

## **Cabinet – 16 April 2008**

### **Shelfield Sports and Community College – Proposed Academy**

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Councillor Zahid Ali, Children's Services
<b>Service:</b>	Education Walsall
<b>Wards:</b>	All Walsall wards but particularly Rushall/Shelfield
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Forward plan:</b>	No

#### **1. Summary of report**

This report provides details of the progress made since Cabinet agreed, on 16 January 2008, to support the submission of an 'Expression of Interest' in academy status for Shelfield Sports and Community College to be submitted to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and sets out proposed arrangements for progressing this further.

#### **2. Recommendations**

That Cabinet approve consultation on the proposal to close Shelfield Sports and Community College on **31 December 2008** subject to the agreement of the Secretary of State to approve the opening of the school as an Academy from **1 January 2009**. (For clarity this means that the closure would be followed immediately by the opening of the Academy with no disruption to the education of the students at the school. Should the Academy not be established, Shelfield would continue as a community school.)

#### **3. Background information**

- 3.1 At the meeting held on 16 January 2008, Cabinet received a report on academy status schools in Walsall and supported the submission of a formal 'Expression of Interest' for Shelfield Community Sports College and Darlaston Community Science College in order to allow a formal feasibility study to be undertaken.
- 3.2 Officials from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) have confirmed that the Expression of Interest for Shelfield has been approved by ministers to enter the feasibility stage and as part of this there will be consultation on the proposal. The feasibility stage continues until a decision has been taken to close the school which is to become an academy and the funding agreement for the academy has been signed.

## **4. Resource considerations**

### **4.1 Financial:**

#### Revenue

- 4.1.1 All education revenue funds (with the exception of money for statementing) and pupil related grants for Walsall will be reduced if Sheffield becomes an academy; the new academy would receive these sums directly. The money removed from Council allocations and grants will be spread across a number of services provided by the Council and the education contractor. In addition to the traditionally traded services, the council and education contractor could offer to sell more services to the new academy to reduce the impact of the lost revenue and grant allocation. The existing Walsall academy does not buy any services from the Council or education contractor. LA supported 'community' academies will, however, have local authority representation on their governing bodies and this may result in them purchasing services from the council and / or the education contractor.
- 4.1.2 Pupil related grants and parts of grants would be reduced to reflect the change in pre-16 pupil numbers if Sheffield is established as an Academy.
- 4.1.3 Sheffield's full year budget share (without grant) is £4.5 million.
- 4.1.4 Walsall's total Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is £166 million. This sum is split into money directed to schools through the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) (£154.8 million) and a centrally retained sum of £11.2 million. The centrally retained sum is used by the Council and the education contractor to provide services to schools.
- 4.1.5 In addition, a sum would be removed from the centrally retained part of the DSG. For the period January to March 2009 this would be approx £50K and in a full year this would increase to approx £200K. These figures have been calculated using a central spend calculator provided by the DCSF.

#### Capital

- 4.1.6 The DCSF will make a fixed sum available for the new academy and the Council will be required to either manage the capital project within that fixed sum or meet the additional costs from its own resources.
- 4.1.7 The arrangements for this may need to be reviewed if Walsall's bid for inclusion in Wave 6a of the building Schools for the Future programme is successful.
- 4.1.8 After achieving academy status, Sheffield would receive future capital monies directly from the DCSD.

### **4.2 Legal:**

- 4.2.1 The closure of Sheffield Community and Sports College in order to enable the school to become an academy is subject to statutory procedures. These specify that there must be a period of consultation before the proposing authority decides whether it wishes to proceed with the proposal. It is proposed to consult on the proposal from 28 April 2008 and to report to Cabinet on the outcome of consultation at the meeting to be held in mid-June 2008. Subject to approval by

Cabinet to proceed, a statutory proposal would then be published following which there would be a representation period of six weeks during which objections could be made. A further report would be brought to Cabinet so that the final decision could be made in the light of any responses received during the representation period and the proposal be 'determined'. It is expected that the final decision would be taken in early November 2008.

- 4.2.2 Details of the proposed timescale for considering this matter are provided in the table below. By law, the representation period following the publication of a statutory proposal is set at 6 weeks. In order to avoid the majority of this representation period falling in the summer holiday period, it is proposed to delay publication until the start of the September term.

28 April 2008	Consultation starts (6 weeks)
6 June 2008	Consultation ends
Mid/late June 2008	Walsall Council (Cabinet) considers response to consultation and decides whether to proceed with the proposal
5 September 2008	Statutory notice published, 6 weeks representation period follows
Early November 2008	Consideration of proposal by Walsall Cabinet and notification of decision to parents, staff and governors at the schools

- 4.2.3 Consultation would include the publication of a consultation document which would information regarding the proposed closure of Shelfield and also information about the proposed academy. This document would be issued to stakeholders and would be made available to the public. Meetings would be held with stakeholders including parents, staff and governors and there would also be consultation with pupils on roll at Shelfield.
- 4.2.4 The admission arrangements for the 2009/10 school year for community and controlled schools in Walsall were determined by Cabinet on 19 March 2008. The 'Information for Parents' handbook and the 'Walsall Preference Form' for secondary admissions for September 2009 will be issued to parents on 11 July 2008; the closing date for receipt of applications is 10 October 2008. These admission arrangements will apply to Shelfield or a successor academy as the final decision regarding the establishment of the proposed Shelfield academy will not have been taken until after these dates. Should Cabinet decide to approve consultation on the proposal to close Shelfield Community and Sports College in order to enable the school to become an academy, a note to this effect will be included in the 'Information for Parents' handbook.
- 4.2.5 The sponsor has confirmed that all students who have a place at Shelfield when the proposed academy opens would automatically be enrolled at the academy.
- 4.2.6 Details of the proposed academy are provided in **Appendix 1**. This document was provided by the DCSF, is based on the Expression of Interest and has been cleared by representatives of the sponsor (the Ormiston Trust).

### **4.3 Staffing:**

- 4.3.1 The staff employed at Sheffield are employees of Walsall Council. In an academy, however, the staff are employed by the governors (trustees). In circumstances where a school closes and reopens as an academy, staff are 'TUPEd' across to the new employer on the same terms and conditions of service.
- 4.3.2 As existing staff would be 'TUPEd' to the new employer, there should not be any redundancies.

## **5. Citizen impact**

- 5.1 There is the potential to more rapidly improve secondary education provision in the Pelsall area and there is also the potential for greater levels of community engagement.
- 5.2 The sponsor for the proposed academy is the Ormiston Trust. In the Expression of Interest, the Trust states that it is 'committed to the transformation of learning and the regeneration of communities particularly through its focus on the development of extended school provision achieved with multi-agency cooperation.'

## **6. Community safety**

It is anticipated that investment in the improvement of the site will have a positive impact on the education of the students in the school. As a community Academy there is an expectation of increased links with the local community.

## **7. Environmental impact**

If Sheffield Sports and Community College is closed and a successor academy opened, it is envisaged that parts of the current building would be demolished and replacement accommodation be provided. Much of the recent building at the school would be retained and some of the older building would be refurbished and updated. Any new building would be built to the latest building and environmental standards and would incorporate the use of sustainable resources wherever possible; designs would incorporate developments to reduce the impact on the environment. The Academy would ensure that the community was appropriately engaged and informed regarding any changes to the site during the planned period of refurbishment.

## **8. Performance and risk management issues**

### **8.1 Risk:**

- 8.1.1 There is a loss of direct control by the Council of property in schools that become academies. This would apply for the life of the academy and there would be conditions in the agreement to ensure that the property would return to the Council if the academy closes and can ensure that the property can only be used for specified purposes.

8.1.2 The loss of direct control would be mitigated by the transfer of liabilities and by the influence of LA representatives on the board of governors.

## 8.2 Performance management:

8.2.1 The performance of the Academy becomes the responsibility of the DCSF.

## 9. Equality implications

### Admissions

9.1 In the Expression of Interest, the sponsor has confirmed that the proposed academy would comply with admissions law, the School Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admissions Appeals Code of Practice as they apply to maintained schools. It has also been confirmed that the academy would have regard to and have an independent appeal panel which acts in accordance with the Secretary of State's guidance on exclusions.

9.2 The sponsor has confirmed that all students who have a place at Sheffield when the proposed academy opens would automatically be enrolled at the academy.

9.3 The admission arrangements for the proposed academy include admitting 10% of pupils on the basis of their aptitude for sport; this is in line with the current arrangements.

9.4 Discussions between Education Walsall, Walsall LA, the Ormiston Trust and Sheffield have led to a clear agreement that the proposed academy would serve the same community as Sheffield College. The sponsor wishes to explore the possibility of using banding to admit the remainder of pupils.

### SEN

9.5 The sponsor has confirmed in the Expression of Interest that the proposed academy would meet the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice and would seek to be an inclusive school as part of the full LA provision for SEN.

## 10. Consultation

10.1 Council officers, DCSF officials and their appointed project manager, and a representative of the Ormiston Trust have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## Background papers

Cabinet Report 16 January 2008: Consideration of Academy Status Schools in Walsall.  
Expression of Interest for Sheffield Community Sports College.

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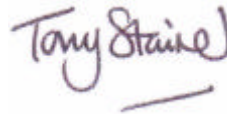
Signed:



Executive Director: David Brown

Date: 7 April 2008

Signed:



Managing Director, Education Walsall

Date: 7 April 2008

Signed:



Portfolio Holder: Councillor Zahid Ali

Date: 7 April 2008

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This document was provided by the DCSF, is based on the Expression of Interest and has been cleared by representatives of the sponsor (the Ormiston Trust). During the consultation period the DCSF will share a final paper.

## **The proposed Academy to replace Sheffield College, Walsall**

### **Summary**

1. It is proposed that an Academy, sponsored by the Ormiston Trust, would replace Sheffield Sport and Community College, Walsall. The proposed Academy would have 1200 students at 11-16 (8FE) with a further 300 post-16. Although the 11-16 pupil admission number would remain unchanged, the post-16 provision would double in size, reflecting improved staying-on rates. The expansion in the sixth form numbers has been agreed by the local LSC who support the proposal.

### **Sponsors of the proposed Academy**

2. The sponsor of the proposed Academy, the Ormiston Trust, is an operational charity working to promote the well being of children and young people, through direct service provision and by raising awareness. The Ormiston Trust has three open Academies (the Gateway Academy, Thurrock, the Shireland Collegiate Academy and the George Salter Collegiate Academy, Sandwell).
3. The Ormiston Trust is committed to the transformation of learning and the regeneration of communities particularly through its focus on the development of extended school provision, achieved with multi agency cooperation. As an Extended School, the Academy will engage with the community to create a comprehensive range of community services linked to the delivery of its curriculum specialisms. The Ormiston Trust is extremely focussed on engaging the local community in the proposed Academy and would work closely with community leaders to raise standards within the Academy and more widely.

### **Vision for the proposed Academy**

4. The vision for the proposed Academy focuses on close involvement between the school and its community. Sheffield College serves some of the most disadvantaged wards in Walsall and the Ormiston Trust wants the Academy to support community regeneration and deliver strong extended school provision through multi-agency cooperation.
5. The proposed Academy would have a broad and balanced curriculum and would follow the national curriculum in English, Maths, Science and ICT. The Academy would be developed in a way which is based on the needs, interests, aptitudes and abilities of students in order to maximise their potential. This would include having individual learning plans for all students and enabling students to access assessments when ready, regardless of age. The sponsor intends that the Academy will specialise in Sport and English. Sport is a very strong specialism at Sheffield which the Academy would build on, integrating with a further specialism of English as a cornerstone to a coherent approach to raising standards through

personal development. Over a quarter of all pupils arrive at Sheffield College two years behind their chronological reading age, and this includes a high proportion of traveller families located in the area. The English specialism would be a feature of all the teaching in the school and there would be a particular focus on speaking and listening skills. The teaching of English would be innovative and links will be made between English and other subjects.

### **Admissions to the proposed Academy**

6. All students who have a place at Sheffield College when the proposed Academy opens would automatically be enrolled at the Academy. The admissions arrangements for the proposed Academy include admitting 10% of pupils on the basis of their aptitude for sport, following the current practice at Sheffield College. During the feasibility phase the sponsor wishes to explore the possibility of using banding for admitting the remainder of pupils, recognising the difficulties this has caused with the Walsall Academy. Discussions between Education Walsall, Walsall LA, the Ormiston Trust and Sheffield College have led to a clear agreement that the proposed Academy will serve the same community as Sheffield College and will be a facility for them to use.

### **The site of the proposed Academy**

7. Between 2002 and 2004 Sheffield College completed a major building programme over half of its site, replacing a number of older buildings constructed in the 1960s, and partially refurbishing the remainder. It is proposed that new buildings will be delivered for the remaining portion through Partnerships for Schools' National Framework, aiming for completion by September 2012.