



24th February 2015

Dear Colleague

You are probably aware that currently we are a maintained foundation school within Staffordshire LA. Under this arrangement the Governing Body is the legal employer of staff and also the Admissions Authority for the school. Our land and assets are also vested in the Governing Body.

For some time our SLT and the Governing Body have been looking at the various options available to us in terms of the legal status of the school including both Academy and Foundation Trust. After a great deal of thought and discussion, we decided further to explore the co-operative foundation trust model. The Governing Body at its meeting on Thursday February 5th decided to take this a stage further by agreeing to consult on proposals to become a Co-operative Trust School. In many ways this will complete a process the Governing Body embarked upon a time ago when it originally changed the school's legal category from community to foundation. We now suggest completing this process by making our legal foundation a trust which will be known as the Stafford Community Learning Trust (SCLT).

Crucially this will not mean us leaving the Staffordshire Local Authority family of maintained schools as would be the case if we became an Academy. The Governing Body would remain the legal employer of staff and the Admissions Authority and our land and assets would be held on our behalf by SCLT.

What is different about a co-operative foundation trust such as SCLT is that the trust itself is a co-operative. This means that over time stakeholders, be they staff, parents, carers, people who work and live locally and vitally our learners can also join the trust as members. In due course there will be the opportunity for other groups or bodies such as other schools and educational establishments to join the trust.

This is potentially very important as we believe (based on evidence from elsewhere) that this will help us to raise participation and attainment. Another important attraction for us in the co-operative school model is that it will ensure that the historic co-operative values and ethos, as well as its ethical principles and co-operative ways of working are formally embedded in our school. In many ways we already subscribe to these.

We will formally enter into the consultation process by issuing our statutory proposals at noon on Thursday 5th March 2014. There will then be a four week statutory consultation period until noon on Thursday 2nd April 2015. The Governing Body will meet in the week beginning Monday April 13th to consider the outcome of the consultation and decide in view of all responses whether to adopt the proposals. If this is decided, the day the School would join the Trust (the legal implementation date) would be Friday May 1st.

You will be reassured to know that Co-operative Trust schools continue to recognise the same unions and staff associations. The existing rights (including Pay and Conditions) of teachers will be fully protected. Terms and conditions will be safeguarded as per the prescribed regulations and support staff will maintain the same employment rights.

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Attached is an information leaflet that sets out briefly the implications of the proposed change of category and the joining of a local mutual co-operative school trust, as well as the reasons why our Governing Body and SLT are proposing it. It also seeks to answer some of the more common questions. The leaflet also includes dates, times and venues of consultation meetings. This includes a special one for **Staff** on **Wednesday March 18th** in the main hall at **3.15pm**. Prior to this there will be a pre-meeting with representatives of school staff unions. These union representatives will also be in attendance at the staff consultation meeting.

A much more comprehensive and in-depth consultation document (known as 'Booklet One') can be obtained from our school via the website www.staffordsportscollege.staffs.sch.uk or in hard copy from the school office. Similarly available is a detailed Questions and Answers document ('Booklet Two').

Part of the consultation process includes gathering stakeholder views and feedback. Included with this letter is a consultation questionnaire which you may return via the school office. Alternatively, you can complete this online via the school website.

We consider your views to be very important and hope that you are able to help us to determine the best way forward for our school.

Although in no way connected with this possible change of status, we are using the opportunity of this consultation to seek your views upon the name of the school. If you believe that the school name should remain the same or change or have any suggestions as to what the name might be, please include these in your response.

If you would like any further information please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk to Governors, Derek Hickman on the number above or by e-mail to governors@staffordsportscollege.staffs.sch.uk .

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Chair of Governors.

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