



Dear Parent,

Gosforth Schools Trust

The formal consultation period for this proposal has now ended and the responses have been collated and analysed by members of the Gosforth Schools' Trust Steering Group (Head Teachers and Governor Representatives). As Chair of the Steering Group I wanted to take the opportunity to offer an overview of the results and to let everyone know what is happening next.

Consultation packs, including a document with basic information, a response form and a link to a very detailed Frequently Asked Questions document had been circulated to all parents, to staff and to a number of others; Ward Councillors, Parish Councils, Trade Unions, Schools in neighbouring Local Authorities, senior officials at Newcastle and neighbouring authorities, Sure Start and the Universities. The consultation pack was also posted on the Newcastle Schools Extranet to allow all schools in the City to comment.

Meetings were held in each of the ten schools involved. A detailed analysis of the responses for each school and a joint report on the overall position have been produced. The analysis for your school and the composite picture are available on the school website. The headline figures of most significance are that **427 forms** were returned from parents and carers. Of these, **418, (98%), were in support of the proposal** (some asking for further information) and **9, (2%), were not in favour of the proposal**. Of the other groups and individuals consulted there were 7 responses, all in favour of the proposal. This included comments from teaching and non teaching trade unions (at least one had arranged its own sessions with members in schools).

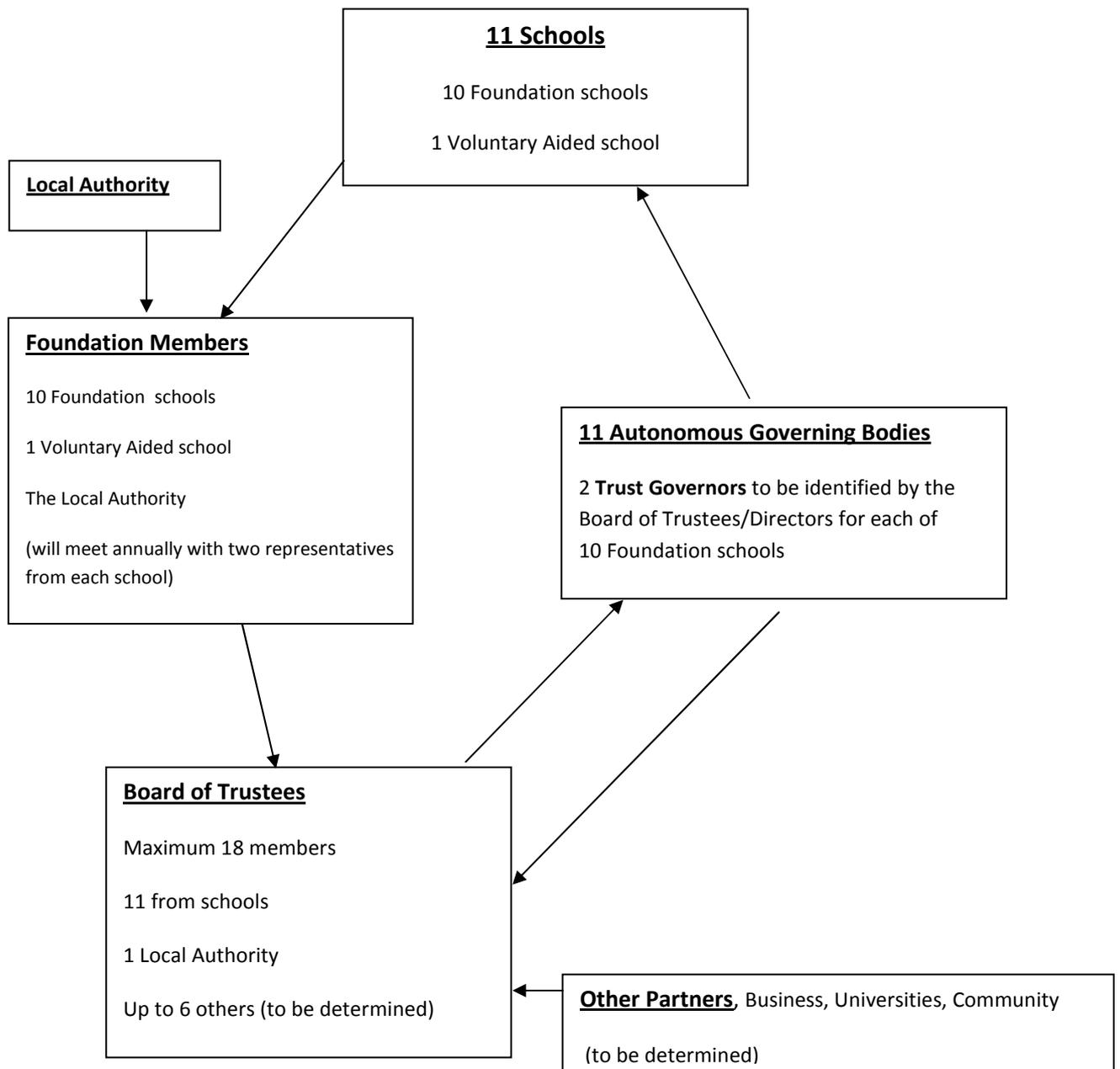
On the strength of this level of support, much of it unqualified, the Steering Group asked each Governing Body to agree to proceed to the next stage which is the issue of Statutory Notices. This has now been agreed by all of the Governing Bodies. The Statutory Notices will be published in the Journal on 11 November and will be posted in schools and other public places. The final decision on whether to go ahead will be taken by each of the 10 Governing Bodies in December following the close of the Statutory Notice period.

A number of comments were made on the response forms, many of which would have been covered at the meetings or answered in detail in the FAQ document. Some answers to the most common queries are given in a newsletter which is on your school website, the FAQ document is also still there. One of the requests was for a chart to show how the structure is shaping up. A very simple plan which shows current thinking is on the back of this letter. However some requests for information have been difficult to meet at this time as they are to do with detail which is still evolving. Hopefully we can offer more detail as things progress. Of necessity this has been and will continue to be an incremental process. Thinking evolves over time and is shaped by comments from interested parties along the way. It would have been quite wrong to present the detail fully formed at this stage, not least because it would have appeared as a *fait accompli*, which it is not.

In conclusion I would emphasise that these proposals are about providing real benefits to our children, current pupils and those yet to start at school. We can do much more for our children if we work together and if we take responsibility for planning our future direction.

Yours sincerely

George Snaith
Chair of the Steering Group
Chair of Governors, Gosforth East Middle School, Governor Grange First School



It should be noted that as **Archbishop Runcie CE First School**, as a Church of England voluntary aided school, is already part of a Trust and therefore will not be changing status. However, Archbishop Runcie is already an active partner of the community of schools in Gosforth and would be an active partner of any Trust established by the Gosforth schools.