

FUTURE OF STROUD SCHOOLS

Nov. 4/22

Decision Deferred by County Council

The position of the Stroud Central Schools was considered at a meeting of the Gloucestershire County Council, held at Gloucester on Wednesday. It was decided to defer a decision on the future of the Schools until the Board of Education's report on junior technical education has been considered.

The Education Committee reported that they had considered a memorandum relating to the provision of senior schools for the Stroud area and the question of the retention of the two existing selective central schools. While recognising fully the most successful work which has been done, and was still being done, in the Stroud Boys' and Girls' Central Schools, the Committee felt unable to recommend the retention of those schools, together with the provision of large senior schools on another site.

If the Central Schools were retained, appreciable capital expenditure would be necessary in order to bring the buildings up to the minimum requirements of the Board of Education, and even then the buildings would compare unfavourably with new senior schools built in accordance with present building regulations. There was also reason to believe that when senior schools were provided in areas from which some children now travel to the Stroud central schools, the tendency would be for all the older children of those areas to attend the senior schools.

Apart from those considerations, it was felt that the County Council could not reasonably be asked to provide and maintain two new senior schools in Stroud and to continue to maintain, at considerable cost, two selective central schools.

The Committee therefore recommended that the County Council should provide new public elementary schools for about 480 senior boys and 480 senior girls respectively at or near Stroud; authorise the Education Committee to give the public notice required by section 18 of the Education Act, 1921, and to take all necessary steps to provide the schools; on the provision of these schools, appropriate the buildings of the Central Schools in Stroud for purposes of technical education, if considered suitable for those purposes.

Mrs. M. Hills moved an amendment and repeated the appeal which she made to the Education Committee, and asked if the schools were closed what was to be the future of technical education in the Stroud district.

Stroud, with its 60 or so industries, she said, was in a peculiar position, and had centuries of tradition in the technical sphere. The children had the ability, and had to have the training; if they closed the Central Schools she was perfectly certain a demand would soon arise for junior technical schools.

The Board were asking them to put technical education in the forefront, and was this a time to destroy the best junior technical education they had in the county?

Captain J. H. Trye seconded.

The amendment was put to the meeting and carried by 13 votes to 10.