building a greater and better environment of learning for the young children.
16. Because all concerns will then be addressed with the support of the new trust.
17. I totally agree with the above statement and understand and learn about different cultures and diversity communities.
18. It would be grate to go along with this.
19. Hamilton will gain bigger advantages through this including diverse information and learning and more the merrier.
20. It's a good move for everyone.
21. Helps support the children with special needs.
22. It is the transfer of public ownership into private hands. Who are the trust accountable to? Transparency, oversight?
23. School will get more support for children.
24. We are doing the right thing for the community. Helping others & supporting families is something I firmly believe in.
25. Because together we can create a strong and resilient group to support the pursuit of excellence for all schools and one which is based on sound shared principles and values.
26. It sounds like there will be better support for the students.
27. Students will learn more.
28. It will help support teaching across the schools, and it will aid transition to secondary school if secondary provision is Baskerville which I understand is a very popular school for the students at Hamilton to move on to.
29. We need to adapt and grow as education continues to change.
30. It is a wonderful way of BETTER engaging & connecting BOTH "local Communities" & parents in what goes on within the school every day of the week.
31. It is striving to improve teaching and learning, wanting the best for its pupils.
32. I think they will help the school and the pupils in many ways.
33. It gives the school more empowerment over changes improvement and general running of the school. Ensures the best care and education for our children.
34. Expertise can be used across sites and resources shared, however I am concerned that his way may result in the school becoming less indecisive and less involved with local mainstream primary schools.
35. It will give further opportunities for collaboration between schools. It will increase CPD opportunities for all staff.
36. In order to improve and move forward, schools need to collaborate to ensure pupils needs are catered for, money is spent wisely and staff have training opportunities.
37. Every child would have a variety of different scopes to manage in later life as they develop.
38. Will raise profile of special education as a speech and language therapist, welcome the possibilities of greater shared knowledge and practice.

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea	28	14	1	3	0
Yes, but I am concerned about...	1	0	0	0	0
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	0	0	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

1 The number of appointed governors.

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals?

Comments received:

1. Please make sure this will not change things for the worst, but will for sure improve things the best way possible going forward.
2. Will the schools policy and procedures be affected by this change? Regarding ethical practice.
3. Is this going to have any impact on teachers? I feel you should be able to retain good teaching staff and TA's and have a consistency instead of changing staff on a regular basis, as the child gets used to them.
4. If the school thinks this is the best option I will be with you all step of the way.
5. It is a superb idea because it puts the children's future prospects into a positive position.
6. In principle the proposals are sound. However removing government accountability and handing control to the private entity seems not quite right. I have always believed in a public service ethos over private control. All in all, I agree with the vision, ethos and aspirations set out in the proposals, but do not want education standards to take second place to the priorities of business and stakeholders. I have had a change of heart, I am firmly against the changes.
7. I believe that the Co-operative Trust will ensure strong support and structure for the future in an environment where schools can no longer operate successfully in isolation either financially or administratively.
8. I completely trust the cause and vision the school has as I share the same morals and ethics.
9. All questions were adequately answered at the meeting and I agree that this is a good idea for Hamilton.

10. When the engagement profile becomes the official way of reporting to the government, it will be very helpful to be working with so many other schools. I believe that this cooperative will be a good thing for everyone involved.

11. I have to be honest and say that I've not looked too much into this due to my own commitments BUT I have had the opportunity to speak to friends /family and it seems that this may be/should be the way forward. I think it is great that foundation schools have more say/power about what happens within school premises as they seem to be best placed in making these decisions. Trust schools which I believe have evolved from foundation schools will obviously see the benefit delivered from its partners. With the cuts that have taken place within the education sector and schools struggling to retain teacher's morale being low, well maybe it is time to try something that involves thinking outside the box. In the socially changing world that we live in maybe the time has come to work harder but also smarter. I am for this change.

12. From the information given on paper it seems like a good move, I am supporting the decision. I am not sure if there are any examples of a school or schools that have made the change and been successful.

13. Will management/staff at Hamilton have less authority than they have already? I think I would like to know more of what the school's see as the benefits of becoming a trust.

14. Do any of these schools currently but in their own SALT? I would welcome opportunities to strengthen links with the speech and language work that is being done in other schools.

15. A telephone conversation with Emma Pinnock from Rookery School was very positive in terms of the proposed developments.

Summary Response Forms – The Pines School

A total of 52 questionnaires were received following over 250 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. These broke down as follows – 16 from parents; 33 from staff; 3 from Governors (1 governor response is included in the parents total and 1 in staffing) 0 from 'others'. Copies of these responses are available for governors' perusal.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	15	30	2	0	0
I am not sure and would like more information ...	1	1	1	0	0
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	0	2	0	0	0
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

As a support staff I feel that our jobs are not valued enough and coming away from Birmingham City Council I believe we will lose a lot of backing (STAFF)

Who care charitable funders? What are the options to change once it becomes a trust school? (PARENTS)

I would like more information regarding support staff contracts and any changes in pay / spinal column points and rates of pension contributions. Will job descriptions stay the same? (STAFF)

Who is responsible if there is a problem with one of the buildings at a Trust school? As a general rule, governing bodies are only responsible for those things for which they have received funding delegated from the local authority – but the Trust must ensure that the governing body has taken out proper insurance. Where there is an emergency, local authority support would be available as for any other maintained school.(GOVERNOR)

If the local authority accepts it has an insurable interest in a Trust school it can make arrangements for such cover to be funded from centrally retained expenditure or through a school's delegated budget. In the latter case, the local authority would need to satisfy itself that the insurance the school arranged satisfactorily covered the authority's risk as well as that of the governing body or foundation. (GOVERNOR)

Under the terms of the 2013 regulations referred to above, all staff will continue to enjoy as a minimum entitlement the same terms and conditions of employment as staff in any maintained school. The process itself is a no measures transfer TUPE. It does not require the extensive consultation that is required under TUPE legislation as legally under the SOPAM regulations it is seen as 're-organisation within a public

service', rather than the complete change of employment situation found for instance in staff transferring from a community school to an academy. (GOVERNOR)

What liabilities may attach to the governing body in respect of employment matters? The governing body may, as employer, in some circumstances have to appear at an Employment Tribunal to defend themselves, if, for example, candidates for a post at the school complain that a governing body's decision or procedure discriminated against them, or if an employee complains that they had been dismissed unfairly? (GOVERNOR)

In cases of dismissal, the local authority has to continue to pay any compensation or legal costs awarded by an Employment Tribunal unless they can show that they have good reason to charge the school's delegated budget (for example, if the local authority had previously advised the governing body that an Employment Tribunal was likely to decide a dismissal was unfair). (GOVERNOR)

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q2. These are the right partners	14	29	3	0	
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	0	1	0	0	0
I think the school should also think about working with ...	0	0	0	0	0
Unsure – answer not given	2	3			

Comments received:

I am concerned as no one works for free, somewhere I feel money will be taken out of our school to pay for this set up (STAFF)

I don't know enough about the partners to answer this (PARENT)

They are likeminded schools (STAFF)

Who are the partners? What if they have old and poor practice, poor progress? SENAR have already got EHCP delays and this could impact? Partner school may have low grades progress/ consider working with The Treetop School (London) Autism West Midlands, IPSEA (PARENT)

Very happy as I am a parent to children in two different schools and there is so much to benefit from each school. (PARENT)

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents /Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q3. This is right for the school	16	30	3	0	0
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	0	0	0	0	0
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	0	0	0	0	0
Unsure – answer not given		3			

Comments received:

It keeps the values school already has. (PARENT)

Will give our children more opportunities to progress and learn from others.
(PARENT)

Opens up new opportunities (STAFF)

We will be stronger (STAFF)

It will support and develop the teaching and learning for pupils and teacher on all sites (PARENTS)

It will help to bring new attitudes and ideas and opportunities for pupils. (STAFF)

It will maintain our independence whilst allowing us to work within a community of likeminded schools (STAFF)

The values are the same as ours (STAFF)

This must have been well researched with a long term plan so that funding will not be compromised or effect learning and opportunities for pupils, staff or the building
(PARENT)

It fits with our school values (STAFF)

It fits in well with our school values and we are better together than alone (STAFF)

These are basically what 'The Pines has always been about (STAFF)

It will help all seven schools to exchange and share resources (PARENT)

School will have more control (PARENT)

It will improve learning for children (PARENT)

It allows the school to liaise with other schools and its partners for additional support
(PARENT)

Building partnerships with other Special Schools will strengthen resources and knowledge to benefit all staff and pupils. (PARENT)

This is a positive move for the Pines enabling us to move forward in terms of strengthening and sharing our resources and skills and other school will share with us. (PARENT)

I feel that this is the best outcome to maintain the best opportunities for our pupils and move forward as a school (STAFF)

It will allow the school to be well prepared for the future (GOVERNOR)

We can learn from others (PARENT)

The vision is a strong, clear positive vision which I believe enhances both teaching and learning. It will strengthen the schools ability to continue to provide a positive learning experience for our children enabling us to facilitate the very best possible future. (PARENT / GOVERNOR)

It will allow us to work with other colleagues and provide a support network. We are still keeping the vision and ethos of the Pines (STAFF)

I believe that the Pines School will benefit from the trust. I think networking and sharing good practice is very healthy for schools (GOVERNOR)

School gets to keep its way of working as well as the security of not becoming a forced academy (STAFF)

We will have access to a wider range of skills, expertise and resources (STAFF)

I agree with the above statement but have concerns that to achieve this may mean increased workload for staff. (STAFF)

We can achieve much more by working in collaboration with others in our local community (STAFF)

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea	14	30	2	0	0
Yes, but I am concerned about...	0	0	1	0	0
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	1	0	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	0	1	0	0	0
Unsure – answer not given	1	2			

Comments received:

I am concerned whether the chosen governor will have time to attend both meetings but it would be a positive way to share information (GOVERNOR)

If it supports the school in providing learning opportunities for children and staff then this can only be positive. (PARENT)

Because it will create an environment that encourages the sharing of knowledge and good practice, providing support where appropriate to create a positive and inclusive school moving forward.(GOVERNOR)

I think this is a good idea for our school. All schools need to develop and share professional ideas to support the children (STAFF)

There should be more than 2 governors so more opinions and ideas can be shared (PARENT)

There needs to be an ongoing dialogue between all members and everyone needs to feel valued. (STAFF)

Would it be a staff governor and parent governor (STAFF)

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals?**Comments received:**

I feel that this is a positive move for the school and will protect the autonomy of The Pines. (STAFF)

This is a good idea if funding does not reduce the service. I am concerned about the options for moving to another school once this one becomes a cooperative trust school? I have not finished researching Trust funded school to learn more about how they operate, the pitfalls and successes (PARENT)

I am looking forward to the trust especially as there are a number of ASD schools joining (GOVERNOR)

It would be nice to include a symbol on the uniform for all schools included in the trust, like a jigsaw piece or something similar on school jumper, would be nice to unify. (PARENT)

Would hope that staff are clearly informed of the process as it unfolds and continues (STAFF)

I fully support the decision to become a member of the cooperative trust (STAFF)

Would appreciate being kept fully informed at all stages. (STAFF)

Will there be a Principal school overlooking all of the schools in the Trust? Working for the council you feel like you have job security with your job will this be reflected in

our new roles if taken over by the trust? Will my line manager still be the head or the Governors? What are the benefits of working with the trust that we don't get with Birmingham City Council? (STAFF)

I am excited to be able to work closer with other special schools, share ideas, resources, land, visits ect.(STAFF)

I trust the school to make the best decision for the pupils and the staff plus the future of the Pines school (PARENT)

I don't like the idea of change but if it protects is against becoming an academy then I support it. (STAFF)

As long as what I have been told during our meetings, regarding pension, pay, working hours are correct I have no issues with joining the Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative trust. I feel it is the right way forward for the school. I would appreciate written confirmation of the above for peace of mind. (STAFF)

We have had a lot of changes last 2 years, new building, new leaders, too many changes to soon. I think the trust is a good idea but we should delay the move (STAFF)

Can my union membership continue once we become part of the Trust? Will pension contribution rates stay the same? Can I continue with my LGPS pension scheme? Will there be changes in the job description? Will the spinal points change for TAs and HLTAs or will salaries change? (STAFF)

Summary of response forms – Uffculme School

A total of 39 questionnaires were received following over 310 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the school as well as to a significant number of interested parties. These broke down as follows – 20 from parents; 16 from staff; 0 from 'others' and 3 'Don't know'. In addition, there was one written response (see appendix A). Copies of these responses are available for governors' perusal.

In addition all secondary pupils were consulted via the School Council and the response was from the School Council was recorded (see Appendix B).

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
I support the proposals	17	15	0	0	2
I am not sure and would like more information ...	3	0	0	0	1
I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ...	0	1	0	0	0
I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ...	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

Make additional comments since the last time submitted to Co-op in red like this

I feel this would benefit the school for lots of reasons and the school would be in a stronger position to support the children with all schools working together. (Parent)

I like the idea of successful special schools in the city being able to support one another to develop and improve through the sharing of expertise, training and resources. (Parent)

More information on ...

Transfer of land – which land? Which schools? Why? Appointment of trustees. Appointment of governors?

Support the change of category but not acquiring a coop Trust because...

How will the board of trustees be made up – who will sit and who decides this? (Parent)

I want it to stay with B'ham City Council. (Staff)

I support the proposals from the information that I have read and been given and my understanding of it. Also, the reassurance that our terms and conditions of employment will remain the same. (Staff)

Would like more information on the benefits of leaving the Local Authority. (Don't Know)

I believe the schools explored other options and found this proposal will meet their need while they can cooperate on a consistent approach without compromising identity and values of each school. (Parent)

I am not sure and would like more information on how the teaching staff feel about the proposed changes, and more about the actual changes as opposed to the things that will not change as a result. (Parent)

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q2. These are the right partners	19	16	0	0	2
I am concerned about the school working with ... because ...	0	0	0	0	0
I think the school should also think about working with ...	0	0	0	0	1

Comments received:

Make additional comments since the last time submitted to Co-op in red like this

We already have links with the schools, and are already working closely with several. (Staff)

It will be good to further develop links. I have enjoyed working with staff from Hamilton and Pines in recent years on assessment. (Staff)

Yes, we can share information. (Staff)

The schools that I know of and have information about. We can share practices. (Staff)

I think the school should also think about working with mainstream schools because I feel that we could benefit from gaining knowledge of their practice and we could pass on our expertise to them. (Don't Know)

These are the schools that are currently expressed their interest. They are working well together and sharing the same views and values. (Parent)

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q3. This is right for the school	18	15	0	0	3
I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because	2	1	0	0	0
I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision.	0	0	0	0	0

Comments received:

Because if it is in the best interests of the children maybe it is the way to go. I do believe all children need the staff they are used to, routines are messed up enough in the children's lives. (Parent)

It sound good support, no changes (Parent)

Anything that improves the school is good for the students. (Parent)

This is a positive move, nothing will change. There is no negative impact on our children. Being part of a trust will enhance our children's experiences – we can work

closely with others and pass our knowledge between the schools. The ethos of each school will remain and no other agencies/ management will be stepping in to decide what happens (Parent)

This fits in with our vision and ethos (Staff)

It will provide improved teaching and learning and enjoyment of all children, and the well-being and needs of children and their families are at the heart of everything. Ensuring our children are happy and making their individual achievements is what we strive for. (Parent)

The pupils are the most important part of any school and their happiness and achievement should be at the heart of the Trusts agenda. (Parent)

The schools can collaborate/ share/ inform in all areas. The Trust allows us to maintain our individual identity, whilst having the strength of schools working together. (Staff)

It allows us to work with schools whilst keeping our own identity. (Staff)

We can be stronger together, share ideas, practice ways of supporting each other. (Staff)

It amalgamates an array of skills/ expertise. In addition to this a cross reference of resource shared amongst schools to ensure all pupils are catered for. Not least the schools have a stronger say over matters acting as one organisation trust. (Parent)

We will gain strength and expertise working with other schools. It makes so much sense to work together with like-minded schools. (Staff)

It brings collaboration with other schools which eventually will strengthen exchange of ideas from practical perspective, etc. (Unknown)

We can work collaboratively with similar schools to develop and deliver the best education for our children. (Staff)

This is right...

I feel support needs to extend to the whole family

This is not right...

I have reservations that the trust is needed to achieve this. (Parent)

Stakeholders in the trust all have the same aims and objectives – to improve lives of children with SEND. Evidence shows that in some cases the other options do not do this e.g. academies and foundation trusts. (Parents)

The Trust schools can work together to negotiate better deals with companies who supply goods and services. Staff will retain their current terms and conditions the same. Joint working will allow pupils to participate in shared events and experiences. (Parent)

Having considered the proposal and the reasons given, I believe this would be in the best interests of the school/s and our children, and of future children. It will help maintain and further develop the high quality, pupil-centred inclusive and vital special educational provision that schools deliver. (Parent)

I like the underpinning values of the Trust and the vision of the Trust. (Staff)

It ensures that the school will be able to meet all children needs and support parents too. Working along other schools continues to allow all opportunities to ensure the children needs/ education are met. It allows the school to continue offering their best to the children/ families. (Don't Know)

We will not be employed by B'ham Council e.g. pension, terms and conditions. (Staff)

I feel this is the ethos of our school and would enable us to continue this into our future. (Staff)

I feel that by joining together, we can provide a stronger, more experienced and skilled team. I feel it will be good to work together to share ideas, practices and resources. (Staff)

It's best for the future for children and staff. (Staff)

It will help improve our school. (Staff)

This is right for the school but do we need to enter into a trust to do this? (Don't Know)

Working together, sharing resources to enhance learning and opportunities is in line with the existing school vision. (Parent)

We can gain so much strength going forward, learning from each other and creating voice that should be louder. (Parent)

It is consistent with the amazing teaching, learning and collaboration with students, families and specialist schools that my son and family have been most fortunate to receive/ has been delivered and achieved over 5.5 years. It is my understanding that the Trust shall formalise everything that is already in place that already works really well and is in the best interest of all the children, families and all the wonderful professionals who always go above and beyond to educate and empower their students, families and the community – and clearly care! (Parent)

It underpins what all schools should be working towards regardless of status. (Staff)

The school/ schools can build on all the great achievements and build a great future for all the children. (Parent)

This may be right for the school but I am not sure at this stage. (Parent)

It will enable all schools to liaise and discuss the ways forward for the future, improve on the provision already provided. This in turn will make a larger voice, therefore give more impact when presenting to regulatory bodies. (Parent)

It will further enhance the school's progress. Ideas can be shared for the good of all. (Parent)

It would afford the school more powers on what is best for the school in the long term and not being dictated to by the council – would be a good move. (Parent)

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

	Parents/ Carers	Staff	Governors	Other	Don't Know
Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea	17	15	0	0	2
Yes, but I am concerned about...	2	0	0	0	0
No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because...	1	0	0	0	0
No, I do not like this proposal because...	0	1	0	0	1

Comments received:

I am concerned who the two governors would be. Could you confirm please? Would they be internal to the school or appointed externally? Prefer an internal appointment. (Parent)

Good idea indeed. Two governors to eradicate single point of failure. (Unknown)

Yes, but I am concerned about...

What percentage of the GB is 2 members? Depending on the motivation of the Trust this election could influence the direction each individual school moves in. (Parent)

I do not like the proposal because we do not know who they are and what their intentions are – do they the schools and pupils best interest at heart? What areas of expertise do they possess that we would benefit from? (Don't Know)

The Trust can always invite more governors to meetings if needed. (Parent)

Two governors doesn't seem enough. (Parent)

So long as only 2. More can complicate matters as it depends on how forward thinking the governors are. (Parent)

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals?

Comments received:

I worry about schools changing, yes it might be for the better. The proposal sounds great, I just hope that being a special needs school, these things are taken into consideration: staffing, routine, school structure. (Parent)

I trust your decision (Parent)

I understand that at any time if the school decides it is not the right option, they can opt out. I feel this is a better option than becoming an academy. If the woodland area doesn't remain the schools under the co-operative model, does this mean I would be sold off and potentially have something built on it? (i.e. houses) (Parent)

I feel this move would be in the best interests of the children. The shared experiences of all the schools can only provide a better learning experience for all staff and children. It would put the school in a stronger position not to be turned into an academy which would not benefit our children, and also when spending money on resources, training courses, equipment for schools, etc. It will be good for staff who we greatly value as they work so hard to help our children achieve things we never thought possible as their careers, terms and conditions remain the same. Also, our children may have the opportunity to attend shared events and experiences. The school may also be able to access charitable funding not currently available. There are several other Autism Specialist schools in the group, so this would be great too. (Parent)

I only wish that this change would give our schools a greater control over the admissions process to prevent the increasing class sizes and strain on resources that we have seen in the last couple of years. Hopefully, the schools, as a Trust, will work together to put pressure on the Local Authority to find other ways to meet the needs of the ever-growing population of special needs pupils so that all the SEN pupils in our city can receive an education to meet their individual needs. (Parent)

The Trust philosophy appears to be supporting schools, whilst providing greater strength. There are so many areas where co-operation and strength in numbers will result in positive outcomes for all involved. The notion of individuality is so important – it will be supported within the Trust structure, but would be lost in the Academy structure. (Staff)

I was reassured at the meeting that the change has many benefits whilst retaining staff pay and conditions and pension. I feel it allows us to keep our own identity amongst a group of schools, rather than being lost in a large group of academy schools. (Staff)

Personally want to ensure standards and quality of teaching are maintained. In addition, resource in terms of infrastructure, support (i.e. transport for all kids), quality of teaching and perhaps additional after-school provision are applied to achieve higher standards of teaching going forwards, and also have visits to give advice to parents on what they can do to support the child's... [words lost] (Parent)

I think this is a really positive move. I am especially happy that it would preserve our pay and conditions, which would not be the case if we were to go down the academy route. (Staff)

If the ownership of these schools get transferred from Local Authority to the Trust, how will this affect funding currently being received from the Local Authority? How about this impacting transportation and the likes? More information will be ideal to have. (Unknown)

I have initial concerns about the motivation and reason why this is being considered. Why schools are spending time on this when perfectly good collaboration can and does happen without the formation of a trust.

How will trustees be appointed? From where and by whom? It is hard to gather and maintain a board of trustees – are the schools confident they can gather a broad enough range of representatives from the wider community?

Why is land transferring to the trust? What is the purpose of this? What land and what will be done with it?

Will staff, including new staff, all still follow LA terms and conditions and for how long will this be guaranteed? Will new contracts be given?

If feel strongly that if schools have been discussing this move for some time that 9 days is not enough to organise attending consultations meetings. Longer should have been given for staff and parents to research and prepare their thoughts. Also, knowing the nature of parents, longer needed to be given to organise child care or work arrangements to attend meetings.

Will staff be used across the trust? Expected to travel between sites, etc? (Parent)

I prefer the school to be part of the foundation trust instead of becoming an academy because an academy is more like a business. My son isn't a business plan, he is a person, a child. His needs come first, his happiness comes first, **NOT BUSINESS! NOT A MONEY MAKING THING!** Every child is an individual and I want the school to remain personal and keep putting pupils first. Hopefully, becoming a foundation trust will be the best route to go for all children who attends the special schools effected by the change. I want my son to have a Head Teacher not a chief executive that doesn't care about the children. (Parent)

I am not sure if there are other local special schools who would be appropriate to join the Trust, but I would hope that the Trust (if formed) would remain open to considering fairly requests of other schools to join the Trust and expand to include them if appropriate (i.e. share same values and provide high quality student-centred provision. I would also like the Trust to join 'Birmingham Children's Quarter' to work together and fight for high quality special needs provision, which is bringing together organisations working to support and provide high quality services to people with special needs in B'ham to work together to protect and improve provision, especially in this time of cuts and austerity. (Parent)

This proposal seems well-thought out and I like the idea of special schools working together to share expertise. I definitely would not like the school to become an academy and this seems like a much better alternative. (Staff)

I like the idea of solidarity and building a community. I think that sharing ideas, skills and knowledge would benefit in many ways. (Staff)

We would like more neutral information given to us and what the full implications are of becoming a trust. We have reservations about the school's deeds being given directly to the trust as well as being employed directly by the school. We welcome working with other schools and learning from their practice. (Don't Know)

Although I support this proposal, I am concerned that over time, running the Trust will become more complex and more expensive. This may lead to increasing commitments and putting financial pressure on partners, members and families. I would like to receive more information on how the performance of the Trust will be managed, monitored and audited. This is a consultation stage; what plans are in place (especially for Uffculme School), if the majority of the schools decided to decline the proposal. (Parent)

As a governor, I have been involved in the discussions and now feel that becoming a member of this trust is a positive move for the future. The future collaboration between the schools will create a platform to share skills, data and much more. (Parent)

Thank you for the useful and reassuring information conveyed in both writing and at the consultation meeting. Happy to assist with fundraising in the near future. In previous years bouncy castle/ BBQ parties and bonfire nights have been a real highlight and I am sure I am not the only parent to say that they would be happy for these to be ticketed events. Sponsored runs like 5 or 10K, half marathons might be an option. Run activities (Run Birmingham) deliver free programs and can obtain spaces for runners (free advertising/ publicity) for Run Birmingham. Runners could set up just giving accounts so money raised can go directly to the trust. (Parent)

I am certainly not against the proposals but at this stage, even having attended one of the consultation meetings, I do not feel I know enough about the proposals, process and exactly how this would affect the school to give further opinion or comment. (Parent)

Appendix A

Email from Denise Thomas - Chair of Uffculme Trust

Thu 25/01, 16:14

Dear Matthew,

Thanks again for keeping us well-informed about the current consultation. Accordingly, on behalf of the Trustees, I would like to ask if you anticipate any change to the Trust's role in its support of Uffculme School should the School change its status from Community to Foundation School and join a Cooperative Trust.

With thanks,
Denise

Notes from meetings:

Baskerville School Friday 26th January

Staff Questions and Answers

- 1) Who owns the land at the moment?**
Birmingham Local authority.
- 2) How do they feel about this and losing their land? Isn't it like losing an asset?**
The authority have a duty to provide Education to all of their Pupils and as even with the proposed changes to the School becoming part of a trust, it remains a maintained school.
- 3) Is there a time period for how long the school is held by the Trust?**
No it is held indefinitely by the trust, the trust acquire the freehold also for an indefinite period of time.
- 4) As a Trust, will we still remain protected and paid in line with NJC terms and conditions?**
Yes, All staff will transfer over on their current terms and conditions. Length of service also transfers over as does the pension fund and contributions into this. The school remains a maintained school and as such all of the terms and conditions are protected. This means that the terms and conditions remain the same as in a local authority school.
- 5) Will we have BCC on our wage slip?**
No you will have the schools name on it, however the pay date and everything will remain the same.
- 6) Will terms and conditions stay the same, you mention we transfer over on these but will they be protected in say 2 years time?**
Yes, as a maintained school we have to follow the terms and conditions as laid out by the local authority. Schools in the Trust will continue to adopt all HR processes as currently in place.

7) NJC has discussed that there is 2% pay rise proposed, will staff still be eligible for that?

Yes, as we will remain a maintained school, all terms and conditions are carried over including pay rises, increases in the pension contributions and pay freezes.

8) Section 6.8 does not read as if it protects teachers and support staff. The wording is not specific to support staff.

Teachers are covered by a National set of terms and conditions where as there are no National guidelines for support Staff. This wording has to be used and is the wording used by the DFE

9) What if this doesn't work for us, can we go back?

If the school feels that this isn't working for them then they can move away from the trust. Land and assets will transfer back to the schools Governors as you become a Foundation school without a Foundation.

You still remain a maintained school and the LA will continue to source funding, send pupils. This is different to when you are an academy, once an academy it is difficult to convert back.

10)What happens if one of the schools in the trust fails in terms of finances?

There is no responsibility on any of the other schools if a school runs a deficit. Schools will not be able to use their budget to support other schools. If OFSTED puts a school into categories, other schools may support but all schools maintain their own status as a school in their own right,

11)Will there be any job losses?

No. There are no grounds for job losses based on becoming a Trust.

12)Trust governors – are they from other schools or our governing body?

They are nominated from existing governors on your schools governing board.

13)SO there will be no additional recruitment of governors?

No

14)Will the authority continue to provide and maintain the buildings? Will we be able to access initiatives? Will the relationship remain the same?

Yes. You remain a maintained school and will have the same rights as all Authority schools.. the relationship with the authority remains the same and the authority will still refer and fund pupils in the same was as they do now.. The school will also be eligible for grants / bursaries and new initiatives led by the authority.

15)Will the admissions remain the same

Yes.

16)What will happen to staff who work for CityServe on a SLA

The SLA will continue for as long as the school wishes it to. These staff will not become school staff but will still work for their company. There would be no reason as to why SLAs would change.

17)Will new staff be employed on the same terms and conditions as as current staff?

Yes. As a maintained school all terms and conditions are the same for new staff.

18) Will we be able to access the same deals and discounts that we currently do – eg gym membership

Yes as a maintained school you will have access to the same deals as you currently do.

19) What types of collaborative work will happen

Heads will set the main priorities

School improvement

- Staff development and training opportunities
- Schools share their School improvement plans
- Improve staff well being
- Look at peer reviews, develop training where there is a common need, working together looking at commonalities

Pupil Enrichment

- Student councils to meet
- Develop opportunities for joint ventures

Economies of Scale

- Employ auditors for GDPR
- Consider therapeutic support across schools
- Look at contracts to secure better deals.

20) Will there be additional training for governors as they will be taking on a huge responsibility?

Largely their responsibilities will be the same as they are now. HR procedures will be followed as they are now, with HR and ER providing the advice that they do now.

Public meeting questions

1) Why does it say acquire a COOP?

This is legal terminology. The group of schools will create the Trust, there isn't one secured already that we could "jump onto the back of" We would be the trust.

2) If schools raise money will LA stop funding

No. The authority has to fund the school in the way that it funds all school. It would be the same as now if the PTA raises money.

3) How do you register as a company with charitable objectives

4) What is the role of the Foundation trust governor

That is for the Trust to decide, there can be a number of ways to do this, it is largely a channel of communication.

5) What are the changes for staff?

Very few noticeable changes to start with, we would remain a maintained school and all terms, conditions, payment will remain the same. They will not be expected to work across other schools although there may be opportunities for CPD

6) If a school moves away from the trust why do the assets transfer to the governors?

The school becomes a foundation school without a foundation.

7) Isn't there a significant amount of pressure on Governors?

Largely their responsibilities will be the same as they are now. HR procedures will be followed as they are now, with HR and ER providing the advice that they do now

**Baskerville School
Friday 26th January**

Staff Questions and Answers

21) Who owns the land at the moment?

Birmingham Local authority.

22) How do they feel about this and losing their land? Isn't it like losing an asset?

The authority have a duty to provide Education to all of their Pupils and as even with the proposed changes to the School becoming part of a trust, it remains a maintained school.

23) Is there a time period for how long the school is held by the Trust?

No it is held indefinitely by the trust, the trust acquire the freehold also for an indefinite period of time.

24) As a Trust, will we still remain protected and paid in line with NJC terms and conditions?

Yes, All staff will transfer over on their current terms and conditions. Length of service also transfers over as does the pension fund and contributions into this. The school remains a maintained school and as such all of the terms and conditions are protected. This means that the terms and conditions remain the same as in a local authority school.

25) Will we have BCC on our wage slip?

No you will have the schools name on it, however the pay date and everything will remain the same.

26) Will terms and conditions stay the same, you mention we transfer over on these but will they be protected in say 2 years time?

Yes, as a maintained school we have to follow the terms and conditions as laid out by the local authority. Schools in the Trust will continue to adopt all HR processes as currently in place.

27) NJC has discussed that there is 2% pay rise proposed, will staff still be eligible for that?

Yes, as we will remain a maintained school, all terms and conditions are carried over including pay rises, increases in the pension contributions and pay freezes.

28) Section 6.8 does not read as if it protects teachers and support staff. The wording is not specific to support staff.

Teachers are covered by a National set of terms and conditions where as there are no National guidelines for support Staff. This wording has to be used and is the wording used by the DFE

29)What if this doesn't work for us, can we go back?

If the school feels that this isn't working for them then they can move away from the trust. Land and assets will transfer back to the schools Governors as you become a Foundation school without a Foundation.

You still remain a maintained school and the LA will continue to source funding, send pupils. This is different to when you are an academy, once an academy it is difficult to convert back.

30)What happens if one of the schools in the trust fails in terms of finances?

There is no responsibility on any of the other schools if a school runs a deficit. Schools will not be able to use their budget to support other schools. If OFSTED puts a school into categories, other schools may support but all schools maintain their own status as a school in their own right,

31)Will there be any job losses?

No. There are no grounds for job losses based on becoming a Trust.

32)Trust governors – are they from other schools or our governing body?

They are nominated from existing governors on your schools governing board.

33)SO there will be no additional recruitment of governors?

No

34)Will the authority continue to provide and maintain the buildings? Will we be able to access initiatives? Will the relationship remain the same?

Yes. You remain a maintained school and will have the same rights as all Authority schools.. the relationship with the authority remains the same and the authority will still refer and fund pupils in the same way as they do now.. The school will also be eligible for grants / bursaries and new initiatives led by the authority.

35)Will the admissions remain the same

Yes.

36)What will happen to staff who work for CityServe on a SLA

The SLA will continue for as long as the school wishes it to. These staff will not become school staff but will still work for their company. There would be no reason as to why SLAs would change.

37)Will new staff be employed on the same terms and conditions as current staff?

Yes. As a maintained school all terms and conditions are the same for new staff.

38)Will we be able to access the same deals and discounts that we currently do – eg gym membership

Yes as a maintained school you will have access to the same deals as you currently do.

39)What types of collaborative work will happen

Heads will set the main priorities

School improvement

- Staff development and training opportunities
- Schools share their School improvement plans
- Improve staff well being
- Look at peer reviews, develop training where there is a common need, working together looking at commonalities

Pupil Enrichment

- Student councils to meet
- Develop opportunities for joint ventures

Economies of Scale

- Employ auditors for GDPR
- Consider therapeutic support across schools
- Look at contracts to secure better deals.

40)Will there be additional training for governors as they will be taking on a huge responsibility?

Largely their responsibilities will be the same as they are now. HR procedures will be followed as they are now, with HR and ER providing the advice that they do now.

Public meeting questions

8) Why does it say acquire a COOP?

This is legal terminology. The group of schools will create the Trust, there isn't one secured already that we could "jump onto the back of" We would be the trust.

9) If schools raise money will LA stop funding

No. The authority has to fund the school in the way that it funds all school. It would be the same as now if the PTA raises money.

10)How do you register as a company with charitable objectives

11)What is the role of the Foundation trust governor

That is for the Trust to decide, there can be a number of ways to do this, it is largely a channel of communication.

12)What are the changes for staff?

Very few noticeable changes to start with, we would remain a maintained school and all terms, conditions, payment will remain the same. They will not be expected to work across other schools although there may be opportunities for CPD

13)If a school moves away from the trust why do the assets transfer to the governors?

The school becomes a foundation school without a foundation.

14)Isn't there a significant amount of pressure on Governors?

Largely their responsibilities will be the same as they are now. HR procedures will be followed as they are now, with HR and ER providing the advice that they do now

Longwill Consultation Parents' Meeting

24/1/18 (11am)

(24)

Q: What will the LA do?

A: Exactly the same as it does now, it's as close as staying the same as possible.

Q: Any conflict between the LA /Trust / Schools?

A: No

Q: Who chairs the Trust?

A: Chair of the Trust appointed at first meeting. It could be any member of the Trust board. A meeting happens 3 times per year.

Q: Is it a collective meeting?

A: Yes, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors from each school, from across the Trust will meet together 3 times a year.

Q: Do the schools have to be SEN schools?

A: They can be mainstream but at the moment this model is just SEN. The one in Burton is a mixed type of schools.

Q: Are there any other schools in this type of model?

A: Yes there is one in Birmingham and others in Tamworth, Burton and Derby

Q: Is there somewhere we can look to see what a difference it has made?

A: Yes, you can look at Co-Op Schools website.

Q: Would the admission process be taken into the Trust?

A: No. We would still follow same process and Code of Conduct. But we could have strength as groups of schools to lobby about the process.

Q: How is being part of the Trust going to benefit/improve the school?

A: Formalise processes, improve provision and opportunities, e.g. music, sports, learning activities. Using expertise across the Trust. Teachers won't swap places of work, but work together to improve. Sharing skills and expertise. Sharing resources / information and knowledge sharing. As a group of schools we will have more buying power.

Q: Comments on advantages and disadvantages?

A: Not really any disadvantages. But there are advantages about efficiency savings.

Q: Who focuses on the priorities?

A: Chair of Trust Board, current Governing Body of school will remain in control and focus on the priorities. Trust level will focus on shared priorities.

Q: Expansion of school – will it have to go through the Trust?

A: No, still through the LA.

Longwill Consultation Staff Meeting

24/1/18

(7 staff, 1 parent, 3 governors at 11:35am)

(28 at 12noon)

- Q: Will there be the same number of staff governors?
A: Yes.
- Q: What will the Trust forum be?
A: Representatives from the membership will sit on the Trust board. 'Members' from each school will make the forum /council.
- Q: Will we remain Longwill School?
A: Yes, we will remain Longwill and will not be under anyone like an Academy.
- Q: Has the Co-Op Trust got a name and will we use this?
A: The Trust will be Birmingham Special School Trust and we could use the logo.
- Q: What are the benefits?
A: Shared expertise / procurement / efficiency savings. We could access funding as a Trust as it will have charitable status.
- Q: Does pay stay the same, do we get any pay progression as a TA?
A: Terms and Conditions may stay the same.
- Q: Could the Terms and Conditions change in the future?
A: All schools are remaining with what the LA are saying and has gone through proper consultation.
- Q: How long does it take to go through the process?
A: Headteachers have been discussing this since last summer. DfE says 4 weeks, but we are doing a longer period of consultation. Proposed date will be 1 May 2018.
- Q: Why are we doing it?
A: There are not any negatives. There are opportunities. LA has shrunk and we need to do something and formalise our working relationships and be part of a structure. Safety and sharing expertise. The Trust will have charitable status and could apply for money through this.
- Q: Would we have new contracts?
A: No.
- Q: Would they bring in anyone above the Headteacher (eg. Executive Principal)?
A: No, this is not like an academy chain.
- Q: What are the implications with being employed by the governors?
A: No difference. They are no more liable. They need to follow HR advice too.
- Q: Longwill already has a charity, will it change?
A: No, it will stay exactly the same.

**Cooperative Consultation Meeting – Fox Hollies
Wednesday 24th January 2018**

Notes taken by Matthew Scarrott.

- Q: Regarding the transfer of assets to the trust, who is responsible for the buildings?
A: School will work with the LA. There will be the same access to funding for buildings.

Q: Why transfer then?

A: Because Land and Assets have to transfer as part of the Trust process.

Q: If we are members of the cooperative, are the schools on a local cooperative list?
Can we donate to schools via the local cooperative organisation?

A: Yes, put the school on the local list then donate via the organisation.

Parent suggestion: set up an online forum to share ideas

Q: Do we have more control on admissions?

A: Still the LA although a bit more complicated because of Other LAs. However, we would have a greater power of voice for better transition

Parent comment: part of the attraction is being able to attract more funding.

A: Partly, but key drivers are: sharing expertise, professional development and help recruitment and retention

Q: what are the costs of running the trust?

A: £13 to company's house. Trust can generate own income through e.g. fundraising, selling expertise

Parent comment: I am part of King Edward's Trust and this is expensive to run.

A: parents can pay into the trust, but this can be complicated. To start with there no real costs, rather use existing resources

Q: how is the trust regulated in terms of the LA?

A: Trust is regulated by the Secretary of State. School individually, still by the LA

Parent comment: think of the case of Perry Beeches – we don't want to be there.

A: As before, trust is overseen by the government.

Q: what is the biggest risk?

A: sign up to too much. Advice to HTs – take it easy, pick 2 or 3 joint things to work on. No financial risk as individual budgets.

Q: is the relationship with the LA still the same?

A: Yes, the LA like the model of schools working together for school improvement, but still part of LA.

Q: Do the LA do less?

A: No, the LA is less well resourced. The LA are doing the bare minimum. Schools have got to do something. There is safety in numbers by working together (analogy if the cake is the schools, the trust is the cherry on top).

Parent comment: so it's pretty much the same, except schools come together to share expertise: the LA still take care of the school.

A: Yes

Q: School's merging?

A: Not merging, still remain individual schools. Trust Board looks at joint working. There will be an additional level of meetings. HTs have already meet but this means meeting in a formal way: a commitment to share expertise - formalised relationship.

Q: What are the areas that the schools are wanting to work on – any clear ideas?

A: HTs have been meeting to look at this. There are three areas:

- Staff development which includes professional development and evaluating each other's practice e.g. through peer reviews
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Financial benefits by collaboratively sharing resources and efficiency.

There are also opportunities for students e.g. activity days.

Q: Regarding resources, if we bought in bulk would we save on cost?

A: Yes, potentially. Bursars in Burton come together to look at cost savings e.g. buying paper

Q: what does the Trust get out of it?

A: the Trust is the HTs and partners. They get improvement in schools and possibly savings. Universities won't get students but will learn from us. There is no financial comeback.

Q: what happens if something goes wrong with a supplier of all the schools? How is it monitored what things are going on in the trust?

A: it will be whoever is leading the project – they would need to respond to the issue. Remember, the trust is not tied to a supplier, they could go somewhere else. Also, as now, if a service provider does not provide they don't get paid.

Q: But isn't the Trust another level of control?

A: the Trust will not tell the school what to do.

Q: but the Trust will have some control?

A: on a day-to-day basis, it is the individual HT. If there are joint projects, the school doesn't have to sign up. But if a school does then signing up to common themes/ aims of that project. Individual Governing Bodies can opt out of some projects. Schools will identify what needs doing, not the Trust – a bottom up model.

Q: what if a school wanted to move out of being an LA maintained school?

A: if the school wanted to become an academy, it could. If the school wanted to come completely out of the Trust, it could.

Q: can the school be forced to change?

A: No, the governing body decides the future of the school, unless the school goes into special measures. If this happened, the school could seek the support of the Cooperative.

Q: what are the reasons for these seven HTs coming together?

A: it started with a larger groups of HTs exploring a range of options. These seven decided this was a way forward for them, and others dropped out. The LA was considering that all LA schools become a trust.

Q: the consultation is about this model and no other models?

A: Yes. School are keen to keep their individuality, but the key word is 'trust'. We sign up to the shared values – if the HT goes the values remain. In an academy model, school may not remain itself.

Parent comment: schools working together is a stronger position. I come with an experience of academy - the request for money was a concern.

Q: are the trust meetings minuted and can parent see them.

A: Yes, via the school website.

Q: if a school doesn't go to the cooperative, would it close?

A: not close but risk the school being directed to be part of an academy trust

Meeting at Pines

Staff Consultation

Q: Do staff get to vote on if they would like the school to join the Trust?

A: Essentially yes by completing a response.

Q: Why do staff need to complete the consultation questionnaire?

A: so that the GB know their view and to contribute to the model.

Q: Does the funding still come from the LA?

A: Yes

Q: Would the school change payroll provider and how would this affect staff pay?

A: they do not have to change the provider and regardless of provider there is no change to pay.

Q: If there is a cluster of schools would there be one principal school/executive head who dictates everything to the other schools?

A: No

Parent Consultation

Q: Will the Trust be able to access additional funds for e.g. to extend the provision of speech & language etc?

A: Yes and with charitable objectives potentially other funding too.

Q: Will there be opportunities for pupils to go to the other schools for specific learning?

A; Yes if the group want to do that.

Q: Can they have a copy of the slides? - I have sent these already Debs.

Dame Ellen Pinsent School – Parent Consultation

24th January 2018 at 9.30am

Present: Alison and Keith. One parent attended

Deb Bacon outlined generally that a group of schools wished to form a co-operative and explained what this meant. She explained the co-operative value; co-op models; co-op trust model structure.

Question: The representative from the members / parents etc – is it one per school or one per all the schools? Answer: It is one representative from all the Trust schools.

Parent Comment:

I think it would be a good idea to share – it is all about the children so any working together with other schools is a good idea. For parents, we would get to know more schools out there.

We have a parent chat room and I will put it on there.

Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust Consultation Meeting for Parents / Carers

Date: Friday 26 January 2018

Time: 11:45am

School: Baskerville School

Questions raised:

Q: Is the Trust responsible for financing all the maintenance and/or repair of the school premises and grounds if these become necessary, e.g. due to natural disasters?

A: The Local Authority will still be responsible for financing all the repairs and maintenance of the school as before. The existing insurance will still apply and the school will still be placed at the same point in the queue for any LA funding.

Q: How is the proposed change going to affect the residential side of the school?

A: The residential provision of the school will remain exactly the same.

Q: It is mentioned that there will be transfer of skills among the staff of the member schools. Will that mean that experienced staff can be transferred to another school and that my child might be taught by staff who are not familiar with him/her? Will it affect staff to student ratio?

A: The school will take into consideration the continuity that is important to existing students. Any staff changes will be made only so that staff can gain useful experience in other schools without affecting the effective education of the students. Staff to student ratio will not be affected.

Q: It is mentioned that students will have opportunities to engage in cross school activities. Will that mean my child is taken away from the school to a new environment that he / she is not familiar with?

A: The school knows the students and is experienced in doing risk assessment for all situations. The school will not arrange for a student to go to another school or place to take part in activities if it will pose an unacceptable risk for the student.

Q: Will my child be taught by staff who are not DBS checked?

A: All staff who come into school to work with students must have valid DBS clearance. As before, the school is responsible to check that this is in place.

Q: What is the school's view regarding the proposed changes?

A: Staff will be consulted about their views. The school governors have considered the proposal and are keen to follow the process through at this point. They will take into consideration the views expressed by parents, staff and other stakeholders. This is why everyone is encouraged to complete the consultation questionnaire to make their views known.

Alison Carter, Head Teacher of Longwill school added that the head teachers of the special schools involved have thought through this very carefully and believe that this is the best model to promote and secure the excellent practices of all the special schools within the proposed Trust. She stressed that the individual identity of each school will still remain the same after the process.

Q: What is the name of the Trust? Has it got a website that parents can have a look at to find out more information?

A: The Trust will be known as Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust. There is no website as the Trust has not been formed yet. However, detailed information documents are available from the websites of each individual school.

Q: What is a trust? Is it the same as an academy? What if a school does not agree to the decision of the trust?

A: A trust is different from an academy. A Trust cannot tell a school what to do. If, for example, all the members of the trust decided to contract out their catering service apart from one, that school can still have their own caterer without having to follow what the other member schools do.

Q: What is the advantages of forming a trust?

A: Some of the main advantages are member schools being able to pool resources, to share costs, to have a better bargaining power in engaging outside services etc. Examples of the areas to benefit will include staff development (e.g. bigger INSET days), developing leadership programmes, moderation and maintaining standards at schools, cross schools enrichment activities for students (e.g. sports, music, learning), savings on contracts (e.g. cleaning, school meals). More job opportunities may also be open to staff of the schools within the Trust.

Q: What are the financial advantages?

A: Schools can look across the trust and generate a pot of money to buy in services such as Speech & Language Therapy.

Q: Will the Governing Body of the school stay the same and meet regularly as before?

A: Yes, the school's Governing Body will stay the same, with the same parent / staff governors etc but two of the existing governors will be appointed as Trust governors.

Q: How will the changes affect staff?

A: Teachers' set of terms and conditions of service will remain the same. Support staff will still be working under the 'Green Book' as before as the school is still a maintained school. Lengths of service and pension for all staff will still be protected.

Q: How can I find out if staff are happy with the changes?

A: A report of the consultation which will include the views of staff, parents and other stakeholders will be made available on the school website.

Co-operative Trust Consultation with Fox Hollies and Uffculme 24th January

Q – Are terms and conditions of employment protected for non-teaching staff?

A – They are exactly the same as the school remains a Maintained School. The only time they will change is if the Local Authority change them through consultation with the Unions.

Q - Do I have to do anything to secure my pension arrangements?

A No, transfer will happen automatically and your pension rights are protected.

Q - Do we have to follow the Local Authority pay agreements?

A - Yes – everything remains the same.

Q - Do we need to name the School where we are working as employer, on mortgage application forms home insurance etc?

A Yes.

Q What are the implications for the change?

A – The Governing Body has to follow all the Local Authority procedures, just as they do now.

Q Do we still have the benefits that the Local Authority offer currently? child care vouchers etc.

A There is no change, you will be entitled to all the benefits that the Local Authority offer.

Q Team teach as a trainer can we train Trust staff?

A yes.

Q Is there anywhere we can look at where we can find out about the experience of other schools that have become a Co-operative Trust?

A In the Birmingham area there is the Four Oaks Trust. Further afield there is the Burton Trust and trusts have been formed all over the county, also try the Co-op trust website.

Q What is it that the Local Authority can't give us that we need?

A In the last Education Act the role of the Local Authority became restricted and their funding was reduced. They are no longer able to provide professional development and school improvement, which now is the role of schools. For example reduction in advisors.

Q Parents might say why aren't we getting the service from the LA.

A they might but in reality we are and have been picking up many of their function for a time.

Q What is the role of the partners?

It is for the Trust to identify what they want from partners. For example, the Universities will be able to provide professional development.

Q What if a few years down the line a or some of the Trust schools move to become an academy?

A Those remaining remain a Trust.

Q Land and Assets – Do I still need to ask the LA if I want to move a door?

A Ask your Governing Board.

Q What if you want an extension or build?

A Same as before.

Co-operative Trust Consultation with Fox Hollies Staff – 24th January

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A Yes.

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A In the last Education Act the role of the Local Authority became restricted and their funding was reduced. They are no longer able to provide professional development and school improvement, which now is the role of schools.

Q What is the role of the partners?

It is for the Trust to identify what they want from partners. For example, the Universities will be able to provide professional development.

Dame Ellen Pinsent School – Staff Consultation **24th January 2018 at 8.00am**

Present: 43 members of staff including 10 teachers

Deb Bacon gave a general introduction - no questions.

Question: Does budget still come from the LA? Answer: Yes

Question: Will TA's need to have new contracts? Answer: No.

Question: Within the consultation paperwork, it states that teachers will automatically continue to be on the same terms & conditions but we make sure that this was the same for support staff – TAs worried about security of jobs. Answer: As a maintained school, the current contract stays exactly the same – all conditions remain the same and any changes would be actioned exactly as they would be now.

Question: What about changes to teachers? Answer: no changes to how things happen – you will still need to make a business case before any changes. Length of service transfers with you.

Question: Does sickness stay the same? Answer: everything stays the same – all terms and conditions stay the same.

Question: After the co-op takes over can it then make changes? Answer: it is not a take-over – co-op cannot tell you what to do.

Question: What if the Trust wants to sell the land? Answer: They can't, the land is in trust for education purpose.

Question: Will the fact that there will be no changes to our conditions be guaranteed in writing? Answer: Yes.

Question: Will we still use the LA HR advice? Answer: Yes.

Question: Will how governors are elected be the same? Answer: yes.

Question: Tell me a downside? Answer: After seven years, I have not found one. Heads may have more meetings and emails.

Question: Would the type of governors be the same? Answer: Yes, it remains up to the school to decide within the regulations.

Question: Has anyone lost their job because of this? Answer: No.

Question: Have you had any staff complaints since becoming a Trust? Answer: No.

Question: Moving forward, what are the new opportunities? Answer: In Burton we worked with Derby University – reduced CPD / work on sports with pupils. Local college provide us with a venue for training days.

Question: Could we move pupils to another Trust School if they don't fit here? Answer: It would be the same as you deal with now – through the City.

Question: Why then are more schools not becoming Co-Operative Trusts? Answer: Because we do not advertise it.

Question: Is this a fast track version? Answer: No the co-operative values say we need consultation – look back to the co-operative values.

Question: What do the co-operative foundation governors do? Answer: They would ensure that the co-op values are followed and Trust plans. Partners have 1 representative and the schools all have two; the Head and the Chair of Governors.

Question: If we decide it is not for us, can we opt out? Answer: Yes, you can become a foundation school without a foundation. The land goes to the governors in trust.

Question: Is this a step towards an academy? Answer: only if you want to.

Question: What about repairs etc? (conversions / builds). Answer: You are still maintained so the LA still has this responsibility. You would stay on the list exactly where you are now.

Question: Why May? Answer: It can be at any time, however we have found that September may not be a good time as your efforts are in bedding down new pupils – clarify changes etc.

Local Authority assurances letter

Date

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,

Assurances from the Local Authority regarding pension arrangements, costs of early retirement and redundancies and related matters.

I write as Chair of the Governing Body of the xxxxxxxxx school. You will be aware that we are currently consulting on changing our school category from community to foundation and at the same time acquiring a charitable trust. The proposed change will mean that the governing body becomes the employing body on implementation day [1st May 2018].

This process is not TUPE, but somewhat similar and taking place under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007) which provides for all rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body of the school. Employees will be employed by the school's Governing Body instead of the Local Authority. The Governing Body will continue to recognise the same teachers' associations and trade unions. The existing rights of teachers will be fully protected if the school acquires a Trust as the Governing Body will still be bound by the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

The Governing Body will set terms and conditions for its own associate (support) staff. However, terms and conditions will be safeguarded as per the prescribed regulations for existing staff and our associate (support staff) will maintain the same employment rights as Local Authority employees.

However, there are now a number of matters we require written assurances on from the Local Authority. These are as follows:

A). Liabilities affecting the governing body in respect of employment matters
The governing body may, as employer, in some circumstances have to appear at an Employment Tribunal to defend the school, if, for example, candidates for a post at the school complain that a governing body's decision or procedure discriminated against them, or if an employee complains that they had been dismissed unfairly.

We would like an assurance in writing that the local authority recognises that in cases of dismissal, it has to pay any compensation or legal costs awarded by an Employment Tribunal unless it can show that it has good reason to charge the school's delegated budget (for example, if the local authority had previously advised the governing body that an Employment Tribunal was likely to decide a dismissal was unfair).

B). Responsibility for the cost of premature retirements and compensation for redundancy.

The governing body, as the employer, can grant premature retirement to the staff for reasons of redundancy, or can terminate a member of staff's employment in the interest of the efficient discharge of their employer function. The governing body also decides on the level of compensation to grant any member of staff they may make redundant.

We would like an assurance in writing that the local authority recognises that it, as the "compensating authority" has to pay "mandatory compensation" towards a teacher's annual pension and retirement lump sum if they are granted premature retirement by the governing body. We do recognise that the local authority has the power to take the costs of premature retirement from a school's delegated budget if the authority has not agreed to the premature retirement. Similarly, the authority is empowered to take the costs of discretionary compensation for redundancy from a school's delegated budget if they have good reason to do so (an example of this might be if the local authority thought the discretionary payment in a particular case was too high in relation to its own policy).

C). Pensions of associate (support) staff.

Associate (support) staff at foundation schools are allowed to continue to be in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), if the local authority, with the consent of the school governing body, has by a statutory resolution specified them to be eligible to belong to the scheme. Otherwise, the associate (support staff) will no longer be members of the LGPS and it will be for them and the school governing body to make alternative pension arrangements. In our case, the governing body has resolved to seek to ensure continuity of pension arrangements for associate (support staff) through the local authority and the LGPS. We are now formally seeking written assurances that

- i) the local authority will agree the statutory resolution specifying that associate (support) staff currently in the LGPS will continue to be eligible to belong to the scheme. We would ask for a copy of the actual resolution and the minute of the meeting where it was agreed.
- ii) the local authority will also agree to associate (support) staff currently not in the LGPS, continue to have the right to join it going forward and that a similar offer be made to new associate (support) staff joining the school in the future.

Yours sincerely,

(Chair of Governors)

Draft staffing protocol

A Protocol on Employees' Terms and Conditions and Union Relations

1. The school will continue to adhere to the national and local conditions of service currently in place for its existing employees and will continue to employ new staff on these terms. All employees' continuity of service will continue, and contracts will only change in that the employer will become the Governing Body. Other contractual details will remain the same.
2. Recognition of the same trade unions and professional associations will continue, and the school will engage with the Unions in the same way in the future, in line with existing local agreements.
3. The School believes that trade unions help ensure good employee relations, will encourage employees to become union members and will inform new appointees accordingly. The School will, on request, provide the trade unions with names and work locations of new appointees.
4. The relevant unions are the teacher unions (ASCL, ATL, NAHT, NASUWT, NUT and VOICE) and the unions representing support and other professional school staff (GMB, UNISON and Unite).
5. Consultation on internal procedural matters and working and organisational arrangements will be dealt with in the first instance by discussions with union representatives within the school, who may ask for support from their local or regional officers if they think this is necessary.
6. If the school in the future considers varying existing terms and conditions, or not adopting variations agreed through the mechanism for negotiating between the Local Authority and its employees, it will notify the local authority representatives of the recognised unions, and will negotiate with them, through a forum consisting of representatives of the school and internal and/or external representatives of each of the recognised unions. In the unlikely event that there is a breakdown in negotiations on terms and conditions, the matter may be referred to the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) in order to seek resolution of the issue. Either party may determine that a matter is referred to ACAS for conciliation. Both parties may subsequently agree, where necessary, that a matter is referred to ACAS for arbitration. Whilst these procedures are being followed the School will honour the status quo ante.
7. The school will write to all employees at the date of transfer to inform them that their new employer is now the Governing Body and that their conditions of employment will not change.