

WYEBRIDGE ACADEMY – POSITION STATEMENT

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CABINET

13 DECEMBER 2007

Wards Affected

St Martins and Hinton

Belmont

Hollington

Purpose

To note the position on this project.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendations

- THAT (a) the interim report on the progress on this project be noted and;**
- (b) the final decision on the Outline Business Case be deferred to the next meeting of Cabinet.**

Reasons

A report to Cabinet on the Outline Business Case was programmed for the meeting on 13th December. Despite the majority of the work being completed there are still some outstanding issues to address which should be completed in time to report to the next scheduled meeting of Cabinet on 10th January 2008.

Considerations

1. To complete the Outline Business Case which is required by the DCSF, work has been undertaken on
 - (a) **Design**

Two possible options have been identified on the existing site. The one preferred by Sponsors, Local Authority, and Planning and Highway Officers, and current school Chair of Governors and Headteacher involves the building of a new accommodation on the playing fields. This allows the existing school and other users to carry on in its current accommodation until the new accommodation is available (estimated September 2010).

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
George Salmon – Head of Commissioning and Improvement
Tel – 01432 260802

At present this has been costed above the indicative capital grant offered by Partnership for Schools. In the absence of a reply from PfS this is an area of risk for the Council which needs to be addressed before full support could be given to this option.

(b) **Third Party Use of the Site**

The needs of the South Wye Learning Centre and the 2XL Youth Provision can be met within the proposed Academy. There has been a meeting with the Chair of the Redhill Residents Association, who in the absence of a guarantee of a sole use area being available, believes that acceptable alternative provision could be achieved through the relocation and venue of some of the existing temporary accommodation to another local site. The Property Service Manager has advised that this could be achieved at the cost of £60,000 if no significant external works were required. This is being discussed further with Planning Officers.

(c) **Post-16 Provision**

Further discussion has been held involving the Sponsors, Learning Skills Council, Sixth Form College and College of Technology Staff and Local Authority. There is common agreement that post-16 provision should not begin until the new facilities are available i.e. September 2010. This would also allow some lead in time to develop appropriate and viable causes. There are risks to the Academy and Sponsors that they will have responsibility for delivering causes within tight budgets defined by the numbers of students staying on. This issue would be addressed in the three year period before any curriculum offer is made, and would be developed in a future vision in which students registered at one institution may be taught at another.

2. These are the major outstanding issues. The overall cost of the scheme and the alternative provision are the two areas in which further work will be done for the meeting on 10th January 2008.

Financial Implications

The Local Authority is responsible for building the new academy within the funding offered by Department of Children, School and Families. This currently stands at £20,184,404. The preferred option may require more expenditure, but this is dependant on Partnership for Schools approving that design and consequent increased allocation. A definite response from Partnership for Schools has not been received as yet.

Alternative accommodation for the Redhill Residents Association will require capital expenditure, varying between an estimated £50,000 to relocate temporary buildings to £250,000 for a permanent structure.

In revenue terms the academy should broadly be neutral, it being funded on the same basis of other schools in the County.

Risk Management

Robust project management will be put in place to deliver the new building within the allocated sum to the agreed timescale. The proposal to delay the creation of post-16 provision on site allows sufficient time to undertake the necessary planning and detailed discussion with partners including the college provider. It also means that appropriate accommodation will be available.

Alternative Options

The Local Authority could withdraw its support for the academy proposal as a whole. This would jeopardise the very real achievement that Wyebridge Sports College has made in recent years and leave the future of high school provision in the South Wye area uncertain.

Consultees

Sponsors

Headteacher and Chair of Governors of Wyebridge Sports College

South Wye Learning Centre

2XL Youth Project

Redhill Residents Association

South Wye Regeneration Partnership

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None identified