

REPRESENTATIONS TO STATUTORY PROPOSAL FOR GILLAS LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

A	B	C	D	E
No.	Name	Responding as	Issued Raised	Response
1.	Mr D Coulbeck Report	Gillas Lane Action to Support School (GLASS)	(i) Statutory guidance for Decision makers - Surplus Places Standards Community use Parental choice Core agenda 'The removal of surplus places must always support the core agenda of raising standards and respect parents' wishes by seeking to match school places with parental choices	Surplus places: The local authority has a duty to keep the number of school places under review. There are two key calculations that are taken into account in measuring LA performance in relation to surplus places – the overall number of surplus places calculated as a percentage of total places across the local authority and the number of individual schools with 25+% surplus places. Standards: Educational standards were not taken into account in the initial stages of the review and planning of school places. However, in formulating the proposal for closure, consideration was given to the attainment at Gillas Lane Primary School and Bernard Gilpin Primary School, as the receiving school. The overall Ofsted judgement for Gillas Lane Primary School is good and at Bernard Gilpin it is satisfactory. However, in terms of attainment, the schools achieve broadly similar results, with Gillas Lane achieving higher in some areas and Bernard Gilpin higher in others. Community Use: The school is not used by the community

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				<p>Parental choice:</p> <p>Gillas Lane Primary School is one of a number of maintained primary schools in the area. There are sufficient places to accommodate the pupils from Gillas Lane at Bernard Gilpin Primary School, which has been named as the receiving school and which is less than 0.5 of a mile from Gillas Lane Primary school. Whilst it is accepted that the closure of the school will reduce the number of maintained schools in the area for which parents can express a preference, there are other maintained schools in the area that have available places and parents may express a preference for them, rather than the named school. Reports to Cabinet, as the decision makers, have included minutes of consultation meetings and responses. The local authority has balanced parents' right to express a preference for a school, against the availability of places in the immediate area and its duty to manage the supply of school places in formulating the proposal.</p>
			(ii) Assessment Criteria Principles Financial information	<p>Principles</p> <p>The principles applied in the options appraisal were agreed by Cabinet after extensive consultation.</p> <p>Financial Information</p> <p>Capital and revenue funding information, including the sources of funding, is contained within the main body of each Cabinet report. Additional financial information has also been provided on the estimated costs of remodelling to realign the net capacities at both schools had the proposal been to do so.</p>

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			(iii) Option Appraisal Nursery Implementation date Meals Staff	<p>Nursery At the stage 3 consultation meetings with Gillas Lane and Bernard Gilpin Primary schools, officers gave conflicting messages about nursery provision, should Gillas Lane close under either option 1 or 2. The position was clarified at the subsequent February 2009 stage 4 meetings, that there is sufficient nursery provision in the area to meet demand, should Gillas Lane Primary School close.</p> <p>Implementation date Officers presented data at the meeting on 23 February 2009 which showed projected pupil numbers. Officers also advised the meeting that the <u>earliest</u> the proposal could be implemented was 2011 and pointed out that if that was the implementation date it would mean the year 6 year group would exceed 60. Copies of the PowerPoint presentation used at the meeting are available and confirm that officers were not reliant on parents pointing out the facts to them but rather that the information was presented to parents.</p> <p>Meals The statement in the Options appraisal that Gillas Lane Primary School supplies the meals to Bernard Gilpin school was acknowledged as being incorrect at the 23 February 2009 meetings. The meals are in fact supplied by New Penshaw Primary School. Whilst accepting that the statement was incorrect it does not impact on the validity of the options appraisal because it has no material affect on the position of Gillas Lane Primary School.</p> <p>Staff The impact of staffing under options 1 & 2 were correctly stated as being the same i.e. under both options staff would be made redundant. However, under option 2, amalgamation of Gillas Lane and Bernard Gilpin Primary Schools, staff would have been in a position to apply for jobs at the newly created school.</p>

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			(iv) Formal Complaints	Until a decision is made by the Committee, the statutory process is still ongoing. Matters raised as complaints, which in fact related to the consultation process and consultation meetings, were included in the report for consideration by Cabinet in April 2009. As such Cabinet considered the issues raised when deciding whether to approve the publication of a statutory notice. In that way, the matters raised as complaints were considered and did inform the decision making process.
			(v) Demographics and House Building Population House building	<p>Population The objective data used for future projections is that supplied on a ward basis by the Office for National Statistics, which includes the latest actual information they have available plus information on future projections. Live and projected births are not based on anecdotal evidence.</p> <p>House building Throughout the school place planning exercise, advice on potential housing developments has been provided by the Council's Development and Regeneration directorate. Whilst there are a number of sites in the Houghton area identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, only the impact of those with definite plans for development have been included in the projections.</p>

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			(vi) Parents' Voice	<p>There has been three stages of consultation which has included parents/carers and other interested parties. Their views have been recorded in notes of the meetings and the written responses to consultation. Each report to Cabinet has included the relevant notes and responses and the general feeling of parents and others has been included in the body of each report.</p> <p>The Children's Services Review Committee (CSRC) (now Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny Committee) has received regular reports and presentations and set up a working party to review the process to ensure that the consultation being undertaken was robust. The feedback from that group was very positive. At their meeting of 12 March 2009, members received a report and members of the Houghton community attended the meeting and had the opportunity to address the committee. The Chairman advised members of the public that he would ensure that a copy of the minutes of the meeting outlining their concerns was submitted to Cabinet for their consideration. Included in the minutes were matters which the Chairman felt should be drawn to the attention of Cabinet for their consideration. The matters and the response to them were addressed in the 8 April 2009 report to Cabinet.</p> <p>The consultation meetings were planned to give maximum opportunity for all of those who wanted to attend to do so. Crèche facilities were offered at each of the meetings for parents/carers. There were no requests to change the day or times of the meetings and there were no issues raised about the timing of the meetings.</p> <p>School Place planning is a very sensitive area and whilst genuine and robust consultation has taken place, the local authority must balance the views of parents against the duty to manage school places, now and for the future.</p>
			(vii) Parental Choice	See E1(i) above

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			(viii) Pupils Consultation Integration Options	<p>Consultation Children's Services Personal Social, Health, Citizenship, Education (PSHCE) consultant, who leads on children and young people involvement in the City, contacted both Gillas Lane school and Bernard Gilpin school (as the receiving school) to discuss an appropriate, sensitive and meaningful way of consulting with pupils on the proposal to close the school and name Bernard Gilpin as the receiving school. The headteacher at Gillas Lane felt that the school had done sufficient work with the pupils in a sensitive and age appropriate way to help them understand the issues around the possible closure. It was agreed that the school would pass on the pupils' thoughts and opinions as part of the response to the consultation process. The responses were included in the 8 April 2009 report to Cabinet.</p> <p>At Bernard Gilpin Primary School, the PSHCE consultant met with the school council to discuss what it is that they like about Bernard Gilpin and what in their view makes it special.</p> <p>The notes of the meeting on 23 February 2009 show the response to the question 'What benefits are there for my children for this school to close?' as 'A sustainable school in which to finish their education, the numbers in this school are not sustainable.'</p> <p>Integration</p> <p>In response to concerns about pupils integrating into Bernard Gilpin School if the proposal is approved, the proposed date of closure is August 2012, which would enable a fully supported transition programme to be put in place for all pupils, and in particular for those pupils requiring additional support for SEN.</p> <p>Options</p> <p>The proposal is to close Gillas Lane Primary School. The option of amalgamating Gillas Lane and Bernard Gilpin schools is not the proposal.</p>
			(ix) Teachers	The proposal is for closure of Gillas Lane Primary School. Amalgamation with Bernard Gilpin Primary School is not a proposal.

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			(x) Community Voice	Gillas Lane School is not used for community facilities. There are dedicated community facilities in the near vicinity. The suggested alternative use for nursery accommodation at Gillas Lane was one of a number of actions that could have been taken to realign the net capacity if option 3 were to be implemented. It was not therefore a new option.
			(xi) Education Standards	See E1(i) above
			(xii) Nursery Provision	At the stage 3 consultation meetings with Gillas Lane and Bernard Gilpin Primary schools, officers gave conflicting messages about nursery provision, should Gillas Lane close under either option 1 or 2. The position was clarified at the subsequent meeting with parents at the stage 4, 23 February 2009, meeting, that there is sufficient nursery provision in the area to meet demand, should Gillas Lane Primary School close. Officers at that meeting apologised for incorrect information having been given previously. The conflicting messages given at the meetings is regrettable, however, the responses to stages 3 and 4 of the consultation were not dissimilar. Responses to stage 3, when it was stated that nursery provision would be established at Bernard Gilpin Primary School if Gillas Lane Primary School were to close, were no more positive than those submitted at stage 4 when the nursery position was clarified, in other words there was still little support for the closure options, whether nursery facilities were to be available at Bernard Gilpin Primary School or not.
			(xiii) Financial Appraisal	See E1(ii) above

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			(xiv) Inconsistency Grange Park New school not part of the proposal	Grange Park The School Place Planning for the Future exercise has been undertaken on a cluster basis. Different solutions have been proposed to address the differing positions across the City. The Grange Park proposal is part of a strategic proposal for part of the north side of the City, and is subject to the following caveat: Across the cluster, monitor and review the surplus position annually and within the next 2 – 3 years formulate proposals in light of emerging trends and PSfC. New building not part of the proposal If the proposal for closure of Gillas Lane Primary school is approved, Bernard Gilpin Primary school would be the receiving school. Bernard Gilpin school building is 15 years old, in very good condition and sits on a large site. The layout was built in accordance with building specification relevant at the time. The classrooms are smaller than would be built under current guidance but the internal accommodation would be remodelled to meet current specifications.
			(xv) Statutory Guidance on School Closure	The statutory guidance referred to is the 'CLOSING A MAINTAINED MAINSTREAM SCHOOL - A GUIDE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND GOVERNING BODIES' The local authority has complied with all aspects of the statutory guidance.
			(xvi) Sunderland City Council Behaviour Parents views Questions not answered	Parents views See E1 (vi) above. Questions not answered It is not clear which questions have not been answered and no questions have been set out under this heading
			(xvii) An alternative strategy	The suggested alternative use for nursery accommodation at Gillas Lane was one of a number of actions that could have been taken to realign the net capacity if option 3 were to be implemented. It is not therefore a new option/strategy.

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2.	Mrs M Coulbeck Letter	Grandparent	(i) Consultation Process: Incorrect information Failure to comply with internal policies Serious errors in reports Failure to involve 'difficult to reach' Methodology used for consultation Timing of consultation meetings Inflexibility Officer conduct Consultation response form Pupil consultation Inequality of proposals	Incorrect information See E1 (iii) above Failure to comply with internal policies It is unclear exactly which policies it is felt have not been complied with. The statutory process has been followed and the level of consultation has gone beyond what is required. Serious errors in reports See E1 (iii) above Failure to involve 'difficult to reach' It is unclear who it is felt has not been included in the process. Letters were sent to the home addresses of every child at the school, setting out the options at stage 3 and the proposal at stage 4 and inviting parents/carers to attend the meetings. Methodology used for consultation See E1 (vi) above Timing of consultation meetings See E1 (vi) above Inflexibility School Place planning is a very sensitive area and whilst genuine and robust consultation has taken place, the local authority must balance the views of parents against the duty to manage school places. Officers had no preferred option, the recommendations were based on the outcome of the options appraisal. Officer conduct It is difficult to respond to unsubstantiated claims that officers were rude and disrespectful and were ill prepared for the meetings without specific examples being given. Officers behaviour was professional and courteous throughout the process. Consultation response form The consultation response form did not include a section for name and address but it was made very clear at the meetings that responses were welcome in any written format and they would be included in the report to Cabinet. Pupil consultation See E1 (viii) above Inequality of proposals See E1 (xiv) above

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			(ii). Option Appraisal: More research should have been done Financial information Deprivation Options	More research should have been done A significant amount of research and planning has been undertaken throughout the process. The example given is the nursery provision - see E1(xii) above Financial information See E1(ii) above Deprivation In terms of school place planning, deprivation is not a criterion that is applied. Whilst Gillas Lane is in an area of high deprivation, a large number of children living in the area already attend Bernard Gilpin Primary School. Options The options appraisal was carried out based on the principles agreed in May 2008 and any significant issues that were raised during the consultation.
			(iii). Decision making: Responses not considered Complaints Decision making	Responses not considered Every response was read and included in the reports to Cabinet for their consideration and to support their decision making. Complaints See E1(iv) above Decision making The decisions have been made by Cabinet at every stage of consultation. In reaching the decisions Cabinet has had a wealth of information, including responses to consultation. The options appraisals, on which the proposal was formulated, were fully documented in the relevant report and were based on the principles consulted upon and agreed in May 2008, plus any additional significant issues that were raised during consultation.
			(iv). Choice	See E1(i) above
			(v) Education: Performance Change	Performance See E1(i) above Change There is no evidence that performance is adversely affected at schools that are the receiving school when another school closes. The implementation date of 2012 will enable a fully supported transition programme to be put in place for all pupils.

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			(vi) Statutory Guidance	See E1(xv) above
3.	Cllr D Smith & Cllr C Wakefield Report	Ward Councillor	(i) Reasons for report: Views not taken into account Additional proposals Benefits of Option 2 Transfer of pupils not in the best interests of the community	
			(ii) Proposals unpopular with community	The responses to consultation have shown very strong opposition to the proposal for closure of Gillas Lane Primary School. School Place planning is a very sensitive area and whilst genuine and robust consultation has taken place, the local authority must balance the views of parents against the duty to manage school places, now and for the future.
			(iii) Gillas Lane would lose a nursery facility	The nursery class at Gillas Lane Primary School is an integral part of the school and would close along with the school. The nursery class is funded on a planned place basis for 26 part time places plus an additional 9 part time places from the spring term. The nursery is currently open for morning sessions only and as at May 2009 had 16 part time 3 year olds and 10 part time 2 year olds. Houghton Nursery School has sufficient capacity to meet the demand in the area.
			(iv) Bernard Gilpin has no kitchen facility	It has been confirmed throughout the consultation that should the proposal to close Gillas Lane Primary School and name Bernard Gilpin as the receiving School go ahead, kitchen facilities would be established at Bernard Gilpin Primary School.
			(v) Dining hall at Bernard Gilpin is too small	It has been confirmed throughout the consultation that should the proposal to close Gillas Lane Primary School and name Bernard Gilpin as the receiving School go ahead, remodelling work would be undertaken at Bernard Gilpin Primary School as necessary.
			(vi) Bernard Gilpin has overcrowded classrooms	See E3(vi) above
			(vii) Bernard Gilpin would lose a library and computer room	There has never been any suggestion that Bernard Gilpin would lose any of the facilities it currently has, including the library and computer room.

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			(viii) Parking on a school run would be dangerous	Bernard Gilpin Primary school is less than 0.5 of a mile from Gillas Lane Primary School. The Council has undertaken a significant amount of research into the distances currently being travelled by pupils from home to Gillas Lane Primary School and the distance from their homes to Bernard Gilpin Primary School. Of the pupils currently attending Gillas Lane Primary School, 65% live closer to Bernard Gilpin Primary School, and 35% will have their journeys increased by up to 0.5 mile. As most pupils live nearer to Bernard Gilpin school and no pupil will travel more than an additional 0.5 mile, it is anticipated that there would be no significant increase in traffic
			(ix) Taxpayers money spent unnecessarily	The cost of the capital works that would be undertaken at Bernard Gilpin Primary School need to be balanced against the capital costs that would be incurred to reduce the net capacity at both Gillas Lane Primary School and Bernard Gilpin Primary Schools and the savings in maintaining one building rather than two half empty buildings. There would also be savings in recurrent costs from the closure of Gillas Lane Primary School which would be available to all schools via the funding formula.
			(x) Birth rate	The methodology used for calculation of the birth rate for future projections is based on information from the Office for National Statistics. The data is supplied on a ward basis and includes the latest actual information they have available plus information on future projections. The projected information for the Copt Hill ward shows a very slight decrease in numbers and the Houghton ward shows a very slight increase, with the decrease marginally outweighing the increase.
			(xi) Housing strategy	The methodology for calculating any new pupils generated from new housing developments is based on a nationally recognised formula, which is used by local authorities in their planning. The figure is that for every 100 family houses an additional 12 pupils will require school places. See also E1(v).

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			(xii) Admission rates	The projections used throughout the consultation, and which are revised regularly are based on actual pupil numbers, plus projections based on objective data and using a recognised and proven methodology. The suggested methodology is based on incorrect assumptions that the birth rate is projected to rise within the Houghton area and on assumptions on housing developments that are not sufficiently progressed to be taken into account in planning school places. The proposal that at a given time the PAN be decreased for 4 years at Gillas Lane Primary School and 5 years at Bernard Gilpin Primary School, to address the surplus position does not recognise that reducing the PAN alone does not address surplus capacity. The reduction in surplus capacity can only be achieved by a reduction of the PAN and remodelling of the buildings to realign the net capacity at each school.
4.	Cllr R Heron Letter	Ward Councillor	Closure is premature - new houses are to be built	See E1(v) above
5.	Mr D Coulbeck Letter	Grandparent	(i) Letters treated differently from first stage of consultation (ii) Attendance numbers incorrect (iii) Parents voice ignored (iv) Formal complaints dismissed (v) Educational factors omitted from option appraisal process (vi) Surplus places can be removed without closing school (vii) Why are schools treated differently i.e. Grange Park (viii) Social factors not taken into consideration	Cabinet received reports and feedback at each stage of the consultation. In the final stage of consultation, the issue of letters and emails not having been included in full following earlier consultation was raised. In response to the representations all letters were reproduced in the 8 April 2009 report to Cabinet. In the report to Cabinet in December 2009, the number of attendees at the October 2008 meetings at Gillas Lane and Bernard Gilpin Primary Schools were inadvertently transposed. See E1(vi) above See E1(iv) above See E1(i) above Surplus places could be managed by reducing the PAN and realigning the net capacity but the options appraisal carried out and included in the 11 February 2009 report to Cabinet, concluded that it would not provide a long term solution to the surplus position. See E1(xiv) above See E2(ii) above

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			(ix) Nursery provision information not consistent	See E1(iii) above
			(x) Fairer solution would have been amalgamation	See E1(viii) above
			(xi) SOC made up of Cabinet Members, how is this fair?	Under legislation, school organisation proposals are an executive function and therefore are determined by Members of Cabinet. It is the legislation that provides for the right of appeal only in very limited, specified, circumstances.
6.	Janine Johnson Letter	Parent	(i) Parental choice	See E1(i) above
			(ii) Lack of consultation	See Appendix 1 for chronology of the 4 stage consultation. Responses and minutes of meetings have been included in all relevant reports to Cabinet to support the decision making process.
			(iii) Over 200 response forms ignored	All responses have been included in Cabinet reports.
			(iv) Education	See E1(i) above
			(v) Wrong information/nursery provision	See E1(iii) and E1(xii) above
			(vi) Scrutiny meeting	Minutes of the meeting of CSRC were included in full in the 8 April 2009 report to Cabinet. In addition the specific issues that the Chairman of CSRC requested that Cabinet consider were included in the report along with responses to the points made.
			(vii) Other viable option for Gillas Lane	See E2(ii) above
			(viii) Increasing birth rate/housing developments	See E3(x) and E3(xi) above
7.	Steven Johnson Letter	Parent	(i) Lack of balance within the Executive Summary: Buildings Previous actions Alternative use for surplus Cross cluster issues Class sizes Competition	Buildings See E3(v) and E3(vi) above Previous actions See E3(vii) above Alternative use for surplus The proposal is for closure of Gillas Lane Primary School. Cross cluster issues See E3(viii) and E1(v) above Class sizes See E3(vi) above Competition See E1(iii) and E3(ii) above

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			(ii) Lack of detailed costings or proposals	See E1(ii) above.
			(iii) No consideration of education levels	See E1(i) above
			(iv) Lack of answers to questions during consultation	See E1(xvi) above
8.	Albert Anderson Letter	Chair of Governors	(i) Governors unhappy with lack of consultation	See E1(vi) and E1(viii) above
			(ii) No attempt was made to contact hard to reach parents	See E2(i) above
			(iii) Reducing the PAN is the only option governors will consider	The proposal is for the closure of Gillas Lane Primary school
9.	Terry Hambleton Letter	Headteacher	(i) Gillas Lane Primary School is a good school and serves the needs of the children well in a caring and supportive way	The local authority has a duty to keep the number of school places under review. There are two key calculations that are taken into account in measuring LA performance in relation to surplus places – the overall number of surplus places calculated as a percentage of total places across the local authority and the number of individual schools with 25+% surplus places.
			(ii) Nursery provides easy transition from nursery to reception.	The proposed date of closure is August 2012, which would enable a fully supported transition programme to be put in place for all pupils.
			(iii) Classrooms are small at Bernard Gilpin	See E3(vi) above
			(iv) Schools not being treated fairly in relation to other schools	See E1(xiv) above
			(v) Support for option 3	The proposal is for the closure of Gillas Lane Primary school
10.	G Parkin Letter	Other	(i) Class sizes	If the proposal is agreed and Bernard Gilpin Primary School is named as the receiving school, class sizes would be bigger than they are currently. However, if the school was to remain open the net capacity would need to be realigned to address the surplus place position and there would be bigger, mixed age classes.
11.	J A Hall Form	School Staff	(i) Overcrowding/ Classrooms not big enough	See E3(vi) above
			(ii) No kitchen facilities	See E3(iv) above
			(iii) Children's relationship with staff	The proposed date of closure is August 2012, which would enable a fully supported transition programme to be put in place for all pupils.
12.	J Hall	Catering Staff	(i) Upheaval for children	See E11(iii) above

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	Form		(ii) No kitchen	See E3(iv) above
			(iii) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
13.	C Chesney Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Class size	See E10(i) above
			(ii) Kitchen	See E3(iv) above
			(iii) Nursery	See E1(iii) above
			(iv) Road congestion	See E3(viii) above
			(v) Cost	See E1(ii) above and E3(ix) above
14.	M P Green Form	Resident	(i) Overcrowding	See E3(vi) above
			(ii) Relationship with staff	See E11(iii) above
15.	A Donaldson Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Bigger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) Further to travel	See E3(viii) above
16.	J Greenwood Form	School Staff	(i) Teaching standards	See E1(i) above
			(ii) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
17.	- Form	Teacher	(i) Bigger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
			(iii) School is important part of the community and our views should be considered	See E3(ii) above
18.	Malcolm Fletcher Form	Resident	(i) New housing development	See E1(v) above
19.	G Craven Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Teachers made redundant	If the school closes teachers will be made redundant but will be fully supported in seeking employment through the local authority's redeployment policy.
			(ii) Bernard Gilpin not big enough for pupils	See E3(vi) above
20.	K Craven Form	Parent/Carer	(i) No answer as to why Gillas Lane closing will benefit the children	The notes of the meeting on 23 February 2009 show the response to the question 'What benefits are there for my children for this school to close?' as 'A sustainable school in which to finish their education, the numbers in this school are not sustainable.'

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			(ii) Bernard Gilpin not of the same standard	See E1(i) above
			(iii) Why are other schools not having to close i.e. Seaburn Dene	The School Place Planning for the Future exercise has been undertaken on a cluster basis. Different solutions have been proposed to address the differing positions across the City. The Seaburn Dene proposal is part of a strategic proposal for part of the north side of the City, and is subject to the following caveat: Across the cluster, monitor and review the surplus position annually and within the next 2 – 3 years formulate proposals in light of emerging trends and PSfC.
			(iv) What is financial costings made up of	See E1(ii) and E3(ix) above
21	Mr & Mrs Egan Form	Resident	(i) More traffic congestion	See E3(viii) above
			(ii) More housing to be built	See E1(v) above
22.	Mrs A Stafford Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Parental choice being taken away	See E1(i) above
23.	Mr G Hughes Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) No nursery unit	See E1(iii) above
			(iii) Temporary classes	During the consultation it was stated that the earliest the proposal could be implemented was 2011 but that if that was the case there may be a need for temporary arrangements to be put in place to accommodate the projected large Year 6 group. The proposed implementation date is 2012 which means that every year group would be less than 60, therefore there would be no requirement for temporary accommodation.
24.	Mrs RH Hughes Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Pupils would receive less attention	See E10(i) and E11(iii) above
			(ii) Traffic congestion	See E3(viii) above
			(iii) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
			(iv) Temporary classrooms	See E23(iii) above
			(v) No nursery provision	See E1(iii) above
25.	L Lillie Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Parental choice being taken away	See E1(i) above
			(ii) People's feelings not taken into consideration	See E3(ii) above

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			(iii) Education not taken into consideration	See E1(i) above
26.	M Lowther Form	Resident	(i) Wasting taxpayers money building a new school	See E3(ix) above
27.	S Smith Form	Resident	(i) Bernard Gilpin too small	See E3(vi) above
			(ii) Portable classrooms	See E23(iii) above
			(iii) No kitchen facilities	See E3(iv) above
			(iv) No nursery provision	See E1(iii) above
			(v) No parental choice	See E1(i) above
			(vi) Views not taken into consideration	See E2(iii) above
28.	R Bennett Form	Resident	(i) Risks to education	See E11(iii) above
29.	Mr & Mrs Dover Form	Resident	(i) New housing developments	See E1(v) above
30.	A Waters Form	Parent	(i) No benefits for children's education	See E1(i) and E2(v) above
			(ii) Ofsted results should be taken into consideration	See E1(i) above
			(iii) Overcrowding	See E3(vi) above
			(iv) Traffic congestion	See E3(viii) above
			(v) Unfair that Gillas Lane is only school in process to close	The School Place Planning for the Future exercise has been undertaken on a cluster basis. Different solutions have been proposed to address the differing positions across the City.
			(vi) Disruption to children will be detrimental	See E11(iii) above
31.	R Watson Form	Parent	(i) Bigger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
			(iii) Unfamiliar teachers and surroundings	See E11(iii) above
			(iv) Children who need extra help will suffer if moved	See E11(iii) above
32.	S McCoy	School Staff	(i) Oversized classes	See E10(i) above

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	Form		(ii) New housing development	See E1(v) above
			(iii) No kitchen	See E3(iv) above
			(iv) Children with special needs will suffer	See E1(viii) above
33.	A Thompson Form	Grandparent	(i) Further to travel	See E3(viii) above
34.	D Middleton Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Larger school	See E11(iii) above
			(ii) Drop in attainment for children	See E2(v) and 11(iii) above
			(iii) Classrooms will be too small to take children	See E3(vi) above
			(iv) Increased traffic	See E3(viii) above
			(v) Taking away of parental choice	See E1(i) above
35.	M Middleton Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Further to travel	See E3(viii) above
			(ii) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
36.	Charlotte Hirst Form	Resident	(i) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
37.	J Bescoby Form	Resident	(i) Overcrowding at Bernard Gilpin	See E3(vi) above
			(ii) Extra traffic congestion	See E3(viii) above
			(iii) No parental choice	See E1(i) above
38.	D Davison Form	Resident	(i) Detrimental effect to children's education	See E11(iii) above
39.	D Harvey Form	Resident	(i) Overcrowding	See E3(vi) above
			(ii) Loss of library & IT suite	See E3(vii) above
			(iii) Use of portacabins	See E23(iii) above
40.	J Crumpton Form	Resident	(i) Loss of school for children in community	See E3(ii) above
41.	T Hope Form	Gym Coach	(i) Loss of gymnastics for children	Bernard Gilpin Primary School offers a broad curriculum to meet the healthy living agenda.
42.	M Wilson Form	School Staff	(i) Loss of small classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) Loss of nursery	See E1(iii) above

A	B	C	D	E
No.	Name	Responding as	Issued Raised	Response
43.	P Brown Form	Other	(i) Flawed consultation process	See E1(vi), E1(viii) and E2 (iii) above
44.	- Form	Other	(i) Ofsted report should be taken into consideration	See E1(i) above
45.	- Form	Other	(i) Bigger school needed if more houses built	See E1(v) above
46.	- Form	Other	(i) Birth rate on the up	See E3(x) above
47.	- Form	Other	(i) Ofsted report should to taken into consideration	See E1(i) above
48.	N Ward Form	Other	(i) Excellent results	See E1(i) above
49.	- Form	Other	(i) Above average performance results	See E1(i) above
50.	D Stafford Form	Parent/Carer	(i) No benefit to open, mixed year classes	See E10(i) and E3(vi)above
			(ii) Will be a drop in educational standards	See E2(v) above
			(iii) Traffic congestion	See E3(viii) above
51.	M Plant Form	School Staff	(i) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) No nursery provision	See E1(iii) above
			(iii) Drop in educational standards	See E2(v) above
			(iv) Taking away parental choice	See E1(i) above
52.	C Veitch Form	Parent	(i) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
53.	- Form	Resident	(i) Community would suffer if school closed	See E3(ii) above
			(ii) Bigger classes	See E10(i) above
54.	- Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Further to travel	See E3(viii) above
			(ii) Disruption to children's education	See E11(iii) above
			(iii) Cost of new uniform	Pupils could wear the Gillas Lane uniform until such times as a new one is needed to be bought
55.	S Nelson	Parent/Carer	(i) Unfamiliar environment	See E11(iii) above

A	B	C	D	E
No.	Name	Responding as	Issued Raised	Response
	Form			
56.	S Hetherington Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Larger school	See E10(i) above
57.	M Watson Form	Grandparent	(i) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) Special needs children left behind	See E1(viii) above
			(iii) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
			(iv) Parents concerns not been taken into account	See E1(vi) and E2(iii) above
			(v) No benefit to pupils	See E1(i) above
58.	M & G Walton Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Drop in education	See E2(v) above
			(ii) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
			(iii) Portable classrooms	See E23(iii) above
			(iv) Taking away parental choice	See E1(i) above
			(v) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
59.	Mrs M Burrell Form	Resident	(i) Bigger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) Traffic congestion	See E3(viii) above
60.	M Coulbeck Form	Grandparent	(i) Parents concerns not taken into consideration	See E1(vi) and E2(iii) above
			(ii) Inconsistent information	See E1(iii) above
			(iii) Failure to comply with council policies	See E2(i) above
			(iv) Disregard for National Statutory Guidance	See E1(xv) above
			(v) Ofsted results not taken into consideration	See E1(i) above
61.	D Coulbeck Form	Grandparent	(i) A small school with good levels of attainment	Gillas Lane Primary School is not a small school by Ofsted definition, which is that a school is considered small if it has 100 or less pupils on roll. The attainment levels are broadly similar to those achieved at Bernard Gilpin Primary School, with Gillas Lane achieving higher in some areas and Bernard Gilpin higher in others. However, the Ofsted grade is good for Gillas Lane and Satisfactory for Bernard Gilpin.

A	B	C	D	E
No.	Name	Responding as	Issued Raised	Response
			(ii) School is being made to pay to sort out other schools' problems	The School Place Planning for the Future exercise has been undertaken on a cluster basis. Different solutions have been proposed to address the differing positions across the City. The position in the Houghton Kepier cluster has therefore been considered holistically and then at individual school level.
			(iii) School being treated differently to other schools i.e. Grange Park	The Grange Park proposal is part of a strategic proposal for part of the north side of the City, and is subject to the following caveat: Across the cluster, monitor and review the surplus position annually and within the next 2 – 3 years formulate proposals in light of emerging trends and PSfC.
			(iv) Education not taken account of	See E1(i) above
			(v) School/community partnership being ripped apart	See E3(ii) above
62.	5 forms from children	Pupil	(i) Please do not close Gillas Lane School. I like this school very much. My teachers are great. I know all of my teachers and they know me too. Please leave our school open. (ii) Please do not close our school. I love our school and my teachers (iii) Please don't close Gillas Lane School. It is a very good school. The teachers know me very well. I really like learning here, the lessons teach me very well. Please leave this school open. (iv) I don't want my school to close because I like my friends there. I will miss the teachers a lot if I go to a different school. (v) It is a good school and has good teachers and lots of good toys.	
63.	- Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Good school as evidenced by Ofsted	See E1(i) above
64.	- Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Classrooms are not large enough to accommodate children	See E3(vi) above

A	B	C	D	E
No.	Name	Responding as	Issued Raised	Response
			(ii) Loss of library & ICT room	See E3(vii) above
65.	M R Ellil Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Traffic congestion	See E3(viii) above
			(ii) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
			(iii) Stress/anxiety caused to teachers dealing with bigger classes	See E10(i) above
			(iv) Not enough classrooms – portable classrooms	See E3(vi) and E23(iii) above
			(v) Loss of library and ICT room	See E3(vii) above
66.	J Osbourne Form	Resident	(i) Disruption to children	See E11(iii) above
			(ii) Larger school	See E10(i) above
67.	- Form	Resident	(i) Loss of stability for children	See E11(iii) above
			(ii) Bigger school	See E10(i) above
68.	M Black Form	Resident	(i) Loss of heart of the community	See E3(ii) above
69.	J Smith Form	Resident	(i) Parental choice	See E1(i) above
70.	G Scott Form	School Staff	(i) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
			(ii) Ofsted not taken into consideration	See E1(i) above
			(iii) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
71.	C Norman Form	School Staff	(i) No kitchen	See E3(iv) above
			(ii) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
			(iii) New houses to be built	See E1(v) above
			(iv) Not enough classes at Bernard Gilpin	See E3(vi) above
72.	- Form	Other	(i) Larger school	See E10(i) above
			(ii) No nursery	See E1(iii) above
73.	J Coulbeck Form	Other	(i) Disruption to education	See E11(iii) above
74.	S Armstrong	Parent/Carer	(i) Bigger school	See E10(i) above

A	B	C	D	E
No.	Name	Responding as	Issued Raised	Response
	Form		(ii) Children who need more help will suffer	If the proposal is approved, the proposed date of closure is August 2012, which would enable a fully supported transition programme to be put in place for all pupils, and in particular for those pupils requiring additional support for SEN
			(iii) Classes over 30	The proposed date of implementation is 2012, at which time there will be no more 60 pupils in each year group, and in most year groups there will be less than 60 pupils.
			(iv) No nursery	See E1 (iii) above
75.	A Owen Form	Grandparent	(i) Loss of pivotal part of the community	See E3(ii) above
			(ii) No nursery	See E1 (iii) above
			(iii) Should listen to community's views	See E3(ii) above
76.	E Bailey Form	Teacher	(i) Small school is better for children	Gillas Lane Primary School is not a small school by Ofsted definition, which is that a school is considered small if it has 100 or less pupils on roll.
			(ii) Won't be enough places in future, especially nursery places	Based on projected numbers, there will sufficient places at both Bernard Gilpin Primary School and Houghton Nursery School to meet demand for places in the area.
77.	R Whitehead Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Bernard Gilpin is too big a school, not a community school	A significant number of pupils living in the same area as pupils who attend Gillas Lane Primary School, currently attend Bernard Gilpin School.
78.	- Form	Parent	(i) No nursery provision	See E1 (iii) above
79.	N James Form	Other	(i) Detrimental to community	See E3(ii) above
80.	M A James Form	Grandparent	(i) Taking away the heart of the community	See E3(ii) above
81.	P Elder Form	Parent/Carer	(i) Bigger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) Children who need extra support will suffer	See E74(ii) above
82.	- Form	Teacher	(i) Small school helps pupils get the best out of their learning	See E10(i) above
83.	E Jennings Form	Teacher	(i) Larger classes	See E10(i) above
			(ii) No nursery	See E1 (iii) above

A	B	C	D	E
No.	Name	Responding as	Issued Raised	Response
			(iii) Cost of adaptations to Bernard Gilpin	See E3(ix) above
84.	- Form	Carer	(i) Loss of nursery	See E1(iii) above

Additional comments

No.	Name	Responding as	Comment
85.	P.Sloan	Resident	Leave Gillas Lane open and leave those children where they are! I can see there is an option that would leave the small, family, happy school open (option3). Surely that must be a workable option or it would not have been suggested. This should definitely be the only option as far as these little children are concerned!
86.	M. Donoghue	Resident	Unclear on the Option 3, however, I object to the closure of Gillas lane Primary school. 'OBJECT TO THE CLOSURE'
87.	L. Nichols	Resident	It would be a shame if Gillas Lane School were to close as it is, and has always been, the heart of the community.
88.	J. Hirst	Resident	I feel I must voice my disappointment at the decision made. Gillas Lane school is very special to everyone who has ever had children there. The teaching and support staff are amazing and I feel that the education my daughter received there was first class! We need more schools like Gillas Lane not less.
89.	L. Hamilton	Resident	I do not want the school to close.
90.	B. Dobson	Parent/carers	Leave our school alone
91.	N. Findlay	Other	The school has been open since I was a little girl and many of my friends attended here, it will be a great shame for this school to close for the pupils and the community.
92.		Other	My nephew attends Gillas Lane primary. He is content and happy at this school and it would be heartbreaking for it to close. He does not want to go to Bernard Gilpin because it will be a big school. Surely there must be a way to keep Gillas Lane open!
93.	V. Docherty	Other	Will be a shame to close the school down.
94.	L. Cormpton	Other	I wish to object to the closure of Gillas Lane School. I know several children who have attended the school who have benefited from their time and teaching there.
95.	T.	Parent/carers	Local government seem to be getting away with anything these days! With many people outraged by the expenses scandal, they should be trying to help communities out. Our school should not be sacrificed due to government spending our money on biscuits and second homes.
96.	M. Gardner	Resident	This school has served our community for well over 40 years, and three generations of our family have attended this school, and should remain open. Thank you.
97.	A.M. Fenwick	Resident	This is a lovely school. All staff are caring, enthusiastic and they bring out the very best in every pupil. They gain confidence and really enjoy their school life. My daughter is a nursery nurse at the school and as a registered childminder myself this will affect us both if the school closes.
98.	M. Keighley	Resident	I do not want Gillas Lane to close.

In addition, 7 parents/carers, 8 'others' and 10 residents submitted forms without comments and 1 form was received but was not signed.

Breakdown of responses

GLASS	1
Grandparent	8
Parents/carer	37
Other	24
Councillors	2
Chair of Governors	1
Headteacher	1
Staff	12
Resident	36
Pupils	1
Total responses	123

Sunderland City Council

Minutes of a meeting in relation to the proposed closure of Gillas Lane Primary School held on Monday 15 June, 2009 at 10:00am in Committee Room No. 5

Present: -

Councillor Paul Watson	-	Leader of the Council
Councillor Pat Smith	-	Portfolio Holder for Children and Learning City
Councillor Derek Smith	-	Copt Hill Ward Councillor
Councillor Colin Wakefield	-	Copt Hill Ward Councillor
Paul Campbell	-	Head of Resources
Val Thompson	-	School Place Planning Manager
Julienne Collinson	-	Assistant Chief Solicitor

Parents/Carers: -

David Coulbeck (DC)	-	Chairman of GLASS
Colin Watchman (CW)	-	Community Governor
Steven Johnson (SJ)	-	Parent
Janine Johnson (JJ)	-	Parent Governor and Member of GLASS
Julie Milner (JM)	-	Parent and Member of GLASS

Councillor Pat Smith welcomed all Members, officers and parents/carers to the meeting. All those in attendance then introduced themselves.

Councillor Pat Smith explained that the purpose of the meeting was to listen to the parents' and carers' objections to the proposal to close Gillas Lane Primary School.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Paul Watson regarding the status of the meeting, the Assistant Chief Solicitor advised that the consultation stage of the process had ended, and that a statutory notice in relation to the proposal to close Gillas Lane Primary School had been published in May. The six week representation period would come to an end this week and the final decision regarding whether or not to close the school would then be taken by the School Organisation Committee of Cabinet (SOC). Parents/carers were advised that the minutes taken at the meeting would be distributed to the Members of the Committee and would be treated as forming part of the representations to the statutory notice, in addition to any other representations that the parents/carers present have already submitted. It was reiterated that the meeting was for the

Councillors to listen to the parents/carers, but not to enter into discussions in relation to the proposal, upon which they would make a decision in July.

DC thanked Members and officers for providing parents and carers with the opportunity of the meeting. He then proceeded to deliver a PowerPoint presentation (copy annexed to these minutes).

DC spoke on behalf of all parents/carers who objected to the closure of the school, stating that they appreciated the situation needed to change and that they were willing to work with the Council, but asked the question would Members and Officers want their child to go to a school with lower standards, larger classes, cramped classrooms (maybe portacabins) and unfamiliar teachers which is less convenient, less practical and not their first choice.

The presentation then went on to cover the following issues: -

Parental Choice

Reduced parental choice was a big issue for parents/carers. Parents felt that their parental choice in relation to Option 1 had been ignored and that there were few options for children currently at Gillas Lane to go anywhere else but Bernard Gilpin.

Gillas Lane

Gillas Lane was regarded by parents/carers as a good, small, family-orientated school with a good standard of education. It has a good Ofsted report, is good at dealing with Special Needs, is supported by the community and has dedicated teachers. It is considered that surplus places can be managed without closure. Parents questioned 'so why is there a need to close a successful, well-regarded school with a good reputation in the local community?'

Objections to Option 1

DC explained that Option 1 was considered to be the least acceptable option for pupils, parents and the community. It was expected that major transition problems would occur and that it was only the Council who saw this as an acceptable option. Parents felt that there was no guarantee that their children's educational levels would be improved, and could not see any educational benefits for Gillas Lane pupils. DC also stated on behalf of parents that they do not agree or believe that newer buildings result in better education, and reinforced that Option 1 was the worst option by far for Gillas Lane pupils.

Support for Option 3

DC stated that parents, pupils, the Gillas Lane community and both Gillas Lane and Bernard Gilpin Schools all considered Option 3 to be a viable solution, particularly as it solves the problem of surplus places. Therefore, parents questioned ‘why does the Council not want to work with the local community?’

Why not Option 2?

Parents considered this was better than Option 1 (the lesser of two evils) for pupils because it was fairer to pupils and teachers and would provide easier transition for Gillas Lane Pupils. Parents questioned ‘why was Option 2 discarded with no explanation?’

Complaints

DC stated that complaints had been raised via the proper channels because parents were extremely frustrated with the school place planning process.

The complaints were detailed as follows: -

Consultation process - the design of the consultation process was considered by parents to be flawed for the reason that there was only one method. DC stated that there was no flexibility on the timing of meetings, there were no focus groups, no plans to involve children sensitively, no plan for the difficult/hard to reach groups and the response forms were not designed for acknowledgement.

Parents also felt that the consultation processes did not follow Council policies and strategies, in particular those relating to Community Consultation, Social Cohesion, Corporate Equality Scheme, Community Empowerment Action Plan and Every Child Matters.

Options Appraisals – parents expressed a number of complaints, particularly regarding perceived errors/mistakes that had been made in relation to nursery provision and changeover timings. DC stated that parents felt that the assessment criteria lacked “education” factors and that there was too much concentration on “building” factors. Furthermore, it was considered that there was no detailed financial assessment of the options, housing building/demographics were uncertain and educational standards had not been taken into account. Parents asked the question ‘why were there no detailed financial assessments to compare options?’

Decision Making – parents felt that there was no transparency in the decision making process to go from three options to one. Parents considered that there were inconsistencies, particularly as Seaburn Dene and Grange Park Primary Schools were more badly affected by surplus places than Gillas Lane. Parents considered that there was enough uncertainty in Houghton for Gillas Lane to be treated the same as Grange Park. Parents regarded it as unfair and asked ‘why have parents’ wishes not been acted upon?’ and ‘why is Gillas Lane not treated like Grange Park at the very least?’

Consultation Meetings – DC stated on behalf of parents that they felt no proper research had been undertaken by officers and inadequate preparation had been carried out prior to the meetings as officers were unable to answer questions from parents. Parents felt that officers were unclear about nursery provision or the proposed year of implementation and made inappropriate comments and lacked sensitivity towards them.

Statutory Guidance – non compliance – Parents felt that the Council had not complied with the Statutory Guidance due to the following issues not being taken into account: - educational standards, parents' wishes and social factors/impact on the community.

Excerpts from the Statutory Guidance were then read out, and attention was drawn to paragraphs 4.19, 4.34 and 4.35.

DC then stated that Gillas Lane is a good school in terms of educational attainment, and that parents' choices should be respected and regarded as important in the Council's decision making process, which parents do not feel has happened.

DC went on to state that standards at the school had not been taken into account whilst the Statutory Guidance states that they should be, and there is not sufficient understanding on behalf of the Council regarding the impact that the closure of the school will have on the local community.

What parents would like to see happen

Parents would like to see Gillas Lane treated the same as Grange Park, the PAN reduced and the school remodelled. They would like parents and carers to be included in future planning arrangements regarding the school and for the situation to be monitored over the next 3-5 years, with an actual review in 3 years time.

DC stated this presentation was not a substitute for oral representations at the SOC meeting, and that parents will still request to speak at the meeting. DC drew Members attention to the Decision Makers' Guidance on School Closures and requested that they read this.

Next steps involved parents discussing the matter further with their legal advisors later this week.

A suggestion was then put to the meeting by parents to delay the decision of the SOC until the Local Government Ombudsman has reported back on the five complaints.

Additional comments

JM stated that the closure of Gillas Lane Primary School would be the only school on the School Place Planning Process where the pupils would not be going into a new, purpose-built school.

JJ whilst referring to the latest Ofsted Inspection reports for both schools explained to Members that the Ofsted Inspection carried out at Gillas Lane Primary School on 19-20 November 2008 reported that the care and individual support offered to pupils was outstanding. On the other hand, the

Ofsted Inspection undertaken at Bernard Gilpin Primary on 26-27 June 2008 reported that school care, guidance and support was satisfactory, which JJ stated was not good enough.

SJ felt decisions had been made and then the data made to fit the decision. He then outlined a series of discrepancies which he had identified in some of the financial data, and stated that it would be useful to see the associated costs and savings of all three options.

CW stressed that the overriding concerns were not about the buildings, but about the pupils.

JJ referred to the Sunderland.gov website stating that the Leader's Blog mentioned the importance of 'people power' and that much research and consultation goes on in the City, and that she hoped parents' views had been listened to today.

Finally, DC summed up the presentation and thanked Members and officers once again for providing parents with this opportunity. He asked whether Members had any questions to put to parents, and if Officers were prepared to answer some of the parents' questions.

Councillor Pat Smith thanked parents and explained that this meeting was not an opportunity for questions, and assured parents/carers that Members and officers had listened to their objections.

The meeting was declared closed and all parties withdrew.