

**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Decision Report**

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services
<b>Date:</b>	17 November 2010
<b>Title:</b>	Post-16 education in the Gosport area
<b>Reference:</b>	1648
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children’s Services

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**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. This report seeks approval for consultations on the future organisation of post-16 education in the Gosport area.
- 1.2. Section 2 explains that local education authorities now have enhanced strategic responsibilities in relation to post-16 education. A review of existing provision is recommended in order to achieve a better post-16 balance in Gosport with a view to improving standards and enhancing choice.
- 1.3. If consultations are approved, a later report would summarise all responses and, if appropriate, propose a “preferred option” for further consultation. It is important to stress that decisions on a “preferred option” for post-16 provision in Gosport would only be made after all consultations had been completed and the outcomes carefully analysed.
- 1.4. Although this report concentrates mainly on the situation in Gosport, reference will also be made, as required, to provision at Fareham College which is attended by a significant number of Gosport students and is the accountable body for “Gosport College” (see 3.10 – 3.12).
- 1.5. A map of the area is included as Appendix A.

**2. The County Council’s new responsibilities for post-16 education**

- 2.1 Section 15ZA of the Education Act 1996, as inserted by section 41 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, states that:  
“A local education authority in England must secure that enough suitable education and training is provided to meet the reasonable needs of —

(a) persons in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19, and;

(b) persons in their area who are aged 19 or over but under 25 and are subject to learning difficulty assessment.”

- 2.2 These new County Council responsibilities, which came into effect on 1 April 2010, are the result of the dissolution in March 2010 of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) which previously had responsibility for post-16 education other than school 6<sup>th</sup> forms. The County Council now has a clear, strategic role in relation to post-16 planning, particularly in areas such as Gosport where there is a mixture of college and school provision.
- 2.3 The Government’s recent decision to transfer responsibility for post-16 funding, other than school 6<sup>th</sup> forms, from local authorities to the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) does not detract from what the Local Government Association has recently referred to as a “strong, strategic role [for local authorities] in overseeing the education and training offered in their local area”. (LGA media release 20 July 2010) The County Council’s statutory responsibilities, set out in paragraph 2.1, have not changed.
- 2.4 The importance of taking into account the wider picture has been highlighted by Gosport Borough Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s report on post-16 vocational education within the borough. The committee noted that, as the scrutiny process went forward, they became “increasingly aware of the difficulty of examining post-16 vocational education in isolation from educational provision in general and 14-19 vocational provision in particular...” (Para 2.7 of report approved by Gosport Borough Council on 31 March 2010).
- 2.5 Contact with local schools and colleges has highlighted the following priorities in relation to post-16 provision:
- ensuring good quality, coherent post-16 provision throughout the area
  - increasing post-16 participation in learning by potential Gosport students from its current 76% particularly since this overall figure masks much lower rates in the wards of Bridgemary North and South, Rowner, Holbrook, Grange and Elson where it is significantly below both the Hampshire and the regional averages
  - increasing the number of students remaining in Gosport to continue their post-16 studies rather than attending Fareham and other colleges
  - further reducing the number of Gosport young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) – 7.6% (159 young people 16-18) in June 2010 (c.f: Fareham 3.6% (102); Havant 8.9% (268)); n.b: later figures are less reliable because of volatility at the start of the academic year
  - determining the most appropriate location for a skills centre, approved in principle by the local LSC in 2009/10, catering mainly for Key Stage 4 pupils but also available for older students, as part of a general review of post-16 provision.
- 2.6 As far as the timing of this proposed review is concerned, it is instructive to bear in mind that, on the basis of the Department for Education’s (DfE) criteria (i.e: GCSE performance and deprivation), Gosport was identified as

the second Building Schools for the Future (BSF) priority area in the county after Havant. These same factors also influence post-16 provision and outcomes.

- 2.7 It is important to recall that, based on current legislation, the education participation age will rise to 17 from 2013, up to which age all young people will be required to continue in education, training, or employment with a training element. The County Council will be responsible for ensuring appropriate provision is available for this extra demand which will increase further from 2015 when the participation age is raised to 18. The proposed withdrawal of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) might also affect student choices.
- 2.8 To some extent the extra demand created by this rise in the participation age might be counter-balanced by a demographically driven 9.5% decline in the number of 16 year olds in Gosport and Fareham during the next ten years. (Source: County Council Environment Department: 2009 based Small Area Population Forecasts.)
- 2.9 In proposing to consult on the future organisation of post-16 education in Gosport, the absolute interdependency between the development of high quality provision for young people and the need for a sustainable adult learning offer to support individual skills development, community cohesion and economic prosperity is recognised. Any subsequent proposal arising from the consultation exercise must take this issue fully into account.

### **3 Existing post-16 provision in Gosport Schools**

- 3.1 Three Gosport secondary schools cater for pupils from Year 7 to Year 11 (Key Stages 3 and 4). They are Bay House School, Bridgemary Community Sports College and Brune Park Community College. Bay House has a 6<sup>th</sup> form which provides AS (Advanced Supplementary) and A2 (A level) courses together with a range of more vocationally based programmes. (The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) positions GCSE grades D-G at Level 1, GCSE grades A\*-C at Level 2 and A levels at Level 3.
- 3.2 All Gosport and Fareham secondary schools, special schools and work-based learning providers work together as members of the Gosport and Fareham 14-19 consortium. The consortium has successfully developed a wide range of diplomas, focussing on applied skills with a mix of practical experience and theoretical learning. Despite the Government's decision to cancel academic and extended diplomas, and to revoke the entitlement requirement, the Gosport and Fareham consortium is offering all seven diplomas in 2010/11.
- 3.3 AS and A2 courses are also offered by Fareham College and St Vincent College in Gosport. For 2010/11, the two colleges and Bay House are offering a minimum of 38 A2 levels, 30 of which will be available in more than one institution, thus offering choice to potential students and requiring providers to ensure that their programmes are well promoted.

### **St Vincent College, Gosport**

- 3.4 St Vincent College, one of 15 post-16 colleges in Hampshire, is an open access 6th Form College. It mainly serves learners in the Gosport area, where there are wards of significant deprivation and traditionally low participation in post-16 learning. 1,080 16-18 learner places have been commissioned for the academic year 2010/11. Learners will follow a range of AS and A2 courses, BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) national qualifications and level 1 and 2 qualifications. The college has a £5.023m 16-18 learner responsive allocation for 2010/11 including additional learning support. Total turnover in 2008/09, the last year for which final accounts are available, was £6.149m.
- 3.5 The college's accommodation comprises a range of building styles from a 19<sup>th</sup> century military façade, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century brick buildings and more modern late 20<sup>th</sup> century construction. Nearly a third of the accommodation is either nationally or locally listed.
- 3.6 The college was inspected by Ofsted in November 2008 and judged to be good. Key strengths were a diverse and responsive curriculum offering good provision and outstanding educational and social inclusion. Areas for improvement included success rates in some courses, improvement action planning and the financial position of the college. The subsequent monitoring visit judged that reasonable progress had been made across all areas previously identified for improvement.

### **Bay House School and 6<sup>th</sup> form**

- 3.7 Bay House School and 6th Form catchment area covers the southern part of Gosport, including Lee-on-the-Solent. 400 16-18 learner places have been commissioned for the academic year 2010/11. The number on roll in September 2010 was 2,166 (1,743 Years 7-11; 423 6<sup>th</sup> form). The school has a 16-18 learner responsive allocation of £2.001m for 2010/11 including additional learning support.
- 3.8 The receipt of capital funding over recent years from the LSC has facilitated additional 6<sup>th</sup> form accommodation to cater for an increasing demand for places. More than half the students attending the Bay House 6<sup>th</sup> form attended other schools for their statutory secondary education.
- 3.9. The school was inspected by Ofsted in March 2008. It was described as a good school with several outstanding features. Its 6th form was deemed to be outstanding. The school's post-16 value-added score for 2009 was the highest of all institutions in Hampshire, including independent. (Source: DfE performance tables)

### **“Gosport College”**

- 3.10 Acting on legal advice regarding the sufficiency of 16-19 provision in Gosport, the former LSC commissioned Fareham College to deliver an additional 130 vocational post-16 places in Gosport from September 2010. This followed a call for expressions of interest by the LSC to which both Fareham College and St Vincent College responded. The additional places were awarded to a consortium of Fareham College, the three Gosport secondary schools and Fareport Training (see 3.12).

- 3.11 This provision is being promoted under the banner of “Gosport College” with a dedicated programme prospectus and website ([www.gosport.ac.uk](http://www.gosport.ac.uk)). Management of the college is vested in the “Gosport College” Executive, which comprises the three Gosport secondary headteachers, the principal of Fareham College and the managing director Fareport Training. “Gosport College” is not a legal entity and so all students recruited to provision under the “Gosport College” banner are legally students of Fareham College, the contract holder and accountable body for programme performance and learner outcomes.
- 3.12 The partnership has developed a broad skills-based programme, offered at foundation level to target those not accessing the current local offer. Courses are being delivered at school and college locations, as well as Fareham College's skills centre at Fareham Reach and Fareport's training centre in Gosport High Street.

### **Fareham College**

- 3.13 Fareham College lies on the A27 within walking distance of the station and town centre. 2050 16-18 learner places have been commissioned for the academic year 2010/11. Latest figures for the current term show that 36.8% of learners attending Fareham College come from Gosport. The college offers a broad range of vocational and academic provision from entry level to level 4/5 professional courses, including apprenticeships, with most learners following a Level 3 course. Vocational and applied courses are the most popular and the college is developing its Foundation Learning provision. The college also offers alternative, more practical provision for some 450 14-16 year old pupils attending local schools, as well as an extension programme for gifted and talented pupils. The college has a £9.647m 16-18 learner responsive allocation for 2010/11 including additional learning support. Total turnover was £12.347m in 2008/09 (latest available figures).

### **Other local providers**

- 3.14 The other main provider of post-16 education in the area is Fareport Training, a work-based learning provider mainly covering the Gosport and Fareham area. 326 learner places, targeting hard to reach learners, have been commissioned at Fareport for the academic year 2010/11. Provision includes health and social care, childcare, customer services, business administration, ICT, retail and hairdressing. There is also a large Apprenticeship programme. Fareport's 16-18 learner responsive allocation for 2010/11 is £0.745m.
- 3.15 Young people from Gosport also access post-16 provision offered by other providers within a wider travel-to-learn area, including Highbury College, Portsmouth College, Paragon Training, PETA, Catch 22 and Motiv8.

## **4 Recent reviews of post-16 provision in Gosport and Fareham**

- 4.1 In recent years, there have been a number of reviews of post-16 education in Gosport and Fareham. In 2005, at the request of the LSC, KPMG (Klynfeld Peat Marwick Goerdeler) prepared a Strategic Options Review of Post-16 provision in the area. KPMG identified a number of possible ways

forward, ranging from maintenance of the status quo through to variations on collaboration or merger.

- 4.2 KPMG also identified significant gaps in levels 1 and 2 provision, especially in the Gosport area. This was one of the themes picked up the following year in a complementary report by Bentley Jennison Consulting on Post-16 Curriculum Planning in the Fareham and Gosport area. This 2006 report also identified the comparatively limited range of AS and A2 courses available in the north of the area and the high numbers of students leaving the area to access AS and A2 courses at other post-16 providers.
- 4.3 This detailed examination of the various issues surrounding post-16 provision in the Gosport and Fareham area culminated in a 2007 proposal to merge the two colleges, possibly in newly built accommodation on the HMS Daedalus former Fleet Air Arm naval base at Lee-on-the-Solent. After substantial local consultation, the proposed merger did not go ahead. The significant capital funding potentially available at the time is no longer available.
- 4.4 The consultation document prepared at the time drew particular attention in Gosport to KS4 performance, the narrow range of vocational provision at levels 1 and 2, low post-16 participation and comparatively high NEET levels. The range of level 3 courses in the Fareham area and the need for collaboration between all post-16 providers was also highlighted.
- 4.5 In response to these findings, there is now greater availability of level 1 and 2 courses in Gosport; similarly, there is now a greater range of L3 courses in Fareham. Joint working between members of the local 14-19 consortium has brought about greater overall coherence in the local curriculum offer.

#### **Latest KPMG report**

- 4.6 In May 2010, KPMG published a further report, originally commissioned by the national LSC, on Delivering Value for Money through Infrastructural Change. This report looks at post-16 provision nationwide with particular emphasis on value for money and can be accessed at:  
[http://readingroom.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/sfa/vfm\\_infrastructural\\_change\\_report.pdf](http://readingroom.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/sfa/vfm_infrastructural_change_report.pdf)
- 4.7 The implications of this report for post-16 provision will need to be considered during the consultation period.

### **5 Possible future options**

- 5.1 A number of possible future options for post-16 provision in Gosport are summarised below and referred to in more detail in sections 5.2 – 5.8. Other options might well emerge during consultations.
  - maintenance of the *status quo*;
  - federation or collaboration between post-16 providers;
  - merger between post-16 providers;
  - review the role of “Gosport College” in relation to other providers.

#### **Maintenance of the *status quo***

- 5.2 The 2010 KPMG report drew attention to the likely financial difficulties in the sector as a whole, echoed by recent discussions in the specialist educational press. Postponing any review of post-16 provision in the area

could put providers at a disadvantage in terms of both curriculum and financial planning.

### **Federation and collaboration**

- 5.3 Under present legislation, although informal collaboration remains an option, if federation is to be considered, only “soft governance federation” (DfE description) between colleges is possible. Under this arrangement each college retains its governing body but a joint governance/strategic committee with delegated powers can be established, the extent of its powers being agreed by the governing bodies. This allows governing bodies to share the planning and management of key areas of their responsibilities.
- 5.4 The Collaboration Arrangements (Maintained Schools and Further Education Bodies) (England) Regulations 2007 provide the statutory basis for any formal collaboration between schools and colleges. Given the role of Bay House School in the provision of post-16 education, it is helpful to record that the Explanatory Note to these regulations explains that they “enable governing bodies of maintained schools and further education bodies to develop joint working arrangements and, if they wish, to delegate the exercise of their functions to one or more joint committees”.

### **Post -16 merger**

- 5.5 There are two ways in which a merger could be implemented:
- in the first model, a new corporation would be established and the existing corporations dissolved and transferred to the new corporation;
  - in the second model, one of the corporations would continue whilst the other(s) would be dissolved and transferred to the continuing corporation.
- 5.6 Under the current statutory framework, the final decision on any merger proposal would be taken by the Secretary of State who would require a very detailed and wide-ranging portfolio of information before coming to any decision.

### **Incorporation of “Gosport College”**

- 5.7 As explained in section 3, “Gosport College” is now a reality, in the sense that a management structure has been established and courses are now running. The college is run under the auspices of Fareham College because the funding for the programme outlined in the college prospectus was allocated to Fareham College by the LSC.
- 5.8 “Gosport College” could be established as a self-standing 6th form college corporation, approved by the Secretary of State for Education (under section 33C of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992) as a body corporate. Whether this would be a viable option in practice would depend on proposals for the area as a whole.

## **6. Finance**

- 6.1 It is anticipated that, given the procedures proposed for any initial consultation exercise, costs could be covered from within departmental resources.

- 6.2 Depending on the outcome of consultations and the details of any future “preferred option”, it is likely that any further reports will need to contain a detailed financial analysis of proposals and information about funding sources.
- 6.3 Despite the Secretary of State’s recent decision to hand over responsibility for funding to the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA), the County Council retains a key commissioning rôle within the parameters of budgets and funding rules operated by the YPLA and must therefore be certain that any proposals have been rigorously costed and funding identified.

## **7 Consultation procedures**

- 7.1 If approval to consult is granted, this report and an explanatory note will be posted on the Children’s Services website on 18 November, with the facility to respond on-line or by letter. Consultations will be publicised in the local media. Consultees would include the governors of all local secondary schools and colleges, representatives of school and college students, local county councillors, local MPs and MEPs, Gosport and Fareham Borough Councils, Southampton and Portsmouth City Councils, the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), Solent Local Enterprise Partnership, professional associations and trades unions, community groups, the Local Children’s Partnership, the local Hampshire Action Team and private sector post-16 providers. Employers, including the Royal Navy, will be consulted directly and via local employer representative groups.
- 7.2 Taking into account the Christmas holiday period, it is recommended that consultations should run until the end of January 2011. Once responses had been analysed, in accordance with agreed procedures, a further report would be submitted to the Executive Lead Member, summarising the outcome of consultations and, if appropriate, proposing a single “preferred option” for further consultation.
- 7.3 Given the complexity of this issue and, in particular, the demands of the detailed advice in the LSC guidance and the need to ensure proper consideration of all responses, any second report is unlikely to be presented before April 2011 at the earliest.

## **8. Conclusion and recommendations**

- 8.1 Taking into account the issues raised in this report, and in order to ensure long-term, sustainable post-16 provision in Gosport, a detailed, and transparent, review is now appropriate.
- 8.2 If consultations are approved, and bearing in mind the complexity of patterns of 16-plus provision, every effort will be made to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are identified and encouraged to respond.
- 8.3 All responses will be carefully analysed before any decisions are taken. Any decisions will focus on a determination to provide an effective range of high quality provision to meet the needs of all young people in the area.

**9 Recommendation(s)**

That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services be asked to approve:

- initial consultations on the future pattern of post-16 provision in the Gosport area
- the preparation of a report summarising the outcome of consultations and, if appropriate, proposing a "preferred option" for further consultations.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	No
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Maximising well-being:</b>	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>	Yes

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

**IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

**1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

1.1 Equalities issues will feature in the consultation process.

**2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1. Consultations will not change the existing pattern of post-16 provision in the area and are unlikely to have any direct impact on crime and disorder.

**3. Climate Change:**

3.1 How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No proposals have yet been made.

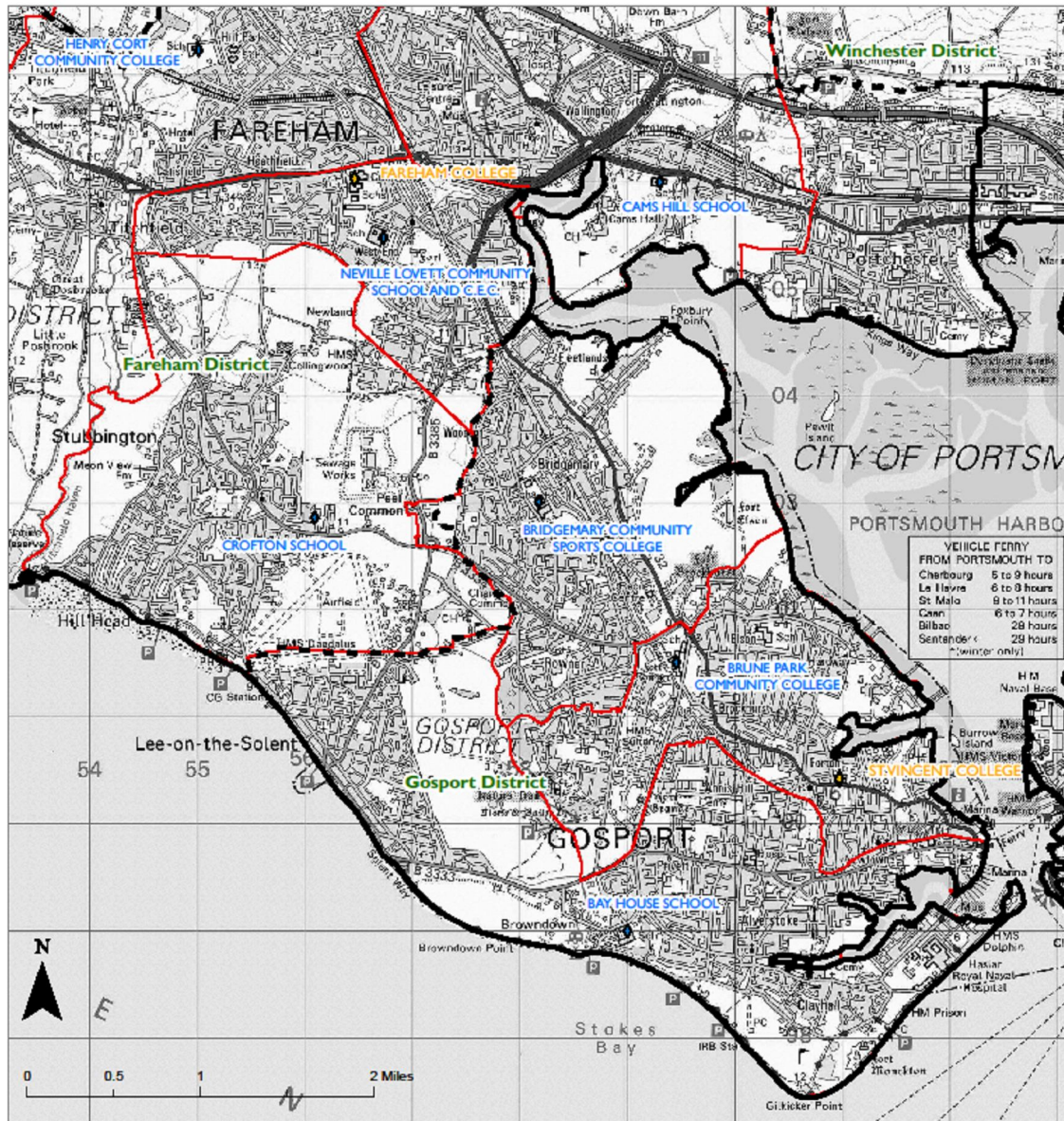
3.2 How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No proposals have yet been made.

Appendix A

Secondary Schools and Colleges in the Gosport and Fareham area

May 2010



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**Legend**

- ◆ Selected Secondary Schools (not ind. schools)
- ◆ Further Education Establishments
- ▭ School Catchments 11 to 16
- ▭ HCC District Boundaries
- ▭ HCC and Unitaries Boundaries

