

Meeting: Staff consultation

Date/Time: Tuesday 6 July at 3.30pm

Venue: Hookergate Comprehensive School

Present:	Cllr M Graham	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Communities: East, Economic Development
	Margaret Whellans	Group Director Learning & Children
	David Mitchell	Director Learning and Schools
	Peter Crabtree	Headteacher Hookergate School
	Steve Williamson	Headteacher Ryton School
	Tim Nelson	School Inspector
	Sandra Hewson	Senior HR Adviser
	Dilys Cowper	Financial Support Services Manager
	Anita Dowson	Note taker

Attendance: 57

Margaret Whellans opened the meeting and thanked those present for attending and explained the purpose of the meeting.

Introductions were made by representatives from the Local Authority.

David Mitchell gave an overview on progress since informal consultation in 2009 and highlighted issues regarding recent announcements by Government indicating that BSF projects in Gateshead have been suspended.

The following questions and comments were raised by members of staff at Hookergate Comprehensive School.

- Considering new school has been stopped and other schools at Whickham and Ryton are oversubscribed could the size of those schools be reduced and Hookergate remain open?
- If the money doesn't become available what is the contingency plan and is there a plan in place?
- Once the review is complete and reported back in September will the authority have to bid for the money again and restart the whole process?
- If the money isn't going to be available for a few years could the schools be run on both sites and maintain the buildings to avoid

overflowing Ryton school?

- A year ago David Mitchell explained the way forward on BSF and was told Gateshead had failed to get the funding in an earlier stage. If the funding had been secured at that time would the position have been different for a new school and would the project not have been stopped?
- If the new school isn't built will the rebranding of Ryton still happen before Hookergate closes?
- So far the focus on staffing in the school has been on teaching staff having jobs. There have only been vague assurances regarding the support staff, when will the position regarding support staff be known as there is a great deal of concern amongst support staff. What ideas/plans are in place to for structures?
- There will be a big impact on the community and parents belief is the school is closed and pupils will just be moved into Ryton.
- What will be done to rebrand Ryton and make moving to Ryton site more palatable to the local community? The consultation process was to get community buy-in.
- Would like reassurances that students won't have to have temporary accommodation when anything does happen.
- Could Hookergate become a low school for Ryton to save on demountable buildings being put up and would years 7, 8, 9 being located at Hookergate be an option?

Margaret Whellans raised awareness of the Trade Union meeting being held on 7 July and suggested staffing issues should be raised at that meeting via TU representatives. Margaret Whellans also encouraged staff to send in their comments via the consultation booklets which had been distributed too.

The meeting of staff at Hookergate School closed at 4.00pm.