

Wiltshire Council

Council
13 July 2010

Notice of Motion No. 11
Opting Out Arrangements For Schools

From Councillor Jeff Osborn, Trowbridge Grove Division
and Councillor Helen Osborn, Trowbridge Lambrok Division

'This Council views with alarm moves to encourage Wiltshire primary and secondary schools to opt out of their formal relationship with this local education authority (LEA).

The outcome of such a move is likely to result in a "creaming off" of well performing schools, leaving the LEA with a greater proportion of underperforming schools. Also it is unclear as to whether these opted out schools will take full responsibility for Special Educational Needs pupils.

A further consequence will be that the LEA will lose its critical mass to provide the full range of viable support services.

Already in this current year Wiltshire Council's Children Services is to have its budget cut by £2.1 million. Added to this is the certainty that Wiltshire Council funds from central government will be cut by at least 25% over the next four years. This must severely impact on local – non opted out – educational provision.

Also it seems that much of the funding for these opted out schools – Academies and Free Schools – will come from the curtailing of the Building Schools for the Future programme. This, in turn, will mean that few, if any, remaining LEA schools will be rebuilt.

This Council therefore resolves to:

communicate the consequences of the opting out of Academies and Free Schools to the people of Wiltshire so that they can better understand what is going on'.