

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Education
Date:	20 March 2017
Title:	Amalgamation of Fort Hill Community School and Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College, Basingstoke including the Fort Hill Special Educational Needs resourced provision.
Reference:	8124
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. The decision:

1.1. That the Executive Member for Education approves that a Public Notice be published in accordance with section 15 and 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:

- to discontinue Fort Hill Community School and resourced provision with effect from 31 August 2017 and
- to establish a new Specific Learning Difficulties resource provision at Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. The authority has to evaluate the impact on the school of the number of children in the catchment area of Fort Hill who have chosen to attend the school, against the numbers who have not and go elsewhere to be educated. We have to consider this against the track record of performance and the significant steps that have been taken to improve the school to little avail.
- 2.2. Counterintuitively, smaller schools perform less well than larger schools in the secondary phase. Whilst there are undoubtedly examples of small schools in which pupils perform well, the average performance is below that nationally.
- 2.3. GCSE results in the maintained schools close to Fort Hill are all higher than in Fort Hill. Progress rates are better. Pupils will do better if Fort Hill is closed and they attend other local secondary schools.
- 2.4. An increase in pupil numbers would increase a school's budget and therefore the breadth of educational offer. In general, larger schools are more successful than smaller schools. This is because they have more resources available to them and it is consequently easier to build up a critical mass of

good teaching within the school. So setting up one larger school would be in the interests of pupils currently in both schools

- 2.5. Having considered all the above options, the County Council believes that amalgamating Fort Hill with Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College on the Cranbourne site offers the best potential for success for both schools.
- 2.6. Alternative options or other proposals as to how the required improvement of Fort Hill could be achieved were invited as part of the consultation process, these are detailed in the report. Having reviewed these options it has been concluded that amalgamation of the two schools on the CBEC site provides the best opportunity for school improvement

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- Maintain the current position; make no change
- Find a strong academy sponsor to improve outcomes at the school
- Link Fort Hill Community School with another Basingstoke secondary school
- Create an all-through 4 to 16 school.

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker: None

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted: None

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: None.

6. Reason for the matter being dealt with if urgent: Not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

In reaching this decision, I have also taken into account the deputations made to my Decision Day by Mr Andrew Hood and by Councillor McCormick of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

Approved by:

Date:

**Executive Member for Education
Councillor Peter Edgar**

20 March 2017