

# FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OSC

## REPORT TO CABINET

12 October 2021

### Proposals for Atkinson House

The report was presented to the Committee, at their meeting on 7 October 2021, by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson, and Sue Aviston, Head of School Organisation and Resources.

The Committee enquired as to how the needs for girls with SMEH were currently being met. They were informed that the needs were currently being met in existing schools, but these schools were at capacity and the increase in places would help meet a growing need for SMEH support. In response to a question about how Northumberland compared nationally, it was confirmed that Northumberland were below the national average in the number of children requiring SMEH support; however, the catchment area would be solely in Northumberland with only surplus places being offered outside the County.

Co-opted members of the committee received an explanation on how NCC were looking long term and on the new strategies being developed that would come to FACS in the future for comment.

Assurance was sought on a number of areas such as transport, sustainability and safeguarding. Members were advised that the relocation would give the school a more central location and give residents in the West of the County greater access to these provisions. The Committee were reminded that all school transport plans were examined from an environmental and efficiency point of view.

With regards to safeguarding, there would always be measures in place and it was anticipated that a working group with head teachers would be set up to look at any safeguarding issues that may arise.

The Committee were keen to ensure that in addition to teachers, parents and other organisations, students were also included in the discussions, and they feel comfortable with the move.

The Committee **agreed** to advise the Cabinet they supported the recommendations as outlined in the report.

**WAYNE DALEY**  
**CHAIRMAN**