

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

CONFIDENTIAL

Title of Report: Options for the provision of Education services at Goose Green and at the Infant Junior School

Paper No: 164/09

Date: 23rd July 2009

Report of: Acting Director of Education

1.0 Purpose

To consider the possible closure of Goose Green Settlement School from the start of the new academic year, September 2009, or possible options for meeting the staffing needs of the Infant Junior School

2.0 Recommendations

- (a) That members consider the implications of closing settlement schools and provide a political steer for the Education Board and the Education Department.
- (b) That members consider the recommendation of the ADoE that
 - i. that Goose Green School remains open
 - ii. that the Education Department begins the process of recruiting a replacement teacher for the IJS
 - iii. that, in the interim, approval is given for the department to employ a LSA to support the remaining Year 6 teacher in managing a combined Yr 6 class.

3.0 Summary of Financial Implications

	2009/10	2010/11	Full Year
	£	£	£
<u>Operating Budget</u>	£36000	£40000	40000

4.0 Background

4.1 As a result of departure of a Junior Teacher (Year 6), the Infant Junior Camp School has a vacancy in the Infant Junior School that will be very difficult to fill by September 2009.

4.2 As a result of considering the options across IJSCamp the current configuration of staffing in the Camp was reviewed.

4.3 Numbers in Camp Ed. have been falling steadily in recent years. In the past FLH, after negotiation with FIG, agreed to pay 50% of the settlement teacher costs to keep the school open despite numbers falling below the agreed minimum level. Numbers in 2008-09 started off at the minimum but fell away through the year.

4.4 Although numbers in the Camp can be very fluid it is predicted to be 4 students at Goose Green Settlement School in September 2009.

1 x Year 5

1 x Year 1 (sister to the above Year 5 pupil)

2 x Preschool (FS1) (attend half days only) includes one child of the teacher.

(There will be 6 pre-schoolers scheduled to join Goose Green over the next four years.)

4.5 The only reasons for considering the closure of Goose Green School at this time may financial, although closure of the Goose Green school would mean that the current settlement teacher could fill the vacancy in IJS

5.0 Custom and Practice

5.1 It has been custom and practice that we only close settlement schools when either the last primary-aged student has left the settlement or recruitment issues are being considered.

5.2 On the last occasion this issue was considered FLH were approached and agreed to meet 50% of the cost of recruiting a new teacher. The current stance of FLH is that they cannot meet an obligation that they believe was in place for one year only. In view of the support provided by FIG to maintain FLH it hardly seems a reasonable expectation of them at this time

6.0 Further Considerations

6.1 It is difficult for farms to persuade families to live in the Camp and the presence, or otherwise, of a school is often quoted as a deciding factor. Any decision to close the school will cause families at Goose Green to reconsider their position

6.2 FIG is currently in the process of developing a Rural Development Strategy and again any proposal to close schools could be considered to run counter to Rural development.

7.0 Options

7.1 Option 1

Bus the pupils to North Arm Settlement School

(There is a precedent for this on West Falklands with students being transported to Fox Bay School.)

Cost:

Estimated cost of fuel £9 348 plus £3 800 payment for driver total: £13 148.

7.2 Option 2

Combination of Travelling & Telephone Teachers

The normal option for children in Camp apart from Goose Green and North Arm.

This can be done within existing budgets;

Savings:

Year 2009/10 (10 months) salary/rpc £26 200 + flights + £7 710 + relocation + recruitment.

Year 2010/11 (12 months) salary/rpc £31 438 + gratuity £7 710 + flights.

7.3 Option 3

Keeping Goose Green School open, would require recruiting another teacher(a) or LSA (b) for IJS.

Cost:

a) i) Year 2009/10 (10 months) salary/rpc £26 200 + flights + £7 710 + relocation + recruitment + £5000 per annum rent to FLH for school building

ii) Year 2010/11 (12 months) salary/rpc £31 438 + gratuity £7 710 + flights + £6000 pa rent to FLH for school building

b) i) as a) i) above but less £18 270 (50% of settlement teacher)

ii) as a) ii) above but less £18 270 (50% of settlement teacher)

7.4 If Goose Green School remains open it should be possible to combine the two Year 6 classes in the IJS. The remaining Year 6 teacher could manage the class with an additional LSA whilst a new teacher is recruited. However there may be opposition from parents despite the fact that students will have additional support.

8 Financial Implications

The options represent savings of between a maximum of £40 000 in a full year and a minimum saving c£22,000.

9 Legal Implications

None

10 Human Resources Implications

None if Goose Green School is closed. The current teacher will transfer to a vacancy in IJS.

If it is kept open a new teacher will need to be recruited.