

Cabinet – 13 January 2010

Darlaston Academy Outline Business Case

Portfolio: Councillor A Andrew, Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Councillor R Walker, Children's Services

Service: Regeneration

Wards: Darlaston South

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Summary of report

- 1.1 The Cabinet meeting of April 2009 approved the statutory proposal to close Darlaston Community Science College on 31 August 2009, subject to the signing of the indicative Funding Agreement by the Secretary of State for the opening of an Academy on 1 September 2009, following which the building will be rebuilt (100%). Cabinet is advised that the signed indicative Funding Agreement is now in place.
- 1.2 Cabinet is now asked to give delegated authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration and the Executive Director for Children's Services in consultation with the portfolio holder, for the signing of the Outlined Business Case (OBC) for the related funding allocation.
- 1.3 It is intended to inform future cabinet meetings on the progress of the project and seek approval of Final Business Case (FBC), and sign to request further delegated authority for officers to enter the final business case, and enter into contract with the successful Design and Build Contractor.
- 1.4 The Department for Children School and Families (DCSF) indicative funding allocation for this scheme is £26,987,944 million, although the final figure will require final agreement and confirmation from the DCSF, before works can commence.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves delegated authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration and Executive Director Children's Services in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder for the signing of the OBC for the indicative funding allocation £26,987,944.00.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The Expression of Interest (EOI) was approved by Cabinet 16 January 2008. This document outlined the proposal to open an Academy on the Darlaston Community Science College site. The sponsor is the Grace Trust which works to promote the well being of children and young people, especially those disadvantaged by their life experiences and circumstances.
- 3.2 The EOI identified the Academy, its size, sponsor, likely site and the indicative funding envelope approved by the DCSF.

The procurement process as prescribed by Partnerships for Schools (PfS) designates the Council as the procurement body for construction of the Academy buildings. The Council is required to procure both consultants and contractors and deliver the project within the funding envelope approved by PfS in the OBC.

- 3.3 Construction consultant Navigant have been appointed to provide the role of Project Manager and Technical Advisors and have commenced works on the OBC, which includes surveys, outline planning application and design options for the New Academy. All stakeholders, including the Principal (Darlaston Academy) and the Sponsor (Grace Trust), have been fully engaged in the consultation processes, and this will continue throughout the remainder of the project.
- 3.4 PfS require that the OBC includes an approval for outline planning permission for the development and this is due to be considered by planning committee on 7 January 2010

4. Resource considerations

4.1 Financial:

- 4.1.1 Funding will be based on the final approval of the OBC allocation, after which no further funding can then be obtained from DCSF; anything beyond the initial fixed budget will be at the Council's risk. The Council's Section 151 Officer is required to sign the OBC as well as the Executive Director of Regeneration and the Executive Director of Children's Services.
- 4.1.2 The PfS funding model includes for a level of abnormal costs to cover issues such as ground conditions, the level of this funding is subject to negotiation with PfS. PfS will not however fund off site works such as Highways improvement which may be identified during the planning process.

4.2 Legal:

- 4.2.1 Legal Services have been consulted and have advised on the appointment of technical consultants and will be consulted during the framework contract procurement process. Martineau from the Council's legal panel have been appointed to undertake the day to day legal activities. The Academy procurement route is strictly prescribed by PfS with little opportunity for derogation.

4.3 Staffing:

4.3.1 There are no staffing implications with this report

5. Citizen impact

5.1 The provision of the New Academy will contribute to the improved learning of the Children and Young people at Darlaston Academy, stakeholders and pupils are currently engaged in a consultation process.

5.2 Subject to planning approval, the proposed Academy will utilise part of George Rose Park to enable sufficient provision of playing fields. These facilities will be available for community use. The Council will be investing in the remainder of the park to improve the facilities

6. Community safety

The proposed designs for the Academy will give increased onsite car parking allocation for the school. The new site will be fenced and investment in the park will also include new fencing

7. Environmental impact

7.1 A BREEAM (British research establishment environmental assessment method) workshop will be undertaken with all stakeholders and the building will be designed to achieve a BREEAM rating of 'very good'. The Academy although subject to a lease to Grace Trust for 125 years will remain part of the Council's carbon footprint for carbon reduction commitment

7.2 The new school and its environment will be designed to minimise impact on the environment, working closely with consultees

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 Risk:

8.1.1 A risk register is in place to enable all the risks to be determined and managed, this will be recorded using the corporate risk assessment/management process.

8.2 Performance management:

8.2.1 The project is registered on the Council's project register and will follow Walsall Project Approach (WPA).

9. Equality implications

The successful bidders (Main Contractor) will be expected to provide a copy of their Equalities and Health policy and this will be approved to ensure that it is in line with the Council's policy. Indeed, some of these items are integral to the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the contract. These items will be monitor throughout the contract.

10. Consultation

Consultation with various stakeholders has and will continue to take place (Academy, Children Services, Leisure Services, Planning and Building Control) and all have given their support and backing to the proposals. Further consultation with the local community will continue as the scheme develops.

Background papers

Author

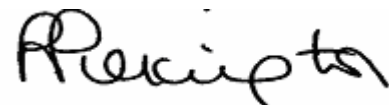
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5 January 2010