



**Risks / Implications:**

Financial:  
Staffing:  
Policy:

} There are no direct financial or staffing implications contained in this report. Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings

Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?  
Wards affected:

A full diversity impact will be undertaken as part of the consultation process.  
All

**Property – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?**

Yes

**Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?**

Yes

**Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?**

No

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes / No \***

Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes / No \***

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **Yes / No \***

\* delete which applicable

**For Cabinet reports only :**

Categorisation of the report:	
Discussion leading to a decision	<b>x</b>
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

Discussion	
Decision	
Information	

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**Tracking/Process:**

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
To add		15 <sup>th</sup> November 2007	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection
Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings	2005/6 2009/10		Progress House Westwood Park Drive Wigan WN4 4HH

Proper Officer



Date

24<sup>th</sup> October 2007

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The following reports have been made to Panel and Cabinet on Building Schools for the Future (BSF); Building Learning Communities (BLC) and the secondary school review.
- August 2003
  - October/November 2003
  - December 2003/January 2004
  - May 2004
  - July 2004
  - July 2005
  - January 2006
  - September 2007
- 1.2 Other reports on the One School Pathfinder, Abraham Guest and St. Thomas More have been made to both Panel and Cabinet.
- 1.3 In July 2005, Cabinet accepted a timetable for the Secondary review and the draft vision for secondary education.
- 1.4 In January 2006, Cabinet decided that the optimum size of a secondary school in Wigan should be around 1000 (11 - 16) - just under seven forms of entry.
- 1.5 Building Schools for the Future will provide Wigan and its Diocesan partners with access to capital that will allow all secondary schools to be refurbished or replaced. The Government is clear that BSF cannot be used to simply replace buildings but has to be used to transform the secondary stock to ensure that Wigan has schools of the right size, in the right place and equipped to deliver a modern curriculum

## **2. School Distribution**

- 2.1 A map showing the distribution of the 20 mainstream secondary schools in Wigan is attached at Appendix 1.

## **3. Number on Roll**

- 3.1 A table showing the admission numbers on roll by year group and the surplus places for each of the 20 mainstream secondary schools is attached at Appendix 2. The number at St. Peter's, St. Edmund Arrowsmith, St. John Fisher and to a lesser extent at Pembec and Abraham Guest have been increased by the closure of St. Thomas More. Figures are also provided for the projected numbers on roll for 2016/17. (Appendix 3).

- 3.2 The authority has a responsibility to limit the number of surplus places and to demonstrate that action has been taken where the percentage of surplus places rises above 25%. Overall surplus places should be contained within a range of between 5% and 10%. As will be noted from Appendix 3, failure to take action now will result in surplus places rising to our 15% by 2016/17.
- 3.3 Overall school capacity is of particular significance in the context of Building Schools for the Future where there could be significant financial implications for the authority if excess capacity is built in to the rebuilt/remodelled secondary estate - notably where the authority has entered into a long term PFI contract.

#### **4. First Preferences**

- 4.1 A table showing the first preferences for the mainstream secondary schools for 2005, 2006 and 2007 is attached at Appendix 4.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the Authority has an obligation to consider parental preferences in exercising its strategic responsibilities in respect of the provision of school places. This was reinforced by legislation introduced in 2006 which required the appointment of choice advisers and placed a new duty on local authorities to provide free home to school transport for eligible children to any of the nearest three suitable secondary schools where these lie between two and six miles from their home. This represents a significant change from current arrangements and is designed to expand the choice available to families in disadvantaged areas.

#### **5. Analysis**

- 5.1 11 to 16 pupil numbers are set to decline significantly over the next few years - from approximately 20,000 in 2007 to 18,000 by 2012. (A reduction equivalent to the capacity of two average sized secondary schools). This will create a significant surplus place problem and this pattern looks set to continue in the longer term, although there will be year on year fluctuations and a temporary increase in numbers is anticipated after 2013, with year 7 intakes reaching a likely peak in 2017.
- 5.2 Based on known births, it is possible to predict the overall year 7 intake for Wigan secondary schools up to 2017/18 with some degree of accuracy. This modelling suggests that, based on existing admission numbers, the supply of Year 7 places will exceed demand by 860 in 2013 and by 418 in 2017. Birth rate projections suggest that there will be a steady increase in surplus places in subsequent years. Even allowing for some flexibility to facilitate demographic change and in-year movement, this level of excess capacity is significantly more than would normally be considered acceptable.

5.3 Whilst demand for places in individual schools is more difficult to predict in the longer term due to the impact of changing parental preferences, it is still possible to look at historic patterns in order to predict future trends. This exercise also allows conclusions to be drawn about how demographic change is impacting on individual areas within the borough and hence to identify where there is the greatest over capacity.

## **6. The Need for Change**

6.1 The secondary school review is prompted by the need to remove increasing surplus places and address the potential non-viability of some schools in the near future. However, the review offers the potential to achieve far more than this, particularly in the light of BSF developments and the consequent availability of substantial capital funding to implement any proposed changes.

6.2 In addition to removing surplus places, it provides the opportunity to address standards issues at some schools, provide school places where parents want them and offer more diverse provision than is currently available.

6.3 As noted above, Government policy has placed increased emphasis on parental choice and requires a local authority to support, through its home to school transport arrangements, families in disadvantaged areas in accessing popular schools.

6.4 In this context, it is important to note that 'choice' is not about having more schools but is about providing a choice of school type (notably a range of specialisms, adequate provision of faith schools and alternative governance models) and ensuring that there is a realistic prospect that preferences can be met (possibly requiring the expansion of popular schools).

6.5 Successful completion of the review of secondary provision in the borough is also a necessary prerequisite of participation in BSF as it is the foundation of our 'Outline Business Case' which needs to be approved by the DCSF before any capital funding will be forthcoming.

## **7. Decision Making Model**

7.1 There has been extensive consultation on possible options for the future of secondary provision in the borough. This has included meetings with secondary headteachers (the last of which was in January 2007), meetings with Diocesan representatives and regular meetings of an Elected Members Working Group.

7.2 Based on these discussions, an option appraisal has been undertaken by officers within the CYPs Directorate. The factors considered were as follows:

- Current educational standards (measured using a range of indicators of both achievement and attainment).
- Current and predicted surplus places.
- Parental preferences.
- Current and predicted pupil numbers.
- Distance to alternative provision.
- Standards of accommodation (both condition and suitability)
- Impact on the community.

## **8. Proposal**

8.1 Based on a school-by-school analysis, it is suggested that the required reduction in surplus places can be achieved by the closure of one secondary school and adjustment to the physical capacity of other schools to more closely reflect the level of sustainable demand.

8.2 Analysis of parental preferences and demographic trends suggests that the position of PEMBEC school is not sustainable. There were only 69 first preferences expressed for entry to the school in September 2007, and there is no indication that this will not be repeated for 2008 and subsequent years. Indeed, the rebuilding and relocation of Abraham Guest School nearer to the community served by PEMBEC is likely to put further downward pressure on admissions.

8.3 It is therefore proposed to close PEMBEC in conjunction with the establishment of the new Abraham Guest School, creating an opportunity to establish a single new and vibrant community resource to better serve the local population.

8.4 The closure process would commence from September 2009 and be phased over two years to allow pupils to continue in the school until the end of their current key stage. Managers in the new schools would work together to support pupils and staff through the process of change and to pool the good practice of both institutions. Transfer to alternative schools could then be managed to minimise disruption.

8.5 The Director's view is that attempting to keep PEMBEC school open would result in a downward spiral in admissions, resources and standards with an unplanned and unmanaged closure being a likely consequence.

8.6 Current projections suggest that all pupils from PEMBEC can be accommodated in schools already serving the local community, although consideration would be given to a modest increase in the capacity of Shevington school.

8.7 It is proposed that adjustment to capacities in other schools should be implemented as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme. This will allow these changes to be supported by the capital programme to ensure that individual schools are rebuilt or remodelled to a sustainable sizes. The table in Appendix 5 is indicative of the school size which could result from this exercise. The position of all schools will be kept under review to ensure that the potential benefits of using BSF to rationalise provision is fully exploited.

## 9. Process Timeline

9.1 The following timeline is proposed for consultation, decision-making and the subsequent implementation of proposals.

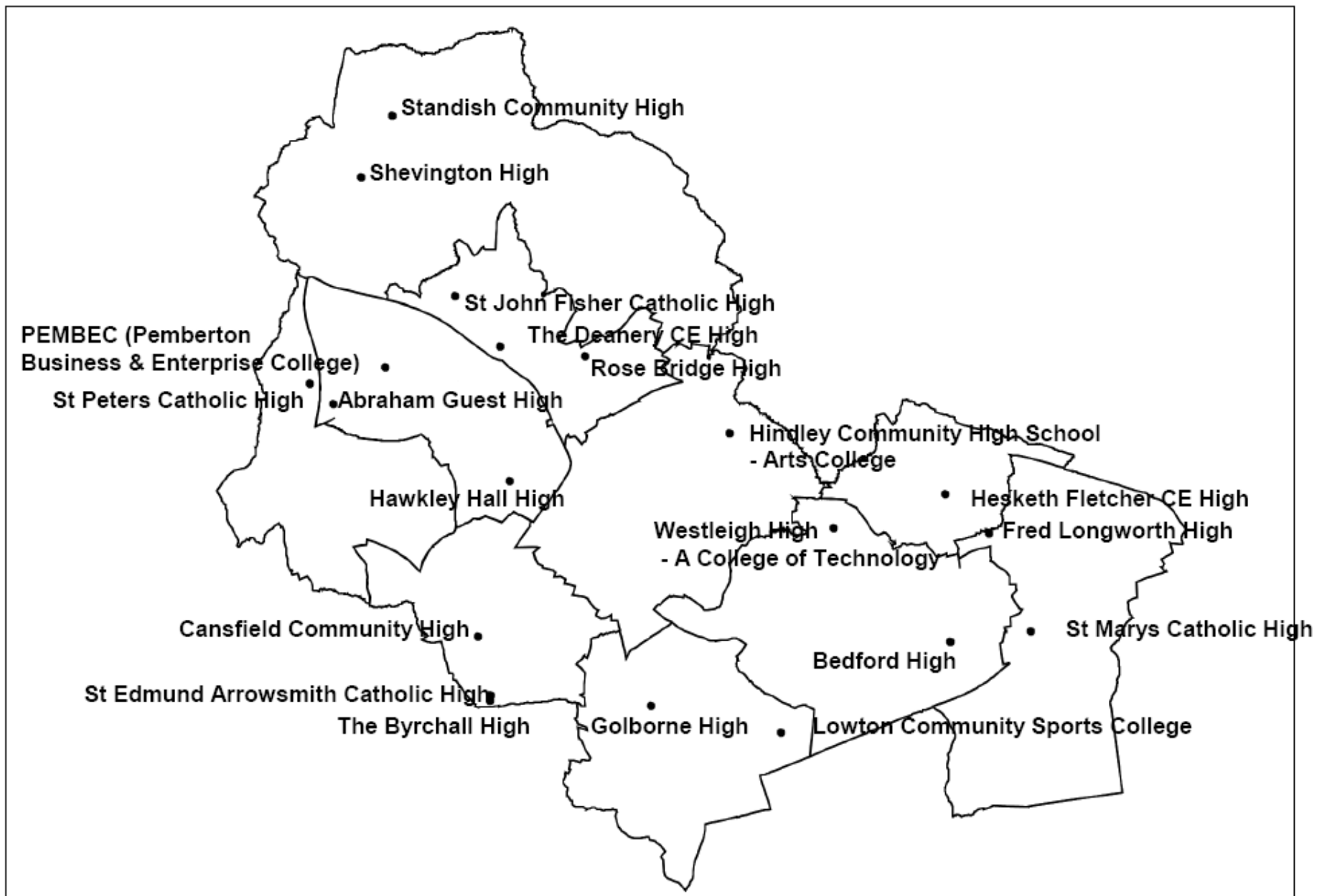
9.2 This timetable would be consistent with the proposed timeline for the development of the authority's Outline Business Case for Building Schools for the Future and any delay in finalising the proposed pattern of secondary school provision in the borough would impact directly on our ability to secure the early release of BSF capital resources.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>When?</b>
Report to Cabinet.	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2007
Public consultation undertaken	December 2007 to March 2008
Analysis of consultation responses	April 2008
Report to decision-making body on outcome of consultation	June 2008
Statutory Notices published	June 2008
Formal decision on statutory proposals	August 2008
Development and implementation of a change plan	September 2008 to August 2009
Initiation of phased closure process.	From September 2009

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007  
StR/GA  
Csp building schools for the future 07

# SECONDARY PROVISION (WIGAN TOWNSHIP MAP)

APPENDIX 1



## SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION AT JANUARY 2007

SCHOOL	TYPE	Adm No 2006/07	AGE AT 31.08.06								TOTAL NOR	Net Capacity	% Surplus Places	
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18+				
The Byrchall High	VC	240	231	240	230	253	240					1194	1187	0%
Cansfield Community High	C	168	174	178	190	196	179					917	1026	11%
Hesketh Fletcher C.E, Atherton	VA	200	152	162	174	198	215					901	1000	10%
Golborne High	C	170	154	165	150	168	170					807	855	6%
Hindley Community High - Arts College	C	187	164	187	202	201	178					932	935	0%
Rose Bridge High	C	140	123	135	144	138	116					656	866	24%
Bedford High	C	240	184	202	203	263	250					1102	1212	9%
Westleigh High - A College of Technology	C	150	158	150	148	167	164					787	779	0%
Lowton Community Sports College	C	230	225	226	229	231	228					1139	1150	1%
Abraham Guest High	C	193	172	191	193	192	193	1				942	890	0%
Shevington High	C	150	145	131	132	180	152					740	890	17%
Standish Community High	C	250	241	258	241	251	262	1				1254	1250	0%
Tyldesley Fred Longworth High	C	255	247	263	250	268	274	1				1303	1275	0%
The Deanery Church of England High	VA	270	268	278	281	291	279	132	103	12		1644	1365	0%
Hawkley Hall High	C	180	175	170	181	181	175					882	960	8%
PEMBEC	C	150	108	99	126	139	112					584	852	31%
St. Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High A-I-M	VA	220	251	234	219	260	244	1				1209	1256	4%
St. Mary's Catholic High Astley	VA	260	260	270	259	284	272	131	112	6		1594	1632	2%
St. Peter's Catholic High	VA	178	195	180	172	188	170	1				906	972	7%
St. John Fisher Catholic High Wigan	VA	180	183	183	177	211	185					939	1041	10%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>4011</b>	<b>3810</b>	<b>3902</b>	<b>3901</b>	<b>4260</b>	<b>4058</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>18</b>		<b>20432</b>		

## Appendix 3

## SECONDARY SCHOOL REVIEW DATA

School	Capacity		Numbers on Roll	
	Admission Number	Capacity (11-16)	NOR 2006/07	Est NOR 2016/17
Cansfield	202	1010	917	970
The Byrchall	240	1200	1194	1004
Hesketh Fletcher	200	1000	901	547
Golborne	171	855	807	750
Hindley	187	935	932	861
Rose Bridge	180	900	656	590
Bedford	242	1210	1102	816
Westleigh	155	775	787	721
Abraham Guest	178 (200)	1000	942	908
Shevington	178	890	740	518
Fred Longworth	255	1275	1303	1176
The Deanery	270	1350	1401	1203
PEMBEC	170	850	584	403
Standish	250	1250	1254	1172
Lowton	230	1150	1139	975
Hawkey Hall	192	960	882	729
St Edmund Arrowsmith	240	1200	1209	1246
Leigh St. Mary's	260	1300	1346	1380
St Peter's	178	890	906	925
St John Fisher	200	1000	939	879
<b>Total</b>		21000	19941	17773
<b>Overall surplus</b>			5.04%	15.37%

## SECONDARY SCHOOL FIRST PREFERENCE INFORMATION

SCHOOL	Adm No 2006/07	First Preferences 2005	First Preferences 2006	First Preferences 2007
The Byrchall High	240	262	221	165
Cansfield Community High	168	172	190	253
Hesketh Fletcher C.E, Atherton	200	138	146	79
Golborne High	170	161	148	159
Hindley Community High - Arts College	187	179	159	178
Rose Bridge High	140	123	116	107
Bedford High	240	179	192	162
Westleigh High - A College of Technology	150	151	170	137
Lowton Community Sports College	230	224	216	189
Abraham Guest High	193	188	165	201
Shevington High	150	127	132	116
Standish Community High	250	270	256	258
Tyldesley Fred Longworth High	255	281	242	242
The Deanery Church of England High	270	263	248	281
Hawkley Hall High	180	160	164	151
PEMBEC	150	76	89	69
St. Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High A-I-M	220	229	253	262
St. Mary's Catholic High Astley	260	304	266	292
St. Peter's Catholic High	178	176	210	205
St. John Fisher Catholic High Wigan	180	175	203	189
St Thomas More		38		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4011</b>	<b>3876</b>	<b>3786</b>	<b>3695</b>

## Appendix 5

<b>Admission Number</b>	<b>11 - 16 Capacity</b>	<b>No of Schools (Est)</b>
140	700	3
180	900	5
200	1000	5
220	1100	2
250	1250	3
280	1400	1