

Cabinet – 17 January 2007

Joseph Leckie Community College – Targeted Capital Allocation

Portfolio: Councillor Zahid Ali, Children's Services

Wards: Palfrey

Service: Built Environment

Key decisions: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

Summary of report

This report recommends that £6m of Targeted Capital Funding earmarked for Joseph Leckie School be allocated to primarily remove the large number of temporary classrooms and provide replacement new build accommodation and that the project be commissioned to Willmott Dixon using the Scape/Willmott Dixon framework.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- Willmott Dixon be appointed as the framework contractor to deliver a design build scheme which will represent Phase 1 of the redevelopment programme for the School.
- Education Walsall, Property Services and Willmott Dixon work with Joseph Leckie Community Technical College representatives to develop proposals to replace the large number of temporary classrooms on the campus and to undertake other essential work within a maximum budget of £6m.
- A master plan be developed for the School to ensure that the Targeted Capital investment will compliment any future funding to be allocated under the provisions of the Building Schools for the Future programme. (Walsall is due to join the programme from 2011 onwards)
- A detailed report be provided when a concept scheme and feasibility costings are available.

Resource and Legal Considerations

The £15m Targeted Capital Funding allocation made by the DfES to Walsall was originally allocated to fund the replacement of Mary Elliot Special School and Daw End School. Following representations by the Headteacher and governors of Joseph Leckie College, it was decided that the funding should be allocated as indicated below:

- £7.0m Mary Elliot School
- £6.0m Joseph Leckie School
- £2.0m Daw End School

A formal brief is being developed with the school and there is general agreement that priority must be given to remove the 23 temporary classrooms that provide a significant proportion of teaching space at an annual cost of £153,600; there is a need for some ancillary works and the provision of additional parking.

To minimise pre-contract costs and work, it is proposed that the same process is adopted for this project as that used to develop the concept scheme and price on the Mary Elliot scheme. This involves appointing the contractor, setting a maximum budget price and then developing a scheme with the input of all key stakeholders.

The Scape/Willmott Dixon framework has been subject to competitive procurement through the European tendering process and has been subject to review by Legal Services, Audit and external legal advisors Wragge and Co. A detailed explanation of the framework is set out in the Cabinet report in respect of the Mary Elliot project, which was approved by Cabinet on 29 November 2006.

The replacement of the temporary classrooms with a stand alone permanent block constructed on a design build basis, linking to a redeveloped school as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme, is a good solution and should maximise the full potential of a design build approach working to a maximum cost target.

Community safety

In designing the Phase 1 work, careful consideration will be given to community safety and in particular to:

- Hazardous features on the site including the presence of an open brook – it may be appropriate to culvert the brook to improve safety and increase the site capacity
- Traffic impact
- Improved parking and dropping off arrangements
- Security through good design.

Environmental impact

The Council is committed to delivering new building projects that reflect good design and achieve the Building Research Establishment (BREEAM) rating of good or very good in terms of the environmental performance of the building. The DfES expect schemes funded through the Targeted Capital programme to achieve a rating of very good. Care will be taken to produce a building that has sustainable features to act as an exemplar scheme for other developments.

Walsall has signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on climate change and is committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions where possible. Minimising energy costs and using sustainable building materials will assist with this commitment.

Performance and risk management issues

- It is important that the project is designed as Phase 1 of a scheme to be completed under the Building Schools for the Future programme. A key risk is whether the follow on funding will be available from 2011 onwards.
- Culverting the existing brook running through the middle of the campus will reduce a potential health and safety hazard, provide useful additional playground space and also improve circulation between the various teaching blocks.
- Sprinkler system – a sprinkler system will be installed to reduce fire risks.
- No site investigation work has been undertaken to date and ground conditions may have an impact on the project.

Equality implications

The development of a significant new classroom block for the School will provide an improved learning environment for the young attending the Joseph Leckie Community College and will provide modern facilities for community use.

Consultation

School representatives will form part of the client team and other stakeholders will be consulted on the concept and final scheme when prepared. Planning officers and Sport England will be consulted at an early stage.

Vision 2008

The proposed scheme would contribute to the delivery of Walsall's Vision 2008 – Section 4 – Making our Schools Great – by significantly improving the learning environment for pupils at Joseph Leckie School and for community users of the buildings.

Background papers

Report to Cabinet September 2006 – Framework Contracts
Report to Cabinet July 2006 – Targeted Capital Allocations

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