

# 070703 Heathcote School 123

## Speaker key

JW            Jane Wilton  
LM            Lindsay Martin  
PD            Pauline Davis  
JD            Justin Donovan

UM            Unknown male

JW     Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Jane Wilton and I work with a company called Accent and Accent is an independent market research company and we've been asked by Hertfordshire County Council to help them with the consultation process, and I think it's important to stress that we are independent, I am independent, I am here to help make sure that the consultation's run in a fair and proper manner and that your voices are heard, as I hope, the panel's voices are heard as well, in answer to your queries. Can I just ask you, if at all possible, to turn off mobiles, and not on to silent unless it's really urgent because it interferes with the recording, which as you can see, I'm wearing a microphone and the panel are wearing microphones and we are recording this whole evening's consultation. There will be a transcript of this evening put up on the website when it's been done, it will probably take a couple of weeks or so, and so therefore if the mobile's affect the recordings, we won't be able to hear what you're saying. So, we're going to start the evening with a presentation which will be given by Lindsay Martin, initially, and after that, we will come to the open part of the meeting, where your questions will be taken by the panel, so I think we will kick off with Lindsay and the presentation. Thank you.

LM     Okay, Jane, thank you very much, and welcome to this third consultation at Heathcote School on behalf of the county council. I think yes, it does work, good, excellent, as Jane has said, this is roughly what we're going to do this evening, I'm going to introduce my colleagues, talk to you a bit about building schools for the future, my colleague Pauline will talk about why we need an area review and what our proposals and then the main part of the evening is over to you. So on my extreme left and your right is Justin Donovan, Deputy Director of Children, Schools and Families, and Chief Education Officer, Pauline Davis, Area Planning Manager who has done the detailed work on this review in Stevenage, and I'm in the middle. So, building schools for the future, the context in which this review is being undertaken and forgive me if you've heard this once or even twice before, because I'm going to be saying much the same thing I'm afraid, but for those of you who are here for the first time, this is the context within which the review of places, secondary mainstream, secondary special, is taking place, in Stevenage, and I doubt that any of us here remember education as it was 130 or so years ago, in the Victorian classroom, but that's what it looked like, and I think they're all girls, it's a bit difficult because it's a bit of a grainy picture, but I think it's a girls only class, but it makes a point about what it was like in those days. Rather more recently in my lifetime, um, we used equipment like slide rules, I certainly used a slide rule when I was at school, an early calculator, early Sinclair calculator, in that particular case, I'm sure if I remember

these things there are at least some people in the audience who are as old as me who remember these things as well, and a lot that don't, of course, remember these things either, but this just says something about the way education has changed pretty dramatically, certainly in terms of equipment, over one lifetime, i.e. mine, yours perhaps, from a slide rule or calculator machine like these to the powered computing power of a palm top, the difference is really quite incredible, and who would have predicted in the 60s or whatever, when these were being used, where we would be 40 years later, in terms of the equipment that's available to young people, and indeed, teachers. And these are the sorts of buildings that that education was carried out in, these post war buildings that you can see all over Hertfordshire, including Stevenage, this isn't actually Stevenage School, it's somewhere else in Hertfordshire, but most of the schools, you will see, including the one we are in now, don't look a lot different from these flat roofed window ward post war structures built in Stevenage in early 1950s at Barclay to the late 1960s in the valley, with, of course, blocks and additions subsequently, but the original buildings were all built between the early 50s and late 60s and are increasingly not fit for purpose for a modern education system.

This is an exemplar design of a new school that department, it was at the time, the Department for Education and Skills, now the department for Children, Schools and Families, you may have noticed in the news at the end of last week, commissioned a number of leading architects to do some exemplar designs of what a secondary school could look like, and these external and internal pictures of the modelling work that architects have done, you won't see any schools that look like that in Hertfordshire, at least not yet.

So what is the programme itself? So the Building Schools for the Future programme is the government's major investment in secondary and special schools, secondary aged special schools, investment in buildings primarily, but not exclusively, worth £2.2 billion per annum, which seems a very large sum of money, but when you consider that Terminal 5 at Heathrow, shortly to be completed, cost £4.3 billion as a single project, that then puts even these large sums of money into some sort of perspective. The first tranche of that money to come to Hertfordshire is coming to Stevenage, roughly £145 to £146 million, including this earmarked, £12 million specifically for information and communications technology, as an indication of how important new technology is to the future of the education system and the way people learn and the way people teach. Altogether, it represents a very exciting opportunity for all pupils in all schools in Stevenage to work together to create a new shared vision for education, to be delivered through this investment. It's also, of course, pretty important to get it right because the current buildings we're in were built 40 to 50 years ago and are still going strong. The new buildings that we build as part of this project also need to last a long time, many generations of children need to pass through them, so it's pretty important that we get this investment right and we spend it in the best possible way.

But, there's always a but, a large amount of government funding doesn't come without quite a lot of red tape, strings attached to it, this is certainly the case for our project, for all projects funded this way, we have to submit a whole series of documents for approval, by central government, the first will be submitted in April, the second, we have to submit around September and October, and finally, our most detailed business case, in about February to March of next year, and only when all

those documents are approved, will we be able to start the procurement process, that is, go to the market to find a private sector contractor who will actually deliver all the building work which needs to be done. That procurement process, tied as it is to European red tape, as opposed to just British red tape, um, takes as you can see, quite a long time here, from the Spring of 2008, into late 2009, and only after that, will we be able to put the first spade in the ground, or however you start a building project these days, I'm sure it's more sophisticated than a spade in the ground, but you know what I mean, we won't be able to start building work until late 2009 or even early 2010 depending on how well this process goes. That's really quite a lot about money in buildings, but it's not really about that is it, buildings are only the means to an end, they're not an end in themselves, we don't build wonderful schools and then think, oh, gosh, we ought to put some children in this, it's the other way round isn't it? We have children who need to learn, we have teachers who need to teach, and we need to provide them with the best possible built environment for that to happen. Buildings are enablers, they're not ends in themselves, so where we started, uh, was with discussion, with stakeholders in Stevenage, principally schools, but not exclusively, on what our shared vision for the future of teaching and learning, in Stevenage, and indeed, across the county, should be. And we came up with these things that I think are pretty unarguable, I don't think anyone would really take exception to any of these. A focus on excellent teaching and effective learning, commitment to raising attainment, raising aspirations, increasing the participation, improving employability, schools which lead and serve the community with a range of public services, a commitment to healthy lifestyles, active participation in sport, a diverse range of specialisms, including vocational ones, linked to the employability I mentioned on the previous slide, I'd mentioned already the importance of ICT, to provide more personalised study programmes, and community access to learning programmes, and last but not least, light, attractive and flexible spaces, in buildings fit for the future. It's important that we design buildings that are going to be sufficiently adaptable to serve well over the next 40 or 50 years. It's pretty impossible, I suspect, for us to predict where the palm top might lead to in 40 or 50 years' time, just as the slide rule to the palm top, what will the palm top lead to in 40 or 50 years' time, I think if anyone knows the answer to that, I suggest they invest in it now and make a lot of money.

So, what do we need to deliver a vision like that? Again, we consulted a range of stakeholders, and most stakeholders, not all, but most stakeholders agreed that we needed fewer mainstream schools, larger sixth forms, and more specialisms, big enough to be efficient and flexible, but small enough to support those all important relationships between students and staff. They agreed that we needed closer links between mainstream and special schools, and Pauline will go through our proposal relating to special schools in a later slide. They agreed that we needed to develop even closer links with [unclear] college, even closer because they are close now, they are well developed now, but they can be developed even further. And they agreed that we needed improved facilities for our Education Support Centre, that is the centre that educates children who are out of school. Currently in very unfit accommodation, in fact a double mobile classroom on the edge of a primary school site, entirely inappropriate, so Pauline, rightly anticipated by getting to her feet, how well we have organised this, the next slide is hers, why we need an area review, so I'll pass you the stuff.

PD Thank you. Hello everybody. Okay, so why do we need this area review? As Lindsay said, this is about an educational vision, and that the investment is just an impetus to achieve that end, but it is a lot of money, and it's important that we invest that money wisely, this is about the future of secondary provision in Stevenage and it's going to have to last for some time, so we must get it right. We need to make sure that what we [unclear] developing schools, building the right number of places, for the young people that we expect to be in the channel in the future, and also to make that provision in the right location [unclear] So what have we done so far? We started talking to people back in January, Lindsay mentioned these stakeholders, head teachers, secondary head teachers, primary head teachers, governing body representatives, borough councillors, County Councillors, college head people, and whole range of key players in the education service within Stevenage, and we started talking to them about this vision, about what young people might need in terms of their skills and aptitudes in the future and then going through, well, if that was the case, what sort of an education provision might they need to be? And they came forward and joined with us to put forward some ideas as to what the possible options would be for organisation of secondary provision within the term. We then evaluated those proposals against all criteria developed by the Director of Children, Schools and Families, and I'll show you those in a moment. They then considered that evaluation, and decided which of those options he wanted us to come and talk to you about to get your views about, and that's what we're doing here today, this is one of a number of meetings as part of our public consultation exercise, I'm sure you've all had a consultation document, you will see that that [unclear] August, and that's what we want to do, to give you an opportunity to have a couple of seconds to look through that list of the form tests, you will notice it's about achievement, not only about places, it's about achievement, it's about building design and it's about transitional arrangements. So it's quite a holistic package then. So let's have a look at this changing pattern of demand in your town.

The government, when we're planning to build new schools for the future, that we need to plan for ten year's hence, that's because they don't want us to build buildings that immediately have to be expanded the very next year. We have a need for 48 forms of entry in 2017, that's our projection, a form of entry, for those of you who are not sure of what that means, is a group of 13 [unclear] coming into school in each [unclear] That 48 forms of entry includes some surplus, that government recommends that we allow between 5% and 10%, to make sure that you as parents, have an opportunity for expressive reference [unclear] reasonable chance of getting it. It also allows for any unforeseen circumstances at the time of projecting those figures.

We also know that for schools within Stevenage, the places that we've got in those schools are unevenly distributed, the schools are of different sizes and they're in places, at the moment, where not all the children live, but I'll show you that in a moment on the map. Certainly recent housing developments in the north east of the town have changed the pattern of [unclear] in places and more housing projected just to carry on with that trend, and while we're talking about housing, it's just worth noting, that if and when the major development west of the A1(M) happens, there are already plans and agreements for a new secondary school and some primary schools, to serve that fairly distinct and separate part of the town. So let's have a look at this map, we're talking here about the big development west of Stevenage, other new areas of housing potentially going out further north, you'll see in the map, this is the

map in the consultation document by the way, you will see that we've identified a site for a small building, a new secondary school building, up in the north of the town, because you will notice that there's this rather large town here, for which there is no local [unclear] provision. What we have in the town are two schools, virtually side by side, in the north of the town, and two schools side by side in the south. Now, I'll come back to what the proposals are in a second. So let's have a look at the proposals for mainstream schools first, and I know that that's probably what most of you came here tonight to look at. The council's preferred option to have a pattern of schools, a geographical spread of schools, of [unclear] schools across the town, and that's the list of schools that the county council is proposing, it should be those eight [unclear] and you noticed I talked about that new site in the north of the town, and the proposal is to move the [unclear] school to that new site, therefore breaking up those two schools very close together up in the north of the town. What you'll notice here and of most importance to you, is that in that pattern of [unclear] Lindsay talked about fewer, larger, schools, the proposals, that under his proposal he put [unclear] and that's because we have two schools that are virtually next door to each other in the south of the town. We have another proposal there, and it's a fallback position, and it's only a fallback position, because the two schools, we don't yet own the land, that's a bit of a chicken and egg, because we can't buy the land until we know what the proposals are going to be and vice versa, but nevertheless, what we are saying is, there are two areas, obviously the new school in the north, the new school site in the north, we're not expecting a problem with that signage, if there is a problem that we can't overcome, then clearly, Thomas Alleyne wouldn't be able to move there, so this four fact position is that Thomas [unclear] circumstances. In the centre of the town, we need a bit more land to rebuild Marriotts School, and open up a new access to the south of that school, and if we hit a problem that we can't resolve, then that school will close under this scenario. You will notice, importantly for this school, that the [unclear] of school closure is a feature of [unclear].

For special schools, we've had a range of proposals, and you will notice here that there are no preferred options for special schools, because we want to hear what people say about this. The long term special school for children with neurological and physical impairments, there are two options there, the school could stay on its current site and benefit from BSF investment there, or it could relocate to either the Barclay or the Marriotts School sites, those are the two sites that will be big enough to sustain both a mainstream school and a special school on the same campus.

The Greenside School, which is a school for people with severe learning disabilities, the school buildings themselves are fine, they're just aren't enough of them, and they're not as conducive for secondary age pupils than as they might have been, so the proposal is to build some accommodation on one side of the [unclear] school buildings so that the primary age children can spread into the existing school building with all the facilities there.

For the Valley School, we genuinely hear about what people have to say about the possibilities for the Valley School, the Valley School could stay on its current site, and benefit from BSF funding there. It could, just in the way I've explained with [unclear] relocate to another school site, again, you will see, the Barclay or Marriotts site up there. The school could continue as an organisation will all the pupils who are enrolled there and the staff belonging to the Valley School, but with the young people

being located in other schools and being supported by that professional network of staff across the town. Or, we could close the school and open up special [unclear] units on each of the mainstream sites, bearing in mind that each of those might need to have a particular specialism to cope with particular needs. A range of options there, there is no preferred solution, we genuinely want to hear what people have to say. But for you tonight, what you really want to know, is what the transitional arrangements are likely to be. Certainly in terms of building plans and work, we want students, staff, parents, governors involved in developing school projects, there are plans in place to engage people in that so that we share in the development of not only provision for schools but also involved in the development of those building projects, and clearly, what we do know is that building work can be disruptive, there's no getting away from that, and what the name of the game is to minimise that disruption, and where we're building these school buildings, what we will say is that we won't move young people into those buildings until they are complete. With closing schools, and for some of you here tonight, I'm sure this is important, we need, obviously to be aware, that this is quite a difficult situation for you as parents and we need to handle that carefully and sensitively as we can, at appropriate points, and clearly, you will want to feel confident, that if your children are here for the duration, then you want to be confident in the quality of the teaching and learning that goes on here during the transition phase.

For staff, certainly we want to involve the school management and staff in any transition plans for them, but they also need to be aware that we're not reducing the number of places in the town, we are expanding other schools as well and we want to keep staff working in Stevenage, it will be an exciting place [unclear]. So I just wanted to reassure you that this is a town wide issue and other schools will be involved in the transitional arrangements for staff at any closing school, and if it becomes necessary, the county council has an excellent record for facilitating any new deployment that might be required.

For students, we will work with the schools to develop clear transition plans. What we will say to you as parents, is two things, first of all we will not move your child during a key stage, we will give you that commitment, and also, to promise that if we get to the point, if the county council decide to pursue the closure of a school, at the time we publish notices, statutory notices, we will make clear to you what the transition plans for children will be, we will make that clear to you at that point, and if your child has to move school and you have the expense of a new uniform, the county council makes a financial contribution to that, and we found the best way of achieving that is via the schools and they will work with you on that. So before we just get to the most important point of tonight, is actually what you want to say, and answer your questions, let's just have a look at how that transition will be taken.

Certainly, we talked about this as a public consultation, we genuinely want to hear your views, please do so, either here, through the recording tonight, or on the response form at the end of the booklet, or by email, or any way you want to tell us, we need to hear what you've got to say. It's going to be my job to make sure that we present your views and the issues that you've raised to the County Councillors who take those decisions. The Education Panel would first see those issues, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October, and the Cabinet of the County Council, which is the decision making body of the council, will meet on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, and the Education Panel will pass on to the

Cabinet their views about the outcome of the consultation. The County Council doesn't just rely on our interpretation of what you've said, they will have the tapes of these meetings, the transcripts, and we make every single one of your contributions available to them so that they can read them first hand, get a real flavour of what you're saying. Those meetings, you will notice are open to the public, they're not public meetings, but you can come along and see what happens, what we normally do, is when a school is affected by a proposal, the school is allowed to have a slot at the meeting to make representation, it's one representative talking on behalf of the school. We usually leave the school to decide who and how that representation is made. If the Cabinet decides to pursue any of the proposals, for example, a school closure is significant enough, we would have to then go and publish what is known as statutory notices, they are a legal sort of adverts in the local newspaper, that says what the County Council proposes to do, and by when and what the transition arrangements are. Those statutory notices sit for a period of six weeks, during which time, you all have an opportunity to [unclear] and if any one person objects, then that objection and those objections have to be referred back to the County Council to reconsider, in the light of those comments, and take a final decision. When we put this together, and that's intended to be by the end of 2007, the government had changed those final decision making arrangements, and I hear say that that's now likely to be in January, because of those changes, so I think you'll be relieved [unclear]

UF We are now at the open part of the meeting and we will be talking questions from the floor until quarter to nine, at which point the panel will be available, excuse me, I'm just going to introduce the opening session and then we will come to questions, okay? That means that you will actually have a chance to talk to the panel individually about any individual concerns about your children, particularly. What I would like to say is that everybody here understands that the proposal arouses strong feelings and we do want to hear your views, and I particularly, am here to make sure that your views are recorded on the tape, so that the County Councillors or anyone else who wishes to listen to those views can hear them. So to that end, I would ask you not to shout out, not to call out, but to put your hand up, if you have a question, I will come to you, I will try to get to everybody, there's a lot of people here tonight, and I will do my best to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to speak. If there are people who haven't spoken and people who are, you know, wanting to put another point, I will go to the people who haven't yet spoken so that they do have an opportunity. So, without more ado, Katie is at the back there with a microphone, and so if you put your hands up, I will actually come to you to get your questions answered.

UM [Unclear] time frame on this meeting [unclear] If you could put a time frame on it, I think would be very helpful. The first part of my question, I want to know what you are doing to retain staff. I have a son in Year 10, going forward to do GCSEs next year and I want to know what reassurances you are going to give, the fact that he hasn't a sort of constant stream of supply teachers coming in and out.

JD Shall I start on the grounds that I haven't yet spoken. Two things, in terms of the time frame, I think it's reasonable to set a time to finish the meetings, and what we've done is have lots of meetings, I know there's a lot of people here we've seen twice before, and so I think we have to stop at some point, and I think it's quite reasonable to set a time, especially as people are out every night. In terms of staffing,

I think the thing to bear in mind here is that we're talking about long term proposals, we've got four or five years down the line to get this right, and absolutely, there are two things at the top of our list of things that, once this, because what we're doing at the moment is consulting on the shape, pattern and location of schools, and there are two things right at the top of our list once that consultation is completed. One is, making sure that parents know where their children will be, so there are transitional arrangements in terms of admissions, so that people aren't second guessing that, and the second is making absolutely sure we secure the best possible staff, not just here in Heathcote, but in all the other schools in Stevenage where also, there will be some disruption, not as significant as Heathcote, but still disruption. The other thing we need to do, from a local authority point of view, is to try and convince as many staff as possible in Heathcote to remain within the Stevenage project, because we believe it's a very exciting place to be over the next four to five years and certainly a very good place to be in terms of one's professional career. What we will be doing is, at some point, certainly if I can, and I'll talk at the Chair of Governors ahead about this, certainly if I can, talk to staff again before the end of this term so that colleagues are familiar with what we're proposing over the summer break. It's a whole range of strategies to try and convince staff to stay and there's a lot of strategies that we can do to make that happen. The other thing is that we are confident that once we've agreed what the shape of schools will look like in Stevenage in the coming years, Stevenage will become a very interesting focus nationally, and lots of people who live within striking distance of Stevenage may well want to come and teach here, because they'll be teaching in some of the best schools anywhere in the country, it's a very exciting curriculum map here in Stevenage, progression routes through to further education, higher education, and certainly, as a young teacher, I would have loved to have come to a place like Stevenage in the future and teach. So we will have strategies in place to try and convince as many staff to stay, we will have strategies in place to try and convince as many staff to come, so that over the next four to five years, Heathcote is a secure and viable school to be. I would say, we are expecting, I would be surprised if the numbers didn't drop slightly as Heathcote moves forward, and what we will end up with are classes which are relatively small, compared to classes elsewhere in Stevenage. What we will do is make sure there is sufficient funding in place to make sure the full staffing levels are maintained.

UM Can I just respond, I don't think you've answered the question, I have to say, I come from an industry [unclear] I come from an industry that's actually littered with companies who've run off money, they've had undue trouble trying to persuade staff to stay, so [unclear] so I'd love to hear from you what strategy you have in place for staff retention.

JD And what I'm saying to you is, that at the moment we're consulting on the number, shape, size and location of schools. What we will do, is once we've consulted on that, and we are talking about four or five years time, what we will then do is put into place very detailed arrangements and there are lots of things we can do, depending on what the final arrangements are and what the pattern is. What we're not doing at the moment is consulting on that, and what we're not doing is winding down, if you like, the overall, if you like, industry of teaching in Stevenage. The number of children in Stevenage is going up slightly, therefore the number of jobs for teachers in Stevenage is going down, and what we do have is a very good track record in Hertfordshire to make sure that every time we do have school reorganisations like

this, we have a track record where 100% of teachers who would like to stay in the area and teach, we will arrange for that to happen, and we will be able to say to teachers, if you want to stay in Stevenage, if you want to be part of what is a very exciting professional project, over the next four or five years, we will work together to make sure that your career is secure in Stevenage. Now, when we've said that in other reorganisations, we've been able to deliver that, 100%. Of course, some teachers will move on, teachers move on anyway, and some teachers may well move on because of the reorganisation, but other teachers will be attracted to Stevenage because of the future in Stevenage that we're planning. It's a very exciting place to be and to come and teach.

JW Thank you. I have about four people who've put their hands up already, so there's a lady here, there's a lady in the front, and then there's a gentleman there, and then we will come to the other two or three here, okay.

UF I'd like to say, you're using words like convincing the teachers, surely, you should be saying, what incentives we're going to give to teachers, what money is set aside for teachers, are you going to be holding jobs open in other schools for these teachers to maintain their positions, to keep their jobs open, you're all using words, but you're not mentioning money, you're not mentioning incentives, you're not saying you're going to hold posts open in the new schools for our teachers and you're talking about four years hence, we're talking about now, children are already being pulled from these schools, teachers will start to walk, because they have families to provide for, they're not going to wait around for four years, they're going to have to start making decisions now, so what are you doing now, and where's the money?

JD What we cannot do, is say to individual teachers, here are financial incentives to stay, here are the jobs we are going to hold open for you, until we have agreed formally what the number, shape, size and location of schools are. That will be done at Cabinet in October, unless there are formal objections, then it will be in January. Now I'm very happy and have already offered to come and talk personally to the staff about the kind of things we will be able to offer them, but not in firm detail, because we cannot do that until we know where the schools will be and their size, that's to pre-empt the consultation process. It might well be that what we do is give what we call in the business, golden handcuffs to stay, it might well be that what we say to staff is, over the next three or four years, when jobs become available elsewhere in the town, we will make appointments across the two schools, so there's a whole range of issues and a whole range of strategies we can use. We are not in a position to make those offers for teachers because that will be pre-empting this consultation process. We are professional people, we do know about these strategies, we have used them across the town in a range of different patterns, depending on the particular issue. What we don't do, is say to staff, here are some firm arrangements until we know what schools will be open, what size they'll be and where they are, that would not be a sensible thing to do, we can and will talk to the staff before the summer holidays about the kind of things that will be in place for them should these proposals go through, but what we can't do is talk to the staff in detail before we've even agreed how many schools and how big they will be, we have to do this in sequence.

UF This is the third meeting that I'm attending and that's in the hope that I might get some clarity and some understanding, I'm getting more confused. Your map

shows very clearly that eventually there will be one school in the south, one school. When you close Heathcote, there is no room in Barnwell for the kids that will still be here, because that will be full. What's going to happen to all the villages, your map doesn't even consider all the villages that this school takes, what on earth are you going to do with all those kids. What [unclear] they don't deserve it, they can all get a bus, you can't do that, when you close this school, there will not be enough places in our area for our kids, our kids walk to school, this is what we're supposed to be doing isn't it, leaving our cars at home, this is our local school, a community school, also a very good school. You're taking Marriotts, [unclear] if that gets [unclear] If we were maybe 40 miles down the road, would you leave us here, because you certainly need provision in this area for children that are coming up, [unclear] is being sold in September, houses are going on there, where are those kids going, what about all the houses that go on [unclear] where are all those children going, [unclear] any other developments locally that are being planned, where do all those kids go, the answer is, the north, you need more provision in the south, don't shake your head, I live here, my children won't have a place to go because people are telling me that Barnwell's full. Where will they go?

JD If I can just make a general point and then hand over to Pauline for the detail, basically what's happening at the moment is, is that there's movement from the north of the town to the south, because there's no school where the children live in the north, those children are heading down to the schools, and what's happening, it's squeezing spaces here, but if you look at where the children live, in terms of the pattern we're leaving behind, not only will there be sufficient places in the south for children who live in this part of the world, but there will be a 10% surplus of places to facilitate that, but perhaps if I can hand over to Pauline for some more detail on that.

PD I think there are two different sides of this, first of all, if we're talking about long term planning, which as we said, we're planning for the medium term here, if we put a school in the north to serve the people in the north, they then won't be taking places in the middle of the town. The Barnwell School is currently full because they're taking children in from the former Collenswood area.

UM [Unclear]

PD Right, so at the moment, the places in Barnwell School are being taken by the people that live not only in this very southern area, but the people that would otherwise have gone to Collenswood School, and they're not able at this point in time, to get places in the schools, such as Marriotts and Nobel. In this plan, we will not only be providing more places in the north, but we will be expanding both Marriotts and Nobel, which will free up the places in Barnwell School for the people in the south of the town and the villages.

UF I still say that doesn't stack up. You accepted the fact that numbers were dropping in this school, inevitably they are already, I'm sure, what I want to know is, can you guarantee us that you will protect us, like when you've got the kids that [unclear] and need a place or been expelled and need a place, they're going to go to a school that's got places, which is going to be us, what I want to know is, can you guarantee us that you won't do that, because the last time I spoke to you, I asked you if you were prepared to give us a written guarantee that our children's education

would not suffer through this process, and you said you wouldn't. Now, things like this are the things that worry me, and you know, you have a duty as an authority to protect our kids and to educate them. We accept the fact that all of this is all very marvellous and it's going to benefit kids down the line, what you should not do, as an authority, is make our kids pay for it. This is a successful school, a happy school, you are doing that at our kids' expense.

JD I mean, I accept the point you're making is a very fair point in that the proposals that we're putting forward here are certainly of most benefit to the children that are currently in the earlier years and in the infant and junior schools, that's quite right, these proposals kick in, the first time children walk through these new buildings' doors, it's 2011, 12, 13, and so it's perfectly true that the children who are currently in school or will be in, not just this school, but schools throughout Stevenage, over the next four, five, six, years, will be, if we're not careful, subject to disruption and to benefit the children of the future, that's a fair point to make, and it is also a fair point to say that there's a history where schools do have surplus places, and this happens at the moment, if you're not careful, they can take more than their fair share of challenging pupils, I think that's a fair point. So what I would say to you is, what we'll do is make sure we can put protocols in place between schools, and Stevenage is pretty good at this actually, in terms of sharing the load about working with challenging kids, we'll make sure that we've got protocols in place that make sure that Heathcote, if it does have spare places, over the next four, five, years, doesn't get full of children that other schools can't cope with, it shouldn't have more than it's fair share of what we call challenging children. That's a fair point.

UF You should say there should be none, because the kids will then be suffering.

JD Well, I mean, I'm not going to commit to that, what I'm saying is, I will make sure that Heathcote is run and gets all the due respect and support as a fully operational, viable school, and that will include not having to take more than its fair share of difficult and challenging pupils, I think that's a fair point.

UM I've got a couple of points, one is that looking through all the BSF documentation on the website, I noted that at some point Stevenage has done a trial school, it must have done to be at this stage in the process, and I don't know why you're shaking your head because I clearly went through all the previous ones [unclear] is the closest we have done in [unclear]

LM No, I'm sorry, we haven't done a trial school, we were not informed that we would receive Building Schools for the Future funding until the 20<sup>th</sup> of December, so we couldn't possibly have done a trial school last year. Trial schools are done for the outline business case, in terms of their initial feasibility work which is required in February to March of next year.

UM It's too late for your trial school, which I suggest means that you've just gone through, you raised it yourself because you raised [unclear] you've already taken one school out of the south of the town, and you're now using that as an excuse for the school in the north. When we were looking at Collenswood two years ago, we were told that it wasn't [unclear] but it turned itself around and was turning into what was going to be another successful school in the town, so why did you close it down?

Well, I suspect I know, because you are much further down in this process in your detailed planning that any of this process is letting on. You say that you previously consulted all the stakeholders. No you haven't, I'm a stakeholder, the children of this school are stakeholders, you are now consulting us, [unclear] that early consultation about where we wanted schools. What is happening to the parental choice in terms of choosing a school, schools of varying sizes. We distinctly chose this school for my son, my son wanted to come here because it has an engineering discipline, Barnwell's no good to us, that's maths and computers, or whatever it is, business studies, he's not interested, he wanted to come to this school because it's engineering. What is happening to that choice, am I now going to have to send my children way across the town to find a school with engineering specialisation?

JD If I pick up the Collenswood point and I can see the argument you're trying to make and without sounding rude, you're just wrong, I'm afraid, the two things don't go hand in hand. I understand that you feel suspicious and, and I think I said before, people are naturally suspicious of local government, you know, that's ... if I can just finish the point, we intervened in Collenswood, you say it was a good school, this was a school with the lowest performing school in the county, this was a school we put a lot of support into, the thought of a local authority deliberately getting a school to fail I think takes suspicion a little bit too far, that's frankly not a reasonable position to be in, what I'm saying to you is, we put a lot of time over three or four years into Collenswood, a lot of money, hundreds of thousands of pounds, we tried to turn the school around and we didn't. Now I accept that because that school didn't improve there is some fault in that in terms of local authority because the strategies we put in place to turn that school round are the same strategies we used elsewhere in the county which worked very well. We've had a review to look into why that didn't work, but Collenswood was an intervention purely on grounds of standards, in the end we felt the standards were so low, and the teaching quality was so poor, we had to intervene and close it. At that point in time, we knew BSF was some way off in the distance, but we did not know that we were having BSF funding until last Christmas, and in fact we had to make an aggressive bid to bring Stevenage forward a number of years to get it into Wave Four. So the two are not linked, the two are separate processes and during the Collenswood closure, we made it quite clear that although we knew BSF was in the future, the two aren't linked, and they're not. I understand you're trying to draw the two together but they are quite separate processes.

UM I just want to say one thing, you just said something now that was very odd, because I looked at the government spreadsheet on where Stevenage was in the Waves, the spreadsheet is dated early 2006, possibly late 2005, it said clearly that Stevenage was in B, which means that you knew that you were going to be in Wave Four a lot sooner than you've been saying.

LM No, let me just explain what the gentleman means if I may, the Building [unclear] programme is divided into parts and then in waves, a part is a bundle of three years, so part A is years one to three of the programme, part B is years four to six of the programme, and he's absolutely right, we were put in part B of the programme, which means we could have got funded in anything of Waves Four, Five or Six, there's quite a lot of difference in three years, it was not until the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2006 that we knew we would be in Wave Four rather than Waves Five or Six.

UF Hi, I live in Datchworth, which is one of the villages you seem to be hoping doesn't exist. My children went to a school that's grown from 120 children to 170 children during the life of their school, I wanted my children to go to Hertford Schools, you decided, not you personally obviously, but the Education Authority decided they couldn't go there, they lived in such a place that it was lottery whether they did or didn't and they weren't allowed in these schools, you said they had to go to Heathcote School. Now they're at Heathcote School and this is supposed to be a consultation process, but I've read the literature, I've read the letters, I've sat and watched the presentation, I'm struggling to understand what my opinion counts. You're giving me the option or you're describing to me, Heathcote School closes or Heathcote School closes. My preference, or my opinion, is that Heathcote doesn't close, but you don't care about that because you are not giving me that in terms of authority. I'd like that to go on record firstly. Secondly, you're talking about the shaping and how you can't make commitments to teachers because you haven't decided what you're going to do, but whatever else happens, you have decided you're going to close Heathcote, so that part of the decision is firm and I'm sorry, but I agree with the gentleman over there, the teachers will leave, they will stay as long as their loyalty and their finance and their families allow them because they're all good teachers, but they will leave, they'll leave our children with poor teaching. To be absolutely honest, I'm not interested in your ten year vision because I'm trying to get my children through education, I'm not doing birth control planning, they're here, I don't have ten years, I've got the next six years to get two kids educated and you're damaging that and I've already expressed why you don't care about my opinion. The final thing I'd like to say is, it was a lovely presentation with absolutely no evidence. If you'd consulted all the stakeholders, I've never met a parent, a teacher, a head teacher, a business person, who thinks that big schools are good for kids, never in all my life. I'd like to see the evidence behind this presentation, I'd like to see all those stakeholders who say it's a good thing.

JD Okay, if I pick up some general points, we're not saying we've consulted so far with absolutely everybody, what we're saying to you is, we're consulting, this is just the formal consultation, the process we've put in place in Hertfordshire has three basic stages to it, the first is, before coming up with proposals on which to publicly consult, which is the stage we're at, we bring together a whole range of stakeholders heads, governing bodies, local politicians, a whole range of people, educationalists, to examine all the possible options, all the things we could do, in terms of creating this pattern of schools. That doesn't involve everybody, what that is, if you like, is pre consultation to look at a number of ideas and then we break those ideas down by applying some key tests, then we go out to consult on that. What most authorities do is do that planning work themselves and then go out to consult, so what we've done is build in a process beforehand where we're consulting with a wide range of stakeholders to develop the proposals in the first place. That's quite true, not all of the stakeholders think that this overall pattern is sensible, I have to say, so far, because we're tracking, as you imagine, as responses come through, there is a lot of support, a lot of support for what we're proposing as a preferred option, across the town as a whole, there is overwhelming support for the pattern, shape, number and location of schools. That doesn't necessarily mean that support is emanating here from Heathcote, and so that's why I'm saying not all the stakeholders liked the idea. In terms of consulting, what we're saying to you is, if you want to create a pattern for

schools which does a couple of things, firstly reflects the current shape of where children now live and where they're going to live, rather than where they used to live 30 or 40 years ago which is what the current pattern does. If you want schools of eight forms of entry, and I will come back to that point in a moment, and if you want the kind of, create the kind of thing that Lindsay was talking about, this is the pattern that we need to do, and we don't two eight form elementary schools next to each other in the south of the town. Your point about eight form entry schools, I could take you to evidence actually, hard nosed research evidence to demonstrate small schools are the best, or large schools are the best, actually the evidence is very inconclusive. In the end, the evidence tells us, what counts against the quality of education of the children is the quality of leadership, the quality of teaching, the quality environment, the support from parents, all those things are far more important, actually, than the size of schools. So I'm not saying to you, by creating eight form entry schools, we're automatically going to raise standards. What I am saying to you, by creating eight forms of entry, what you do is create a cohort at Key Stage Four and the Sixth Form, which are big enough to invest in those children at the age you need to invest in them in terms of possible vocational courses. Vocational courses cost two or three times as much as, if you like, a maths GCSE, and unless you've got large enough children coming through the school, it's difficult to fund those places without undermining the rest of the children. Hertfordshire, we've done brilliantly in terms of standards, we've got it on really good authority, but over the last ten years we've fallen behind that development of vocational courses. What we're saying is this pattern of school is big enough so we can invest in Key Stage Four, and in terms of some of the specialisms that somebody was talking about earlier, what we will do is each of the schools will have one or more specialism, which will be linked to a college, so the college will also be able to invest in those sites. The overall point that the lady said earlier is a very fair point, what we're doing here is creating a pattern and shape of schools for the future and all I can say in terms of disruption, not just for Heathcote children, but for children across town, what we will do is, first of all, keep that disruption to an absolute minimum by planning what we're doing very carefully, once we know what the shape and number of schools will be, and secondly, where there is unavoidable disruption, will manage it very carefully and work our way through that.

UF You talk about, if I want this and if I want that, what about those things you mentioned I don't. What I want is for my children in the next six years to have a good education, and you keep saying words, but they don't make any sense to me, I'm not an educationalist, I don't understand all of the organisational ... but I can see the vision, I can see in ten years' time it's going to be lovely but you're all committing the next six years of our children to a disruptive education, and you might try and ....

JD What I am saying to you is we will invest heavily in Heathcote School over the next four or five years, both in its site, but also in its staff and its children to make sure that there is not just a viable, but a continuing good quality of education here at Heathcote School, and we'll make sure those links are made so that this school benefits from the wider project.

UF Can you give me your mobile number so that I can keep in touch with you over the next six years so that you know when my child is ....

JD I will give you my contact details, yes, I will give you my card at the end. What we will certainly do is agree that we pull together a group of parents from Heathcote School and we would meet with them regularly over the next three or four years, like on a regular basis, so we can monitor what the parents think about what we're doing, hold us to account and give us some feedback, and I'm very happy to do that, and I would be very happy personally to come along to those meetings.

UF One point is, I live in Knebworth, I've got a daughter at this school and I've got a son at private school, the county have already failed my son once, with the primary school admission system put Stevenage before where you live, he was unable to get into Knebworth School and he was sent to school in [unclear] and he's away from all this friends. He's actually due to come to secondary school the year that Heathcote is going to close according to you, where are you going to send children from Knebworth, which will be their allocated school?

PD As I've said before, we expect, with this plan, for there to be enough places for people in the south of the town and the villages to come to the school in the south of the town if that's what parents choose.

UF So will that be Barnwell?

PD Barnwell will be the school in the south of the town.

UF At the moment, he's in a primary school in the south of Stevenage because you would not let him go to the village school, because Stevenage said it's got priority over Knebworth children, so he didn't get into Knebworth school, he had to go to school in Stevenage, so you will not separate him from the friends he's now got at a Stevenage school when he comes to secondary transfer?

PD The admission rules were applied when your son applied to go to Knebworth Primary School and the rules are quite clear that looked after children first, medical needs, siblings, then distance, and in the past, the population in Knebworth was larger and that historically, when it was smaller, people from Stevenage were able to gain places in Knebworth School, and for a period of time, therefore their siblings gained a place over and above some people who lived in the town. That situation isn't happening now, because the population in Knebworth is declining.

UF Yeah, because all the Knebworth kids are coming to Stevenage.

PD No, there are places now in Knebworth Primary, so clearly, all the people who wanted a place got the places. In the future, when we're talking about secondary school provision, those admission rules will still be applied equally, so that if you want a place in any school in Stevenage, you would apply through the normal admission rules ...

UF If you're in Knebworth and you apply you have Hitchin Girls, Hitchin Boys or Heathcote, you don't get any other choice really from Knebworth. I have to say that if you live in Knebworth or one of the villages you get [unclear]

PD I am aware of the concern, the other lady said the same, the concern from people in the villages is it's our contention that there will be enough places, but clearly my job is to manage that supply and demand for places, we will monitor it very carefully, we will also monitor what the admission rules in terms of whether it does disadvantage people from the villages and we will take action if we can and if that's needed, we will monitor the situation very carefully, but we're saying to you now that we don't think that that's going to be an issue.

UF My concern is now, he's happy at school, I'm more than happy with the Stevenage school he's at now, but if he's going to be ripped away from all his friends because of Heathcote shutting, then do I move him now? My other point is, I've got a daughter here who's been more than happy here, on Friday we've had an episode in Year Eight where we've got Stevenage and village schools, we've got them all ganging up against each other, you're going to be separated, they're going to bus all the village kids to different schools, Stevenage kids are all going to be kept together, we've had bullying, I had to pick my daughter up at quarter to three so that she wasn't set upon before she got on the coach by another gang of girls, is this going to be the pattern that we're going to have for four years?

PD Certainly we wouldn't want that to happen and obviously the school will manage that situation. We will talk to the school to find out what happened and what strategies they will be putting in place to avoid that happening in the future, but thanks for telling us because it's an important issue.

UF Hi, before I ask my question I just want to say something about Collenswood and I know you keep on about it, it's only because I worked there, and it shut down because you wanted to sell the land and make lots of money and build a housing estate, that's why it shut down and you put [unclear] teaching in there to make sure it shut down. Anyhow, my question to you now is, if this school is closing, which we all know it is, are you going to put money into a school that's closing, if you don't put money in, what's going to happen to our children that are here, when all the other schools are getting nice sports equipment and stuff, are our children here going to still get that, are you still going to put money into a school that's shutting?

JD We keep going backwards and forward on Collenswood, just for the record, for the tape, we closed Collenswood because it wasn't good enough, the quality of education in Collenswood was poor, going down, I certainly wouldn't want to send my own children there and in the end we intervened and the point you're making is frankly an unreasonable one. I think you were wrong then and you are wrong now. In terms of investing in this site, in the end, that land might well be sold, but not for some time. We said that Barnwell could use that site as long as it needed it and it might well be useful as we work through the BSF programme, we don't know, eventually it might well be sold on, but that's not the reason we closed it, we closed it because it just wasn't good enough and wasn't improving. In terms of your other point, I think that's a very fair point, if we are, as a local authority, saying we want this school to continue to thrive as a school right up to the point where it closes, then what we can't do is allow the site to run down. What we wouldn't do is say to you, well, we'll build a brand new maths block over the next three or four years because that wouldn't be good use of money, but we would make sure that the investment in the site kept it in the condition it needs to be and we would continue to do that. In

terms of comparing with the other children, you need to bear in mind that the other children in Stevenage who are in the current schools in Stevenage, they also won't benefit from any new buildings, because it's going to take four or five years for those buildings, so if you take the Marriotts proposals, where we are proposing to build a new school, the children in the Marriotts School, although it won't be potentially disruptive, won't get access, if you like, to those new buildings, because they will have left the school before they get there.

UF I'm talking about equipment, IT screen stuff, it doesn't make sense that you're going to put money into a school that's going to shut down.

JD Well, it does make sense because what we're saying is, that the IT equipment, the facilities, the resources for the school, we'll make sure that those resources continue to go in, because what we will be doing is investing in the children of Heathcote School. What we won't do is build a brand new maths block or a brand new Science block, but we will make sure that the usual investment in a school of this size will continue.

UF Two of my children were in Collenswood, and you promised me, you promised me, no disruption, they went to Barnwell, one of my children in Barnwell never had detention, perfect school record, she was threatened, threatened by three teachers, she phoned me screaming with terror that she'd been threatened, I went up there, actually, she was right, she was in the right, they were completely wrong. My second child who is Year Eight was forced into what you knew was a failing school, was called [unclear] who know this child now, one of them said to me, she has never put a foot wrong, I know that child, and she was called an animal, now you cannot take a massive group of children and put them into another school without them being treated like second class citizens. I've got another child coming to the school in September, she is absolutely terrified that her education is going to go down the pan the same way that my other two children's has. My child that is here now has gone up two grades in maths in nine months. You didn't give them the education they deserved when they were in Collenswood, and neither did either of my children get the education in Barnwell that you promised, you promised that education, it didn't materialise. Do you know, they were promised revision lessons for GCSEs, they turned up for revision lessons, they didn't get them, how is that not going to disrupt their education, you said to me, there is no hope for their GCSEs this year, take the current Year Eleven from Collenswood that are in Barnwell have no hope for their GCSEs, my friend said, right Mr [unclear] I'm going to sue you because you just said that, you then backtracked, you backtracked, don't you dare shake your head at me, I was there, I remember it, and tell you what, next time I will bring you my children and they can tell you how bad it's been for them and how their education has been disrupted and how I've got three children, I've got four children, quite probably the three year old may get an education in secondary school that is not disruptive, but I very much doubt it if you are still in control.

JD I do remember you and remember you well, the point you make about no hope, I challenged at the time and said you were misquoting me, I went back and listened to the tape and you had indeed misquoted me. Luckily, we record these conversations as we're recording them now, I went back and looked at the tape and

when I'd said you'd misquoted me I was right and you were wrong, you had misquoted me.

UF All these people here don't want the school to close, all you're doing is going round and closing schools, you appear to be a law unto yourself. Are your children educated in Stevenage, I very much doubt it, because if they were, you wouldn't be doing this now. You'd be leaving these children alone, they are in a school where they are now happy, they are confident, and where they are getting a very good education.

JW Thank you, I think you've made a very fair point ...

UF I'm not six year old and I will not be dictated to, this is supposed to be consultation where we can say what we want to say, I haven't finished.

JW Absolutely, but there are lot of people waiting and also, you haven't got the mike and it's not going on the tape which is my point, so I've very concerned that everybody should get a say.

UF Well I'm very concerned that my children's education, three children, disrupted their whole education, which means three children come out of senior school with nothing to speak of, it will affect their education, the teachers will leave and the children will be disrupted, they will then be treated poorly when they are forced to go to a school they don't want to go to. It has happened, I've watched it happen, you [unclear] this lady was fundamentally wrong, you are fundamentally wrong, your children don't go there, you didn't see the tears and the tantrums when they came home and teachers called them animals [?] My child, I can assure you, is far from that, and something else, three teachers threatening one small girl, yes, that's very well mannered.

JD Okay, if I can answer, because the clock is going, first of all, it's very fair that in a public meeting when I'm misquoted again, I think it's fair to say that I went back, looked at the tape, and you were wrong in what you said and I think that's fine. In terms of Collenswood, we're not here to reclude Collenswood, but in terms of Collenswood, where I think I do disagree with you is twofold. Firstly, of course there are individual children in schools across the county who don't settle into schools, who don't have such a good experience as the rest of the school, but I would say to you, if you remember, you were part of a group of parents who tried to save Collenswood and took us one and gave us an interesting time, and we kept that group of parents together and I met with them after the consultation process, right up until when those children joined Barnwell, and I have to say, almost all of those parents, almost all, not yourself, and one other, but almost all of those parents said actually, we are delighted with the progress our children are making, in hindsight, you should have closed the school earlier. Now, not every parent said that, but a lot of parents have said that, I've been back to that Barnwell site, the Barnwell East site, and the behaviour is better, the attendance is up, the children are in control, that is a much, much better educational experience on the Collenswood site now than it ever was, and I know there are examples of children that haven't fared as well, but the great majority of children have got a much better deal from that experience. The other thing I would say about Collenswood, is that the promises that we made there, for example, the promise I've

given tonight, we'd make sure that all members of staff who wanted to stay in Stevenage or in Hertfordshire, that wanted to stay could, all those members of staff who wanted to stay, did stay, many of them in Barnwell, others in Stevenage, others in Hertfordshire, and their careers are flourishing.

UM I've got a couple of points, firstly my son went through that issue of super school with [unclear] which was a few years ago, and I'm sure some of the parents here also went through that. Now the parents here didn't want a super school and I think you can see now that they still don't want a super school. So, I don't understand why they keep forcing this issue with the children of Stevenage, it's just beyond belief. The other point I want to make is the consultation paper at that time, that you drew up for the super school was totally inaccurate and full of holes and inaccuracies, and I suspect this one is probably likewise, and I think the lady's highlighted over there, regarding the numbers [unclear] in the south of Stevenage, so again, I think it's going to be inaccurate [unclear] More importantly, I have a short term relationship with the school, my son is hopefully going to go on to do GCSEs in the Sixth Form and then eventually leave, I'd like to know, is it a matter of record, and I'd like to approach Mr Donovan, that you are going to invest heavily in not only the staff but the equipment and the education of the children at school until you close it? If you just say yes or no...

JD If you could just sit down, I will. If you could just be quiet, that would be great. There are three points and I'll take each one. First of all, the reference to super schools I think is unhelpful in that we are not proposing super schools. Eight form entry schools are not super schools. They are a standard size, up and down the country, eight and ten form entry schools are very, very common indeed, they are bigger than the schools that are currently in Stevenage, but to refer to them as big and super schools is not accurate. There are, Barnwell will be eight forms of entry, alongside all the other schools in Stevenage, if our proposals go through, and if you think of the reference you made to primary schools, we were proposing there a three form entry school, which is on the bigger side for primary schools, but again, not unusual, and what we've created there are three forms of entry on a single campus, two schools, federated together with one governing body, so in effect, we've still got three forms of entry on that site, and I have to say, it's working really well indeed. Okay, well, I hope you agree that it's working really well, there's been a lot of hard work on that. The other thing is that you mention inaccuracies, every time we consult, and we do a lot of reviews, because it's a large county, people always say our figures are wrong, but I have to say, once the reviews have taken place, historically we can demonstrate that actually, you were right in terms of our forecasting of where children live, and what the patterns are, if you go back through reviews that have taken place in areas like South Hatfield and Oxhey and all the rest a few years ago, the predictions we had in our forecasting tool were accurate, and we've had our forecasting tool looked at, and it's plus or minus 1% across the county which is good. The third point, and again, I will check the tape to make sure what I say is accurate, what I'm saying to you, for the record, is that whilst Heathcote is running up until closer, we will make sure we invest in the school in the normal way, so where we would put usual amounts of money into support, IT, repairs and building maintenance, the school will get exactly the same budget it would have got. What we won't do is cut that budget because it's closing, I am quite happy to go on the record for that.

UM I think you'll find the term you used was heavily and I'd like to see a transcript of the tape because I think it was heavily.

UM Okay, well, I think as an authority, we do invest heavily in our schools, it is my opinion, and what I am saying to you is, that we will invest in Heathcote School in the same way we would invest in Heathcote School now, we won't start cutting budgets. What we won't do is build a new sports hall or a new science block, we won't do that.

UM Sorry, I've got just one final point. You talking about committing to parents and which meetings you will attend over the next three or four years, may I suggest to the Board of Governors that you set this up and [unclear] and rather than just attend the occasional meeting, that you should be a vice chair of that meeting, or certainly attend them on a regular basis.

UM I'm quite happy to go on the record to say that I think in fact I would encourage the idea of parents of a school like this going through that transitional period, if that group were to be set up, I'm not sure I should chair it or be vice chair, because I expect the group will want to hold me to account, but I will be very happy to attend regularly. I agree with you, I agree with you.

JW A member of the audience is just pointing out to me that time is ticking on, could you just please keep your comments fairly crisp and to the point, so that I can to everybody, otherwise people are going to go away feeling that they haven't been able to get their point across and we are trying to do so. You need to have your say, but you could you then pass on.

UF As parents of two boys in Heathcote at present, we chose Heathcote for its ethos, for its dedicated staff, for its visionary and successful head, and at the moment, it's a bit of a kick in the teeth really, that Heathcote isn't being considered for relocation to the north and it has vastly superior value added than both Marriotts and [unclear]

JD I would agree with your analysis of Heathcote, I think it is a good and improving school, which is why I think it's unfortunate to compare it with Collenswood and the intervention. The intervention here is about, it's about the future of the town, and we don't need two eight form entry schools next to each other in this part of the town over the next 20 to 30 years, that's the reason we're here, that's the bottom line. In terms of considering moving Heathcote, we did look at that, because as you say, it's got a good ethos, and a school really, we're talking about buildings, but really in the end, it's about staff and kids, it's great to have spectacular buildings but it's isn't about that. We can't really do that because if you were to locate this school, for example, on the northern site, what you would find is that the children who are living in the south, the current Heathcote, would be having to travel to the far end of the town, where are the moment, the children who are living within walking distance of the new site, are the children who are going to Thomas Alleyne, and therefore, it makes sense to move Thomas Alleyne because that, if you're a Thomas Alleyne parent you'll say, well hang on a minute, our children live here, why are you moving a school from the south or the north when you can move us just a mile. The

other reason, and there's a technical reason for this, is that if we were to relocate this school that far away we would have to close Heathcote anyway, but under the new rule, since the Education Inspections Act, if you move a school a distance so that it's not anymore in its location, where the children currently live, you have to actually open a new school and you have to open that up to competition, so rather than say, for example, we would want to move Heathcote to the north of the town, we would have to close Heathcote, open a new school in the north of the town, and open that up to a competition, so anybody in the country could come along and say, we would want to run that school, so it could be the private sector, a faith group, a Trust, could come along and say we want to, and what we're trying to do in Stevenage, for the next 20 to 30 years, is to create a pattern of schools, which work collaboratively together, especially Key Stage Four and the Sixth Form and we couldn't guarantee that with a brand new school over which we had no control, so we did look at that, but for those two reasons, it just wouldn't work.

UM The point you made [unclear] a number of different reasons, about the issue of competition, but I'm sure you aware that what you said is partly true [unclear] for example, it's quite possible for an authority to apply to [unclear] to have an exception from competition rules, so for example [unclear] February 2007, [unclear] if successful, the exception [unclear] proposal for a new school [unclear] says that the Guidance states [unclear] might have an adverse effect on the delivery of [unclear] So no, you didn't actually [unclear]

JD You're right to a point, it has to be under exceptional circumstances, but if you actually look at the pattern we're trying to create here, there are not exceptional circumstances here, because the school in the north, if you think about what we saying to the Secretary of State, we have a school only a mile away which is currently serving the children who live in that area, no, 80% of the children in the current Year Seven and Eight at Thomas Alleyne live in the Great Ashby area, well yes, if you think about the closure, by the time those children move through, they'll be in Years Nine, Ten, Eleven, and so what we will be saying to the Secretary of State, we want to close Thomas Alleyne's school, even though a new school is sitting right next to where the children currently go and then move a school from the other end of town to the opposite end of the town, so that the children who currently go to Heathcote travel past four or five other schools to get there. There is absolutely no way a Secretary of State is going to consider that as sensible and

UM The proposition is that you can actually avoid competition rules, you didn't look at any way of doing that, [unclear] institution that wants to contribute. [unclear]

LM We did look at it, but we got a very clear steer from the Office of the Schools Commissioner that we'd be very unlikely to get an exception in these circumstances, so we did test it out, ultimately of course, you're taking a chance aren't you, because you may or may not get the Secretary of State's exception, so it rather depends whether you want a certain future in a particular place, or the chance of trying to get an exception that you may or may not get, which I put to you, is something of a risk, especially when ...

UF You're taking the risk [unclear]

UM It just seems that you're prepared to let a successful school go.

JD I'd go back to the points I think the gentleman here raised, really I think quite eloquently and assertively, that it is a good school, and it is a responsibility on the local authority to try and hang onto and persuade and cajole as many staff as possible to stay within the Stevenage Project, so we can capture the really good practice in Heathcote, and what we've done so far is have a letter signed by every head teacher in Stevenage, which has gone to the staff to say, look, we want to work with the staff of Heathcote over the next four to five years to make sure that your future careers are not just safe, but really quite interesting and exciting here in Stevenage, so before we've even completed this stage of the consultation, the rest of the head teachers in schools in Stevenage have agreed to work with us to try and hang on to all that good practice, because it is good practice. So I absolutely accept the point, the only reason why we're looking at this school to close is because of its location, not because of its practice, I understand that that's frustrating, irritating and it's going to make people angry, and I do understand that what we're doing is creating a pattern for children of the future, not the present, but we will do all we can to capture that best practice and work it through.

UM Several points I'm afraid, if you close Heathcote, you could not quite simply guarantee every teacher at Heathcote, if they wanted a job, they would be guaranteed another job in another school in Stevenage, that is certainly being made on the very date that the, the proposals may or may not go through council, that is written in stone to teachers in this school. Now secondly, you've created a mess for yourselves, nobody wants Heathcote to close, we want [unclear] but if you look at the first place [unclear] merger, we wouldn't have liked it, but there wouldn't have been that fear, and [unclear] the site being used, if [unclear] merger, there wouldn't be half the alarm. Now we come to the final point I want to raise, you said that [unclear] firstly money is dependable on how many pupils are coming into the school [unclear] Let's be realistic, what's the intake going to be next year, is it going to be 150, [unclear] what will be the intake the year after that, then what will you do with the funding, [unclear] there isn't the number of children in the school to do it. Everybody knows that this school, is it a great school? No. Is it a good school? Yes. I've got my fourth child joining here next year, he's got every single right to have the same level of education, the same level of teaching that all my other three children do, and he has the same right to enjoy the prosperity, which is very welcome [unclear] nobody here, if they've really thought about it, is not going to be pleased about the investment in schools, it's great to see, it will bring a better future for all the children, but every single child in Heathcote, every child in Stevenage has the same right to an education through that period, there is absolutely no reason why you have to have a monoculture number of schools, where all the schools are the same, this is an engineering school. I run a very small engineering business, [unclear] this is one thing that we would use in engineering, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Now, just finally, if Heathcote closes, which everybody knows, there's a real chance of that, who's fault is it, is it the children's? Is it the head teacher? Is it the staff? It's not just a moral thing, you have a legal responsibility to meet the needs of the children and nothing other than meeting the needs of every single child at Heathcote is acceptable.

PD Absolutely.

JD Seven points there, if someone asks me seven questions, you're going to get seven answers, I'm sorry, otherwise I'm going to be accused of not answering questions. The first one, well, there's sometimes points that need correcting, in terms of saying to staff, we will guarantee you a post in Stevenage, technically, this is, if you like, a legal position, the governing bodies of the schools have to make those guarantees and the governing bodies make those appointments. What we can say to staff is that we have already begun to work with the schools, the other schools, to make sure that staff who want to stay in Stevenage can do and what I'm saying to you is that up until now, we've had a 100% track record and we've already made a good start by all the heads signing up personally, including the Catholic school, to making this work across the town. The second point, when you say, no one wants this proposal, it's not quite true, quite a lot of people across the town as a whole are writing in, supporting quite enthusiastically, these overall proposals, I accept, I accept not many of those, in fact, very, very few indeed, are connected to Heathcote School, but the overall proposals, no, if I just, I need to answer your questions and then you can come back. The third point, the third point, you made, was merger.

UM You just misquoted, I said that everybody welcomes, you just said that not everybody welcomes, everybody in this room welcomes the money that is going into Stevenage school.

JD I'm not quoting that bit, I'm quoting one of the earlier points, and one of your earlier points was, nobody wants Heathcote to close. What I'm saying to you is I understand, there is support for these proposals, fairly overwhelming support for the proposals, but I accept that very little, not none, but very little support from Heathcote. You mention merger, we did look at that, but the problem with that is we go back to the original point, you can't amalgamate schools, what you have to do is close both, there's no, if you like, technical way of amalgamating schools, you have to close both schools and then open a brand new school, bring the two together and that we'd have to open up to competition because there aren't any exceptional circumstances. The fourth point you made was transitional arrangements, you know, I absolutely accept that if we're not careful, the disruption will undermine what the kids are able to achieve, and we will do everything we possibly can to manage that. You talked about the fact that if the numbers do fall slightly in the school, that would negate my guarantee that we will keep the investment going, under normal circumstances you would be right, the biggest financial indicator if you like, for school, I think somebody used the phrase, bums on seats, normally children come through the door, they've got... but under reorganisations like this we have a funding formula which allows us to use transitional funding to make sure that through a transitional period, schools can be supported, so even though it might be expensive, because children might be in relatively small classes, we have transitional funding arrangements to help us do that. And finally, you mentioned the fact that most people would welcome the idea of £145 million coming into the town, I have to say to you, that's not guaranteed, we'll get the £145 million if we can convince the people who are going to give us the money, i.e. the government, that what we're proposing is a shape, pattern, number of schools, which are fit for the next 30, 40 years, not, we certainly wouldn't get funding if we went to them and said, all we are going to do is rebuild and invest in our current schools, I suspect we would not get the funding for that, what we have to do is make that larger argument in order to get the £145 million in.

UF I'd just like to know exactly what you've got proposed, there's a lot of parents in this room that are in exactly the same position as I am, my daughter's joining Year Seven this year, and obviously, this school will be due to finish in the year of her Year Ten, so where are you going to put her, where will she take her GCSEs in Year Eleven?

JD Basically what we're, first thing to say, I think there's a meeting for parents of next year's Year Seven, I think on Monday, I'm not sure how wise it is, but I'm going to come to that meeting and try to talk to those parents, because I have to say, we're concerned with any disruption at all but the parents of next year's Year Seven have chosen Heathcote before these proposals came out, so I think, there's a particular point, and so I intend to come along, I know it's the school's meeting, what I'm going to ask for is 10 or 15 minutes to set out some of the things we might want to do and then stay for the evening so that individual parents can come and catch me and what we will basically do, is again, once we've agreed, what the pattern, number and shape, once all that's gone through, we will do some very detailed work on there, and I will give you some examples of the kind of things we can do. Basically, what I'm saying to you is, we will not move the children during a Key Stage. So if it looks like, and by the time your child gets to Year Nine, long before Year Nine, before they get to the end of Year Seven in fact, in the Spring of next year, we will have put in a business plan which sets out the dates, times, locations in absolute detail, so we will be able to say to you as a parent, before your child finishes Year Seven, here's the detailed arrangements, and we will make sure those are clear, and we will set out those, but at the very least, what we will do is certainly not move children during their Key Stage. If necessary, we will have to delay the whole thing. I think it's unreasonable to expect kids to move, particularly in the middle of Key Stage Four and so we will work that through, so that's the guarantee we will give you, for the record, for the tape, we won't disrupt children part way through a Key Stage, especially in the year they're going to do their GCSEs, I think that will be disruption just too far, we wouldn't be able to justify that.

UF I've got two kids [unclear] my brain is just absolutely spinning, I've come to so many meetings, I'm feeling worse, now I'm coming next week because my son starts in September. [Unclear] about Monday night and it did say that a representative from you guys would be there. I emailed [unclear] today to say to him that I didn't wish to see them. We're supposed to be keeping our kids upbeat and happy and wanting to come to school, I don't want my son in this hall on Monday listening to you tell me [unclear]

JD If the parents feel it's unhelpful for me to be there, I'll reconsider that and I'll talk to the head and Chair of Governors. I mean, I suggested I came because I thought it might be helpful. The other way of doing it, rather than getting up and giving a talk, is to be in the building, so if parents want to see me they can, I don't know how common that view is, but I will talk to the head and Chair of Governors about that.

UF Before you spoke, again, if you just say to the hall, that we can go out and do something else in school if we want to, I've tried to keep this away from my kids.

JD As I said, I'll chat to the head and Chair of Governors about that and see if we need to reconsider.

UF One question I have got at the moment is my son is starting in September, my daughter is due to start senior school 2011, at the moment we've got no way of knowing if this school's going to be here or not then, where is she going to go under the Stevenage rule? Is he going to have been told by the time, by the time of 2011 or not make my choice of what school I want them to go to because I live in Knebworth, so I will probably be told [unclear] but how am I going to know where my son is going, because I can't get her into wherever he's gone on the sibling rule if you don't tell me in time where he's going to go.

PD By the time, as we said, that when we publish statutory notices, it will be very clear where the children that will be in this school, where they would have the opportunity to go at the end of the school's life. You will therefore know in advance where your son will be.

UF How far in advance?

PD Well, we will give you details when we publish the statutory notice, and if it's more than one school, we would ask you to express your preference of the schools that might be on offer. You will know where your son is going so you will know when your other child comes up, you will know exactly where they will be and the admission rules will apply and if your second child is a sibling, the sibling rule will apply equally to your second child.

JD One assurance that we've given at previous meetings and we're quite happy to give it again, is that we will not go to statutory, and so if we go to Education Panel at Cabinet and they decide to go for this option, we will not publish statutory notices to implement that option unless we're quite clear about those admissions arrangements. So we won't go out to implement this proposal unless we've got that information, I think it would be unfair to do so, in fact, if it's not illegal, it should be.

UF I just want to know if you can give me any guarantees, I work for the NHS [unclear] so what guarantees, how confident are you that you will get this money [unclear] taking up places, so they would be [unclear] I have worked for the NHS [unclear] and have any of you sat down with any child and asked them [unclear]

LM If I answer the first bit, I think you asked if the money was guaranteed, it's a funding allocation from central government for the financial year 2008/9, those funding plans are set, I think it very unlikely that anything significant like a general election or anything is going to happen between now and next March, so from that point of view, yes, the money is guaranteed for the Stevenage Project. In terms of PFI, the money will be a mixture of PFI and ordinary grant. The normal pattern, completely new build is PFI, the major remodelling and refurbishing is traditional finance, but that's been the pattern in BSF so far. PFI is a private finance initiative where the government issues PFI credits that go to the private sector to build things and then supports the authority in paying the cost of that capital investment through the grants that the authority receives, it's essentially a method of funding. I think in terms of knowing in advance, we didn't get told we were on Wave Four funding in

2008 until 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2004. That must have been purely speculative, because in fact I can make a copy of the letter available if need be to demonstrate that.

PD You made one more point about the school bus, I think what I was referring to earlier was that people in the north of the town have been coming down into the centre of the town, into other schools across the town, because there isn't local provision there. As we make places available there, they will no longer do that, so the pattern of attendance will shift, once the admission rules kick in, once we've changed the pattern of provision, so there'll be places in the north for people in the north that otherwise would have had to come further south, and then the people in the middle of the town and the south of the town would have more opportunity to take advantage of the extra places there which will free up the places in the south of the town for the people who live here and in the villages.

JD Just to add very briefly to that, we have a countywide review of home to school transport, a detailed review, we've delayed that report to members until the autumn term, partly, but not only, to take into account the outcomes of this review, so we can look at that. Going back to your funding, just to make sure that we're clear on this, whilst the overall level of funding is secure, it's a different funding mechanism than what you're used to, there will be difficult financial decisions to make, because when we cost all these options out, and then look at how, we will have to do some juggling to see what we can afford, so inevitably, we would like to spend money than we can get, but the money we are promised is secure, it's a different funding model to the NHS.

UF My other point, have any of you three spoken to children?

LM No, we haven't yet, but we are putting in place plans for consultation process during the autumn term about the Buildings for the Future Project.

UM What about children here, about closing their school.

JD What we will be doing is consulting with the children about the design of the new schools and the working through, if you're saying that we should have consulted with the children about these consultation arrangements, the answer to the question is, no, we haven't, and we haven't done that.

UF You haven't felt the need to ask any of the children if they wanted to close [unclear]

JD We did look at this, we do a lot of area reviews, and we think that if we asked a group of children, do you think we should close your school, the answer to that will certainly be no, even where we consulted with the children at Collenswood, where we felt the circumstances there were so significant, because what we were doing there is closing the school quickly and fairly brutally and we wanted to make sure we spoke to the children, even there, the children said, no, keep the school open, in the same meeting as saying, they're fed up with poor teaching and all those kind of comments. The other question is there's a balance between upsetting the children and involving them in the process, it's a judgement call and we decided not to do that, and if you think we should have, then you know, we'll take that on board for future, but we did

think about that and our judgement was, we decided not to do that, what we will do is involve the children very carefully in the design of the new schools. What we're saying is that of course we're doing this for children, for standards, that's the point, what we're saying is, talking to the children about closing their school, we're not sure how helpful that is in terms of the process. There will be points where we just disagree, you think we should have, what I'm saying to you is, we thought about it, and decided not to and we'll have to agree to disagree.

UF Have you ever asked the children if they want a superschool [?]

JD We're not proposing to build superschools, we are proposing to build schools which are a standard size up and down the UK. I accept that Hertfordshire has a history of small schools, they were designed and built 40 to 50 years ago, the world has moved on, and what we're saying is, we cannot support the curriculum, the teaching pedagogy, and the investment of equipment for the next 30 or 40 years with small schools. So that's the line we're taking. We have decided on the model we are proposing to you without consulting in detail with the children, yes.

UF I'll try to be short, [unclear] I can't really understand we can't have a superschool of whatever you want to call it on the far side of town, as well as keep this school, because we do have children here [unclear]

JD If we were to build the eight form entry school in the north of the town, and maintain this school, we would have too many places in the system. What we're saying to you is the pattern of schools that we're creating here, not only are they in the right place in terms of where children live and will live in the future, but it leaves behind an overall surplus of places of 10%. Now we do know that that surplus of 10% is unlikely to rest in one school, it tends not to be distributed, but across the town as a whole, there will be, one in ten places will be free to allow parents to, I accept the lady's point here, sometimes parents don't have the choice that they would like, but 10% does allow you to express a preference.

UF I was never given a choice of what school I wanted my children to attend, my kids had to come here, we [unclear] because it was the closest to us, I actually wanted them to go to Barnwell because I'd gone there and I knew the school, but now I'm glad they came here, but that's because they had to come here, now in the future children will have to go to Barnwell.

JD I absolutely accept that depending on where you live in Hertfordshire you have more or less choice, that's a fair point, because you have to have rules to determine which children go and which children don't, and depending on where you live, you have more or less option, I accept the point, and not just here, but elsewhere in the county, there are children who live in villages that will express a preference for a number of schools, but will get written into another because of where they live, but I think if you've got something like 16,000 people making a choice to start in September at 76 schools, then you have to have some kind of mechanism for working that out, overall, roundabout 95% of parents across the county get their preferred choices, and there are about 5% that don't. I do also accept the point, if you close a school, then there are fewer schools for which you can express a preference, that's fair, so we would be reducing parental choice by one school, that's fair.

UF You're really saying, you've make your mind up, but what you do you actually plan to do with this site once it's closed.

PD Right, as Justin said earlier on, we don't need two eight form entry schools here, but neither this site nor Barnwell's side is big enough for an eight FE school in the site, we will need to use both sites to support the eight FE school in the south of the town, so this site will remain in use for educational purposes. Exactly where the buildings for the Barnwell school, if the proposals go forward, will be located, will be a matter for the school and the architectural team to decide where the building's will best be located, where the playing fields and sports facilities will be located, but if the proposals go forward, it is quite clear that we will need to use both the Barnwell and the Heathcote site for the one school. I can't say to you with any degree of confidence at this point in time that the buildings will remain, because that's the next stage of BSF, where we work with the schools, looking at what they, what they need to do in the future and what sort of buildings they need to support them and the decisions would be made then about where the school buildings will be based.

UF So your proposal is to move this school to Barnwell?

PD We know that we will need to use this site and the Barnwell site for the one school in the south, exactly whether we use these buildings or the Barnwell buildings, is a decision to be made in the future. This site will be used by Barnwell, yes.

UM This isn't an amalgamation, this isn't a merger of the two schools.

PD No, let's be clear ... I'd like to clarify this, in the future, there will be one school in the south of the town, it will be based across both this site and the Barnwell site ...

UM She means the proposal.

PD I'll just finish that, so this school in the south, under the proposal, if they're put forward, will be based on this site and the current main Barnwell site and in the future, it is not anticipated that Barnwell School will continue to use the Collenswood site.

UM Hello, teacher at the school here so I've got the best interests, I have to say that. Can I first say that I've been here since 1990 and in that time, we've fought to actually make this a better school, and I think that largely, the staff has achieved that. We have now a school which has got incredibly good results at Key Stage Three, record results just came through which our head teacher wants to talk about privately afterwards, we have never ever failed an [unclear] inspection in all the time I've been here, never ever, and that compares very well with many other schools in the town, we like many people here, we're really excited about Building Schools for the Future, we thought it meant something for us as well and we were going to be a part of that visionary future, but apparently, our skills and all these improvements aren't that important. But the thing is, I want to ask about Stevenage in next 50 years, because I've lived here for 50 years so I know something about the past as well. If you move Thomas Alleyne's from where it currently is up to Great Ashby, presumably that's

going to pull people to the north as well, and I guess that that's going to pull people from Marriotts quite significantly, away from Marriotts site, can you talk through the chain of events, the movements and the pupils who are going to be involved, so parents know exactly who is going to be involved in the next ten years, thank you.

PD I can talk about the logic of the new admission patterns in the future, what I can't do at this point in time is to say exactly which buildings we will start with and how that will move around the town, because that's part of the process, so when we know what all the building work requirements will be, we will have to negotiate that with the contractors to see how much work they can take on and what sequence is best for them, but in terms of, you talked about, if the Thomas Alleyne School moves to the north then it will pull people out of Marriotts and such like. As Justin has said to you before, about 80% of the children in Year Seven and Eight and a large percentage of the pupils in other year groups in Thomas Alleyne already live within the Great Ashby area, so those pupils will continue to go to Thomas Alleyne's School, they will just not have to travel over to Thomas Alleyne. Some of the people in the north can't get into those local schools so they come further south, to Nobel, and some of them have expressed frustration because they can't get in there, they go to Marriotts and they go to other places in the town. If there's a school in the north, there are enough children born now to fill an eight form entry school as we speak in the future, so that school will serve the local community around the Great Ashby area. That will mean that people who currently have to leave the Great Ashby area to go to the school at Thomas Alleyne, now, for example, won't need to do that, and that school will serve the local people there. It will mean that the people that have to travel south to Nobel and Marriotts won't do that, so there will be more places available in the centre of town for the people in the centre of the town that currently come further south because Collenswood isn't there and they can't get into Nobel, so the whole pattern of attendance will shift over time. It will take a while to sort its way through, obviously, but that's the logic, that the whole thing will shift, because there will be more schools, more local to people where they live.

UM So from what you've said, is that logic then, that in order to make Marriotts viable, you need to draw people from Bandle Hill and Monksley more heavily, therefore reducing down the number of people here, so you will have to persuade an awful lot of these parents to send their kids to Marriotts.

PD What it will mean is that more parents who have expressed preferences in the past to go to schools like Marriotts and Nobel will be able to get in there.

UM [Unclear]

PD That's okay, but people have expressed frustration both from the north of the town and in the centre that they can't get their children into local schools and they're having to travel much further for them, and they are making Barclay bigger as well, so there will be more places for where the children currently live.

UM I don't understand the central argument, where are the people going to come from to fill up those central schools, I think Nobel's assured because of the developments in the east, but I can't see where Marriotts are going to get their pupils from, unless they draw on these southern areas.

PD They may draw a little on the northern part of the southern area, because as I said before, we are proposing to rebuild Marriotts School on the southern part of its site, and open up the main entrance on that southern part of the site, so quite clearly, the admission rules and the distance arrangements will mean that people from a wider area will get into Marriotts.

UM So you concur that the future pupils of Marriotts are having to come from our traditional catchment area, is that right?

PD I've said we're redistributing the pattern of places, and if more people from what you consider to be your traditional catchment area go to schools fairly close to them, then yes, the pattern will redistribute itself.

UM [Unclear] So the catchment area of Marriotts is moving south to come into this area [unclear]?

LM What we're saying is, if you look at the pattern of schools in the future, and you apply the admission rules, there will be a transitional period because the sibling rule will still kick in, but it's perfectly true that the people who live nearer Barnwell or nearer the schools in the south will have a better chance of getting in than those parents who live further away, and the, if parents are living close to Marriotts, the only reason they can get into schools in this area, is if there are spaces free, so what we're saying to you is, the admissions rules, will, if you like, even that out, and it might well be that some parents would like to send their children in the south, but no longer can, because the schools in the south will fill first with children who live in the south, that will take some time, because the lady at the front here was saying how frustrated she was that that didn't happen to her child because the sibling rule overruled it, and so there will be a period of time, a transitional period, but the admissions rules will mean that those parents living in the south of the town will have a much better chance of getting into the schools in the south than the parents who are living further away.

JW Thank you, if you have a further question, you can direct it at the panel after we've closed the meeting. I realise that some of you have not been able to speak, it's been difficult getting round everybody because it's quite a large meeting, can I remind you that your points can be made on forms that you have to send in, you can go on the website and make sure that your points are made if you don't feel you've had a chance, or even just to reinforce the points that you've already made, do send them in, because they will all be looked at and listened to and there will be a transcript of this tape, I can't tell you quite when and thank you very much.

UM How do we obtain a copy of the transcript?

PD We will put both this recording and the transcript of this meeting on the county council's website as soon as it comes back. Okay, I've just been told, I'm not sure technically whether the recording can go on, but we will certainly put the transcript on as soon as it comes back from the company that's doing it. Can do that, happy to do that, yes.