

LEAD MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION, SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability, Councillor Bob Standley, on 11 September 2023 at Remote Meeting via Microsoft Teams

20. DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 24 JULY 2023

20.1 The Lead Member approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2023.

21. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

21.1 There were none.

22. URGENT ITEMS

22.1 There were none.

23. REPORTS

23.1 A copy of the reports referred to below is included in the minute book.

24. HOLY CROSS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

24.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services with regard to publishing a statutory proposal in respect of Holy Cross Church of England Primary School.

DECISIONS

24.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

1) approve publication of a statutory proposal in respect of the proposed closure of Holy Cross Church of England Primary School on 31 December 2023; and

2) delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to amend the proposal prior to its publication if required.

REASONS

24.3 The majority of respondents to the consultation object to the proposed closure of the school, with concerns being raised about the impact on staff and children's mental health and emotional wellbeing and the sufficiency of school places in the area. However, the challenges the school has faced remain and will be made worse by the reduction of pupil numbers in the last year. No alternative suggestions have been identified through the consultation process that would address these critical issues.

24.4 The consultation responses have not identified any potential solutions or actions to address the issues the school faces. The views of the local authority and the diocese about the viability of the school remain the same. The very low pupil numbers, the challenge of securing appropriate leadership and teaching staff for the school and the concerns over the quality of education that children are receiving leads us to conclude that closing the school at the earliest opportunity is in the best interests of the children and the school community. The local authority would work with local schools to ensure there would be sufficient places available in the local area for children displaced from Holy Cross Church of England Primary School were it to close following the statutory process.

25. HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND (FOURTH ROUND)

25.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services with regard to publishing a statutory proposal in respect of the fourth round of the Household Support Fund.

DECISIONS

25.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

1) approve the proposed use of £1,896,000 of the Household Support Fund, to provide support to households with children between 1 October 2023 – 31 March 2024; and

2) delegate to the Director of Children's Services authority to implement the scheme.

REASONS

25.3 The scheme provides a further opportunity to extend support to households with children, households with pensioners, households with a disabled person and other vulnerable households within East Sussex who are experiencing financial challenges.