

## Questions for Meeting with Education Officers – 20 July 2016

Below are the questions that are being put to the Education officers, as provided by Cllr I Whitley:

IRA

Introductions etc and thank you. We are aware we have been allocated just one hour. We represent the precept payers of Shevington who are understandably upset and angry re the threat to the future of our schools. One hour is a very short period of time to cover all the points.

As a Parish Council we are aware of Wigan development plans and the pressure for massive house build over the next few years.

Given this intensive focus on house build this whole school closure process smacks of contradiction and short termism. What could be dictating this?

By closing one of our schools you would free up a large area of potential building land. We feel more transparency and honesty is required in these proceedings.

Our first question then is:

JEAN

1. Have there been any approaches by developers re purchase of any of the land.. . If not and if closure goes ahead what will happen to the land?

This is of course the not unrealistic fear of residents, parents. We are very properly suspicious that this is the motive behind these plans for closure.

ANGIE

2. 2,000 houses are in the process of being built on the very borders of Shevington Parish...

given the intensity of building why close perfectly good schools in the area.?

Two of the schools are recognised as Good .

One has recently been declared OUTSTANDING. These are easily accessible from new build housing on Arbour Lane and Robin Hill Lane. More easily than Standish schools.

Standish Schools are at full capacity why not let Shevington Schools take the shortfall of places?

IRA

3. There has been and still is house building in Shevington itself. The

numbers you quote of required places are very low given the number of new family homes projected. What is the formula you have used to calculate these numbers?

Also, to close one school means you would not provide enough places for the current intake in Reception. How would this be dealt with?

JEAN

4. Another area of contradiction is the proposal to extend Shevington High School presumably to accommodate children from the surrounding new build areas. This clearly contradicts the plan to close a Primary School. Where will these children be educated up to the age of 11.

ANGIE

5. What investigations into traffic flow have been done? Standish Centre is extremely congested already. It is not designed for the amount of traffic using it at present. Why create more congestion ...why not divert children from the new build so that the shortfall from Standish is taken up by the Shevington Schools. (Yes more congestion in Shevington but only at peak hours. Shevington... more able to take peak hour traffic than Standish which is perpetually jammed.)

IRA

6. What thought has been given to a more equitable distribution of numbers between the three FEDERATION schools plus the diverting of school children from the Standish rim area?

JEAN

7. One option you offer is to conflate one School with another ... While still allowing it to maintain its name. How will this affect the £150,000 school payment and VAT rebate which each individual school receives. Would the two schools on one site still receive this £150,000?

IRA

8. It is of course on the grapevine that these plans are not new..... have been being considered for a long time. So one very serious concern for us all is this. Have you not contributed already to the shortfall of numbers in Shevington County Primary School? If you had a child about to begin Infant / Junior School in the last few years and you heard that the school could be closing what would be your choice? What would you do? There is a dip for 2016 /2017 but after that there seems to be a return to more normal numbers.. Could this dip for the 2016/17 have been caused by

uncertainty and a poor OFSTED report which no longer applies. The school is now recognised as Outstanding...is this not going to encourage parents to place their children here.

ANGIE

9. Supplementary question: can we see the applications from developers .. Under the FOI Act

IRA

10. We think more time is needed to look into the infrastructure contradictions which are evident in these plans and to the projected numbers of pupil places needed in Shevington.

We are also aware that a challenge is being prepared re the legality of the process you have set forward by the Federation schools group. We want you to know that the Parish Council are fully in support of the parent/schools group.