



Approval to publish a Statutory Notice to permanently extend the age range of Widden Primary from 4-11 to 2-11 years from October 2022.

<b>Dates between which decision will be taken</b>	Earliest date: 11 May 2022 Latest date: 25 May 2022
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Philip Robinson Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	Following a period of consultation, we seek permission to publish a statutory notice to permanently extend the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 years at Widden Primary School from October 2022.
<b>Recommendation</b>	That the Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills approves the publication of the Statutory Notice proposing to permanently extend the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 years at Widden Primary School from October 2022.
<b>Reasons for recommendations</b>	Following discussions with the Head Teacher and Governors of the school it was agreed with the request of the DfE to publish a Statutory Notice on extending the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 years. This will allow the school to meet the requirements of converting to an academy by ensuring that the Nursery can be transferred as part of the school.
<b>Resource Implications</b>	No resource implications have been identified at this time other than Officer time and the cost of publicising details of the proposed changes in accordance with the statutory process. Officers will monitor this with colleagues in other teams to ensure that this remains the case.
<b>Background Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consultation letter</li><li>• Consultation report</li><li>• Equalities Impact Assessment</li><li>• Director of Children's Services Decision report</li></ul>
<b>Statutory Authority</b>	Gloucestershire County Council's statutory duty under the Education Act 2011
<b>Divisional Councillor(s)</b>	Cllr Sajid Patel

<b>Officer</b>	<b>Any representations should be sent to:</b>  Name: Tracy Eales, Education Planning Manager Tel. no: 01452 328677 Email: <a href="mailto:tracy.eales@gloucestershire.gov.uk">tracy.eales@gloucestershire.gov.uk</a>  <b>By 5pm on 10 May 2022</b>
<b>Timeline</b>	If recommendations are accepted: Publish Statutory Notice – June 2022 Final decision on expansion – August/September 2022

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) regulations 2013, changes to the age range of 1 year or more requires a statutory process of consultation, consideration of representations and decision by the Local Authority about whether to implement the changes.
- 1.2 Widden Primary School is a Community school and in the process of converting to an academy. The school caters for children aged 4-11 and has a Nursery within the school grounds. However, pupils at the Nursery are not currently on the school roll. Funding is paid into the main School budgets via a journal payment and a separate cost code set up for the Nursery Funding Money. The Department for Education has approached the County Council requesting the Council to exercise its statutory powers to extend the age range of the school to begin the process of academisation. If agreed, following consultation, this will enable the nursery to be integrated during the academy conversion process to avoid it remaining a separate entity from the school.
- 1.3 The proposal being presented here is to enable the statutory process of consultation to be undertaken to enable the Council to consider extending the school's age range.
- 1.4 If the proposal to extend the school's age range proceeds, following the statutory consultation process, 2-3 year olds would then be on the school roll and will be included in the school census. Parents will still need to make a separate application to Gloucestershire County Council for a place in the Reception class.
- 1.5 The Nursery provisions for the 2 and 3 year olds are led by suitably qualified staff. Gloucestershire's Early Years and Childcare Service is supportive of this proposal. As there is no change in the physical premises planning consent is not required and there will be no effect to the school's Published Admission Number for school aged children, nor any change to the school's net capacity.

## **2. Options**

- 2.1 There are 2 options open for the Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills to consider:
  - 1) To publish a Statutory Notice to permanently extend the age range of Widden Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11 years from October 2022.
  - 2) Not to publish a Statutory Notice to extend the age range of Widden Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11 years from October 2022.

## **3. Risks**

- 3.1 Should the DfE grant an Academy order, the conversion process will be completed by the DfE in parallel with the age range extension. If the order is not forthcoming, then the age range extension will not come into effect. Should the Council not

undertake the process to extend the age range of the school the Nursery will not transfer with the school on conversion to an academy and the Nursery could close and leave a shortfall nursery places.

## **Mitigation**

3.2 The Lead Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills to approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to extend the age range, enabling the nursery to be transferred as part of the school.

## **4. Financial implications**

4.1 No financial implications have been identified at this time other than Officer time and the cost of publicising details of the proposed changes in accordance with the statutory process. Officers will monitor this will colleagues in other teams to ensure that this remains the case.

## **5. Climate change implications**

5.1 There are no climate change implications of making this decision.

## **6. Equality implications**

6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been produced. The proposal does not discriminate against any of the protected groups and actively seeks to improve outcomes for children.

6.2 The Cabinet Member should read and consider the Equalities Impact Assessment in order to satisfy themselves as decision makers that due regard has been given.

## **7. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications**

8.1 There are no Data Protection considerations to note.

## **8. Social value implications**

8.1 Supporting the work of the School, Governors and DfE to improve outcomes for the children at the school. They have identified that Academy conversion is the best option going forward and this process will support that.

## **9. Consultation feedback**

9.1 The Council received a total of 4 responses to the consultation.

9.2 Respondents were asked to identify themselves as belonging to one or more groups. 3 identified themselves as a parent/carer with a child currently at Widden Primary School and 1 as a local resident.

9.3 A full copy of the consultation report is attached as an annex to this report.

9.4 Responses to the question were as follows:

**Q1.** To what extent do you agree or disagree that the age range should be extended at Widden Primary School?

9.6 This question received 4 responses. Of these, 4 agreed or strongly agreed.

#### **Response to the consultation**

9.7 Respondents were asked for any further comments they may have about the proposal. No respondents chose to make such comments.

### **10. Officer recommendations**

10.1 Officers recommend that Option 1 is adopted: to publish a Statutory Notice to permanently extend the age range at Widden Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11 years from October 2022. This will only take place on the issuing of a Funding Agreement by the Secretary of State.

### **11. Performance management/follow-up**

11.1 This project will be kept under review by the Head of Commissioning for Learning.