

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the circumstances which led the Education Committee to propose the closure of Pinner Sixth Form College and to consult with all interested parties about the proposal before coming to a final decision. The consultation process is outlined in Appendix I.

The document describes

- (1) the way in which falling rolls will lead to a significant excess in places in the Sixth Form Sector over the next decade;
- (2) the consequent need to close one college in order to ensure that the other three are able to provide a full range of courses;
- (3) the reasons for proposing that Pinner Sixth Form College should be the one to close; and
- (4) the way in which the future of Pinner College is linked to an overall plan for the whole of post-16 education in the Borough.

## 2. THE BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSAL: THE NEED TO CLOSE A COLLEGE

The decline in the birth rate, which began in 1964, has continued against all expectations. Even now it is not clear that there has been an upturn. Coupled to this, the percentage of young people who have chosen to continue their full-time education beyond the age of 16 has also decreased over the last 5 or 6 years (See Appendix II) to about 40% which is still well above the national average.

Appendix II shows that even if the birth rate turns up immediately and the decline in the percentage of pupils who stay on is arrested, there will still be a significant and increasing over-provision in the Sixth Form sector until the mid-1990's. Depending upon the timing and rate of any increase in the annual number of live births in the Borough, this period of over provision would almost certainly extend into the 21st Century.

In recognition of these circumstances, the Education Committee decided on 26 September 1978, that it would not proceed with a plan to provide extensive new buildings for Harrow College of Further Education but would give instead consideration to various options for the reorganisation of the whole of the post-statutory sectors. This review has been undertaken by the Working Party on Review and Development since its inception in October 1978.

Among a range of possible options, two main options have emerged:

- (a) The closure of one Sixth Form College and the removal of the Harrow College of Further Education from the unsatisfactory buildings at the Hatch End site to the vacated premises. (It would continue to use the Whitefriars Buildings). In this way, the Borough would retain 3 Sixth Form Colleges and the partially re-sited College of Further Education.
- (b) The establishment of 4 tertiary colleges in the 5 sets of buildings currently occupied by the 4 Sixth Form Colleges and Harrow College of Further Education on the Whitefriars

Site. This option would involve closing all the Sixth Form Colleges and Harrow College of Further Education and, as with option (a) above, vacating the Hatch End Site.

In either case, it would be necessary to bring about the closure of one Sixth Form College and the Committee believes that a decision to close a Sixth Form College could now be taken without prejudicing the future organisation of the post-statutory sector.

The difficulty of linking the closure of the college to a decision whether or not to reorganise the 16-19 sector radically is that the Working Party has still some way to go before being in a position to take the second decision, whereas a decision to close a college is now urgent.

It is urgent for two main reasons. Firstly, when the decision was taken in 1978 not to proceed with the rebuilding of Harrow College of Further Education it was intended that the College would soon be able to benefit from good, spare accommodation in the Sixth Form sector. The College are still housed in their unsatisfactory buildings. Secondly, the combined roll of the four Colleges has already fallen to a level appropriate to three and will continue to fall (See Appendix III). Three full Colleges could offer a wider curriculum than can be offered if all four Colleges are kept open.

Already special measures have been necessary to protect the system against the effect of falling enrolments. Two Colleges in particular (Pinner and Stanmore) have been significantly undersubscribed for 2 or 3 years and an artificially low admissions limit has been placed upon the other Colleges (Lowlands and Harrow Weald) in order to keep numbers at reasonable levels in all four colleges. This has reduced parental choice, and has made it necessary to supplement staffing to protect the curriculum.

Thus the system has been cushioned so far against the effect of falling rolls but during the long period of decline which is ahead it will not be possible to continue with this approach without damaging the whole system.

To allow sufficient time for consultation and for making the necessary arrangements, the earliest date for a closure would be September 1981. (Students admitted in 1980 would be able to complete their courses-see paras. 5&6). The actual rolls of the four Colleges over the past few years have been as follows:-

January	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Harrow Weald	505	557	530	447	457	432
Lowlands	504	496	476	457	453	450
Pinner	486	452	435	387	353	332
Stanmore	390	412	381	337	362	368
	1,885	1,917	1,822	1,628	1,625	1,582

January	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Capacity (Development Plan Size)	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Capacity (according to Schools Premises Regulations)	Adaptations/Extensions in Progress				2,130	2,130

It should be noted that the College rolls are a little higher than the above table shows during the Autumn term.

3. WHY WAS PINNER SIXTH FORM COLLEGE CHOSEN?

Many factors such as geographical siting, suitability of buildings, staffing implications, accessibility and relative levels of demand from students have been taken into consideration in arriving at the decision on which College should be closed. It has been agreed however, that those criteria are not equally significant, and, that unless there are other exceptional considerations, the decisive criterion is the relative level of student/parent choice for the Colleges.

From a common sense point of view, it seems unreasonable to propose the closure of a very popular, over-subscribed College when one of the objectives of closure is to reap the benefits of having three full colleges. Closure of the least popular seems to meet the spirit and letter of Section 76 of the Education Act 1944 (as amended) which states:-

"..... so far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents."

The wishes of the parents\* are expressed in the forms which state preferences for particular colleges. In terms of Section 76, these would seem to be a powerful indicator in pointing to the college to close. The following table shows the percentage of first choices for each college during the past four years:-

First Choice Forms received

	<u>1975/76</u>	<u>1976/77</u>	<u>1977/78</u>	<u>1978/79</u>	<u>1979/80</u>
Harrow Weald	24%	28%	34%	38%	41%
Lowlands	22%	28%	26%	36%	32%
Pinner	17%	22%	21%	11%	12%
Stanmore	37%	22%	19%	15%	15%

\* The fact that parents may in many cases simply accept the wishes of their children, does not alter the fact that technically they make the application and that they will object if not offered a place at the College of their choice. There is no evidence that parents' wishes are significantly different from their childrens.

It is worth noting that in the years up to and including 1977/78, Harrow Weald, Lowlands and Pinner Colleges had their former grammar school intakes of earlier years working through the school and this is thought to have distorted first choice patterns in those years. In 1978/79 it became clear that Harrow Weald and Lowlands were so popular that they could be eliminated from consideration for closure. Thus the problem was to choose between Stanmore and Pinner.

The relative popularity of the two colleges at second and third choice levels was also considered but the picture did not become any clearer as a result. Whereas for 1978/79 Stanmore was about 1% more popular at each level, in 1979/80 both colleges achieved 21% at second choice level and 22% at third choice level (as percentages of all second and third choices).

The Committee was faced with the urgent need to close a college and while recognising that the statistical information was limited, concluded that in the absence of any other decisive factor the slightly greater popularity of Stanmore indicated that Pinner should be the college to be closed.

#### 4. CURRICULAR CONSIDERATIONS

If a decision is taken to close the college the closure would be phased so that the college would be less than half full during the academic year 1981/82. Every effort would be made to ensure that all students enrolled at the college could complete their courses and this assurance would extend to students who enrolled in September 1980.

Based on a survey of existing places available in the other three colleges.

- (a) All "A" level courses currently available at Pinner could be accommodated, after the necessary staffing/redeployment adjustments at the remaining colleges. The Computer Science course would have to be re-established at another college.
- (b) Options not currently available to students at Pinner could be offered to them by the three other colleges.
- (c) At today's levels of enrolments, there might be some difficulty in accommodating several "O" level courses, notably Mathematics, Design and Technology and Technical Drawing, in other colleges if Pinner were to close. However, as rolls fall this difficulty would be eased. Further help in this direction would be found by shortening certain existing two-year courses at Pinner to one-year (there are grounds for contending that one-year courses at "O" level should be the norm in the Sixth Form Colleges). Also, temporary accommodation could be provided to overcome short-term difficulties which arose, whilst it should be borne in mind that there may be some spare capacity in the Further Education Sector.
- (d) It appears that little, if any, adaptations/extensions for subjects such as the sciences and technical studies requiring specialist accommodation would be required if existing courses were to be transferred to other colleges.
- (e) Concentration of teaching and other resources in three colleges would make for more viable teaching groups and therefore greater student choice. The staffing problems in "shortage subjects" such as mathematics, technical studies, languages and physical sciences would also be eased.

5. ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS

The final intake to the College would be in September 1980 and these students would have a full two years in the college.

Appropriate arrangements would be made for the small number of students (about 18) who wished to stay on for a third year.

6. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

Under existing Council policy, the Committee would meet the problem of staffing as far as possible by redeployment and natural wastage. Redeployment opportunities may be restricted, because of the relative travelling distances involved, for some (particularly non-teaching) Staff, and because there may be no suitable vacancy into which to redeploy teachers. Opportunities may occur in other sectors of the service for redeployment, particularly for non-teaching staff.

Closure would be phased (i.e. the final intake would be in September 1980 but the college would remain open until July 1982) and this would give time for some natural movement of staff which would produce extra opportunities for redeploying people against real jobs. (Each college at the moment has a stable curriculum and staffing arrangement and there is little movement).

TEACHING STAFF

The main point is that the overall staffing commitment would be approximately the same in three institutions as in four since the number of students is likely to be the same in either case.

Existing staff would be entitled to protected salaries under the Burnham Report. The following staff would probably need to be redeployed to the three remaining colleges, in some cases initially on a supernumerary basis:-

- (a) The Principal
- (b) The First Deputy Principal
- (c) The Second Deputy Principal
- (d) The Second Master/Mistress
- (e) Three Senior Teachers
- (f) Some Heads of Department and above scale post-holders

Even if the three remaining colleges became Group 13, which is unlikely, the extra scale points would not absorb these posts. However, reasonably stable rolls for the next few years and natural wastage should lessen the overall problem, and it might be possible to redeploy a small number of Senior Staff to High Schools.

NON-TEACHING STAFF

ANCILLARY STAFF

The revised model establishment for Sixth Form Colleges is being implemented on a phased basis over a number of years as resources allow. The ancillary

staff establishment at Pinner Sixth Form College at the moment comprises:-

Secretary	35 hours per week (full-time)
Clerical Assistant	35 hours per week (term-time only plus 4 weeks in holiday periods)
Other Clerical Assistance	75 hours per week (term-time) only
Technical Assistant	35 hours per week (full-time)
Other Technical Assistance	170 hours per week (term-time only)
Librarian	35 hours per week (full-time)

There would be scope for a redeployment within the Education service generally for most of the above personnel because of natural wastage; those who could not be redeployed would have to be employed on a supernumerary basis until natural wastage created vacancies.

#### SCHOOL MEALS STAFF

Pinner Sixth Form College shares a canteen with Cannon Lane First and Middle Schools. If the college is closed, the canteen will remain open and the jobs of the senior kitchen staff would be unaffected. However, roughly 50% of the 19 General Kitchen Assistants may need to be redeployed or employed on a supernumerary basis depending on the future use of the buildings.

#### CARETAKING AND CLEANING STAFF

The existing establishment is:-

Caretaker  
Assistant Caretaker  
Full-time Cleaner  
7 Part-time Cleaners

Depending on the use made of the buildings some or all the above personnel would need to be redeployed.

#### 7. WHAT THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE HOPES TO LEARN FROM CONSULTATION

The Committee would welcome views on:-

- (a) the general basis of the proposal outlined in Sections 2 and 3
- (b) the choice of Pinner Sixth Form College as the one to be closed
- (c) the implications of the proposal as outlined in Sections 4, 5 and 6
- (d) any matters of concern which have not been discussed in this document

Queries on this document should be addressed to the Controller of Education Services, P.O. Box 22, Civic Centre, Harrow, Middlesex.

Requests for additional copies of this document should be sent to the same address enclosing a stamped 10 or 12p self addressed foolscap envelope. Copies may also be obtained from the local libraries or by calling at the Civic Centre.

APPENDIX I

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Circular 7/78 provides guidelines on timescale for the closure of schools under Section 13 of the Education Act 1944. If a decision was taken to close Pinner College on 31 August 1981, the Circular requires that proposals should be submitted and Section 13 Notices published by 1 July 1980, i.e. 14 months in advance of the date of closure.

Whilst other meetings and steps may become necessary, the Committee has already agreed the following timetable for consultation prior to making a decision on the publication of Section 13 Notices.

12 March 1980	Working Party on Review and Development - to agree and release the consultation document.
20 March	Special Governing Body Meeting
17 April	Public Meeting
22 April	JCC (Further Education) to receive the consultation document
24 April	JCC (Schools) and Harrow Teachers Consultative Committee to receive the consultation document
June	Special Joint JCC (Schools and FE) to receive comments
9 June	The Working Party on Review and Development to give initial consideration to the responses.
17 June	Education Committee to receive the Working Party's report and consider whether to recommend the publication of Section 13 Notices to the Council
26 June	Special Council to decide to publish Section 13 Notices if necessary.

Following the publication of Section 13 Notices, anyone who wishes will be able to make their views known to the Secretary of State and/or the Authority, in writing. (Details of this will be included on the Notices). Depending on his view of the objections, the Secretary of State will make his decision known sometime before the end of the year.

APPENDIX II

Reports to the Working Party showed that earlier forecasts of staying-on rates were over-optimistic and the gradual decline since 1975 had confirmed that there is over-provision in the Sixth Form College Sector. Staying-on rates (as a percentage of the previous September 15+ year group) since 1974 have been as follows:-

Sept. 1974	Sept. 1975	Sept. 1976	Sept. 1977	Sept. 1978	Sept. 1979
43.9%	45.1%	44.4%	41.7%	40.6%	40.3%

It may now be that the staying-on rate has stabilised at about 40-41%, but even if this has happened, falling age groups will lead to a steady decline in Sixth Form College enrolments from September 1980 onwards. A very significant growth in the staying-on rate would be required to offset this effect.

(See Appendix III).

1. The following forecasts are based upon known live births only.
2. Various levels of average staying-on rates are assumed and resultant rolls forecast.
3. In all cases it is assumed that 77% of first year students will stay on for a second year and that 12% of these will stay on for a third year. (There has been little variation in these staying-on rates in recent years).

Possible 16+ Staying-on Rates	TOTAL FORECAST ROLLS AT VARIOUS 16+ STAYING-ON RATES												
	SEPTEMBER												
	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93
40%	1698	1634	1564	1520	1477	1446	1433	1394	1355	1307	1273	1206	1154
41%	1738	1674	1602	1558	1514	1482	1469	1430	1391	1341	1305	1256	1183
42%	1779	1715	1642	1596	1552	1519	1504	1464	1425	1373	1338	1288	1210
43%	1819	1756	1682	1634	1589	1556	1541	1499	1458	1405	1369	1369	1242
44%	1860	1796	1720	1673	1626	1592	1577	1535	1493	1439	1400	1350	1270
45%	1901	1838	1760	1711	1663	1628	1611	1569	1527	1471	1433	1379	1298

4. Three colleges would provide about 1650 places. Therefore in general terms, the forecasts show that only 3 colleges will be needed to cater for the likely demand for places in the foreseeable future. This becomes more evident if it is remembered that in 1981/82 some of the above students would be in Pinner College. If an allowance is made for those students the total roll of the other 3 colleges (assuming a 16+ staying on rate of 40%) would be approximately as follows:-

September	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93
40%	1519	1634	1564	1520	1477	1446	1433	1394	1355	1307	1273	1206	1154

APPENDIX III CONT'D

5. If the present staying-on rates of 77% and 12% between first and second, and second and third year students persist, an annual intake of 300 students (giving a total roll in each of three colleges of about 550) would require the following staying-on rates at the age of transfer from the High Schools (16+) if the colleges were to remain full.

	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93
September													
Previous January 15+	2286	2134	2140	2033	2006	1957	1963	1866	1843	1745	1735	1632	1527
Staying-on rate needed to give total intake of 900 (%)	39.3*	42.1*	42.1	44.3	44.9	46.0	45.8	48.2	48.8	51.6	51.9	55.1	58.9

\* Note that in these years it would be possible to admit more than 300 to each college because they would each be less than full as a result of low admissions in previous years.