

## Appendix B2

### Minutes of Public Meeting to consult on proposals to reorganise early years provision at Hillbourne School & Nursery

Held at 6.00pm on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at Hillbourne School & Nursery.

#### Present:

16 members of the public including:

- Gail Logan, Assistant Head at Hillbourne School & Nursery
- Cathy Ashford, Business Manager at Hillbourne School & Nursery
- Karen Hartshorn, Chair of Governors at Hillbourne School & Nursery
- Jane Auger, Twin Oaks Pre-School Manager

#### Borough of Poole officers present:

- Vicky Wales, Head of Children, Young People and Learning (VW)
- Nicola Keynes, Principal Asset Planning and Development Manager (NK)
- Ian Johns, Asset Management and Sustainability Officer
- Mandy Gridley, Sufficiency and Childcare Manager
- Rachel Folley, Place Planning and School Organisation Officer (RF)
- Freya Ells, Business Support Officer

Vicky Wales (VW) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced representatives from the School, Twin Oaks Pre-School and Borough of Poole.

VW explained that the purpose of the meeting was to consult parents and other interested parties on the proposal to close Hillbourne Nursery, which will involve changing the age range of the school from 3 – 11 to 4 – 11, and to move Twin Oaks Pre-School into the early years building from the Waterloo youth club. This would enable the school and pre-school to work together more closely. She then gave a presentation to explain the proposal and the reasons for it.

A slide was shown of the current layout of the 'Little Acorns' building (ground floor). Ian Johns (IJ) explained that the two large rooms on the right of the plan shown will be the Pre-School's and the two large rooms on the left will be for the Reception pupils.

VW explained the reason for the proposal. There are not enough children locally to support both the Nursery and the Pre-School; the low number on roll at the Nursery means it is not financially viable. VW introduced Jane Auger (JA) to inform the meeting about Twin Oaks Pre-School.

JA informed the meeting that Twin Oaks is a committee-run, voluntary, non-profit-making Pre-School that takes 2 – 4 year olds. It has been located at Waterloo Youth Centre for almost 21 years and has good parental partnership. There is a high staff / child ratio and all staff members are trained to Level 3 and attend regular training. The last 3 Ofsted ratings have been 'good'.

There are 30 places per session currently; if the proposal proceeds they plan to expand to 40 places per session. Current opening times are 5 mornings each week, 5 lunch clubs and 2 afternoon sessions. If the proposal succeeds Twin Oaks plans to move to 5 full days.

JA outlined some of the advantages of being located in the early years block at the school if the proposals proceed. These include improved toilets, space for free play and space to display the children's artwork. Dedicated space will mean that it is not necessary to pack all equipment away at the end of each session.

VW said that Twin Oaks has a good relationship with the Youth Centre but the facilities there are not as flexible as the early years block would be. The early years block would allow better flexibility particularly for expansion of 2 year old provision. This will also allow the children's transition from pre-school to school to be developed to be even better than it is already.

VW invited open questions.

**Question 1:** My son has just turned 2 in January; we haven't been in the area long. If I enrol him at Twin Oaks now and the proposal is agreed will he come here in September?

**Answer 1 (NK):** Yes. NK explained that the legal process will take us until the end of June, there has been very positive feedback so far so we are proceeding on the basis that the proposal will go ahead. We are already looking at the building works that will be needed. The Pre-School will continue to operate if there is a delay.

**Question 2:** What work will be done in the Reception block?

**Answer 2 (IJ):** The block is dated and additional toilets are needed because we are required to keep the Pre-School and Reception separate. There will be some additional work as the building is very old. We need to make sure the Reception year is not disadvantaged by lack of space

**Question 3:** If the work is not done by September, will Twin Oaks be safe where they are?

**Answer 3 (VW):** If there is a delay Twin Oaks will not be asked to leave the Youth Centre. The Youth Centre belongs to the Council and is allocated to VW's service.

**Question 4:** When will the change happen?

**Answer 4 (VW):** September 2014

**Question 5:** What will the Youth Centre be used for during the day, can it be used for additional school hall space if it is free?

**Answer 5 (VW):** ; Councillors have not made a decision yet. It is not a good building and it runs as a charged space.

**Question 6:** Does it belong to the school?

**Answer 6 (VW):** No, it is owned by the Council and allocated to Open Access Purposes. The Council will need to look at the longevity of the space as the building is very run down. At the moment it will continue to deliver positive activities for young people in the area.

**Question 7:** Will Twin Oaks have a separate access?

**Answer 7 (IJ):** We are looking at separate access from the main road.

**Question 8:** If the youth centre is available for lettings the school would be concerned about competition to its own lettings.

**Answer 8 (VW):** You would not lose lettings to the youth centre.

VW thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions. The feedback has been positive. The next stage is to ask Councillors for a decision to support the proposal.

NK informed the meeting that the next stage of the statutory process is to publish a Statutory Notice. Then there will be a 'Representation period' to consult the wider public. All the feedback will be collated and Councillors will make a decision in May or June.

A member of Twin Oaks' staff expressed concern at how few responses to the consultation have been received. The group felt this was positive as it indicates a potential lack of objection to the proposal.

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.