



Seaton Valley Council
A Community Council

Sue Aviston
Schools Organisation and Resources Team
Children's Services
Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
NE61 2EF

26th November 2021

Dear Sue,

Proposals to amalgamate Seaton Sluice and Whytrig Middle Schools

The Council met on Wednesday 24th November to consider its response to the above consultation exercise which proposes an amalgamation of Seaton Sluice Middle School (SSMS) and Whytrig Middle School (WMS) on one site, together with Astley High School (AHS).

Thank you for asking us for our views.

At its meeting the Council received addresses from a representative of the Save SSMS residents group; a representative from the Seaton Valley Federation Governing Body and a written statement from the Head of SSMS. Councillors also had access to the consultation document itself.

Following the addresses Councillors debated the matter and at the conclusion of the debate the Council unanimously agreed the following response to the consultation document:

The Council's preferred option is for middle schools to remain in place in both Seaton Sluice and Seaton Delaval, however, the Council realises that for this to be possible, significant investment will need to be made in SSMS within the same timescale that any new build takes place to replace AHS and WMS. For the avoidance of doubt, the Council fully supports a new build in Seaton Delaval to accommodate AHS and WMS.

The Council is keen to stress that investment in SSMS needs to be made in a timely manner and is concerned that if the new AHS/WMS new build is completed before any



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significant improvements are made to SSMS, some parents, particularly those living in Seghill and New Hartley may opt to move their children to the new school site in preference to them remaining at SSMS. The Council believes that such decisions by parents could damage the ongoing viability of SSMS in the short, medium and long term.

The Council felt that it was unable to fully consider the proposal to amalgamate SSMS with WMS on a new High School and Middle School site in Seaton Delaval without knowing where that site will actually be located and further felt that if Northumberland County Council can be persuaded to make significant investment in SSMS, then expressing a view on the proposed amalgamation would not be relevant to the discussion.

I have attached the statements of the three representatives who addressed the Council's meeting as they give an overview of the factors that Councillors took into account in arriving at their response.

I would be grateful if you could draw member's attention to the views of Seaton Valley Community Council when you report the outcome of the consultation exercise to your Council and thank you again for inviting us to respond.

Yours sincerely

Simon Potts

Simon Potts

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer