

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

3 SEPTEMBER 2009

**REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION/KEY DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor A Cunningham

BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE (BSF) REVIEW OF OPTIONS FOR THE SOUTH OF THE BOROUGH

1. Summary

The BSF Strategy for Change Part 2 (SfC2) agreed by Cabinet in February 2009 included a commitment to review possible options to increase the number of secondary school places in Ingleby Barwick. The current preferred option, as set out in SfC2, is to increase capacity at All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided School in Ingleby Barwick from 600 to 900 places, with corresponding reductions in the capacity of Conyers School in Yarm and Egglecliffe School, and to relocate Egglecliffe School to its playing fields at Allens West. These schools, the three highest achieving secondary schools in the borough, should be considered together because any action to increase capacity at one school would inevitably impact on the others.

Three other options have emerged from discussions between the school communities, members and officers, namely to establish another secondary school in Ingleby; to increase the size of All Saints School beyond 900 places (with greater reductions in the size of Conyers or Egglecliffe); or to relocate Egglecliffe School to a site within Preston Park.

These options have not yet been explored in detail because capital funding for these schools is not included in the first wave of BSF funding. As a result of strenuous efforts over the past year, the scope of the Wave 6 programme has been enlarged from five mainstream schools in Stockton to include all mainstream schools in Billingham, Stockton and Thornaby as well as two special schools and the pupil referral unit. However a letter from the Department for Children, Schools and Families dated 4 August states very firmly that the three remaining schools in the south of the borough will not be brought into Wave 6. No indication has been received of the timing of a second wave of funding. This means that the Council could not commit at this stage to delivering any of the options considered in this report.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to agree that:

- 1) further work should be carried out to explore the feasibility of the three new options, i.e. establishing a second school in Ingleby Barwick; increasing the capacity of All Saints School beyond 900 students; and relocating Egglecliffe School on land within Preston Park;

- 2) these options should be explored further with Partnerships for Schools (PfS) and the Office of the Schools Commissioner (OSC) to obtain their views as these proposals would differ from those submitted and approved in SfC2;
- 3) if, during the feasibility study, other potentially viable options are identified, the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care (CESC) be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to authorise similar feasibility work to be undertaken on these new options
- 4) a further report be brought to Cabinet outlining the results of this additional work for consideration by Cabinet, prior to informing an extensive programme of public consultation.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

Ingleby Barwick currently has one secondary school with 600 places to serve an area with a resident school population of around 1,300 (aged 11-16, not including Catholic students). Some 700 students resident in Ingleby Barwick currently attend secondary schools in Eaglescliffe and Yarm. The Council is committed to exploring deliverable options to increase the number of school places in Ingleby Barwick. A petition has been received asking for the establishment of another secondary school in Ingleby Barwick.

The options recommended in this report for further exploration would require negotiations with landowners, technical investigations of potential sites, and detailed discussions with planners. The resources allocated by the Council for managing the local BSF programme are fully committed to developing the projects in the first wave. Any additional work on the feasibility of options for Eaglescliffe, Ingleby Barwick and Yarm would require resourcing.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;

- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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CABINET DECISION/KEY DECISION

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REVIEW OF OPTIONS FOR THE SOUTH OF THE BOROUGH**

SUMMARY

The BSF Strategy for Change Part 2 (SfC2) agreed by Cabinet in February 2009 included a commitment to review possible options to increase the number of secondary school places in Ingleby Barwick. The current preferred option, as set out in SfC2, is to increase capacity at All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided School in Ingleby Barwick from 600 to 900 places, with corresponding reductions in the capacity of Conyers School in Yarm and Egglecliffe School, and to relocate Egglecliffe School to its playing fields at Allens West. These schools, the three highest achieving secondary schools in the borough, should be considered together because any action to increase capacity at one school would inevitably impact on the others.

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These options have not yet been explored in detail because capital funding for these schools is not included in the first wave of BSF funding. As a result of strenuous efforts over the past year, the scope of the Wave 6 programme has been enlarged from five mainstream schools in Stockton to include all mainstream schools in Billingham, Stockton and Thornaby as well as two special schools and the pupil referral unit. However a letter from the Department for Children, Schools and Families dated 4 August states very firmly that the three remaining schools in the south of the borough will not be brought into Wave 6. No indication has been received of the timing of a second wave of funding. This means that the Council could not commit at this stage to delivering any of the options considered in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to agree that:

- 1) further work should be carried out to explore the feasibility of the three new options, i.e. establishing a second school in Ingleby Barwick; increasing the capacity of All Saints School beyond 900 students; and relocating Egglecliffe School on land within Preston Park;
- 2) these options should be explored further with Partnerships for Schools (PfS) and the Office of the Schools Commissioner (OSC) to obtain their views as these proposals would differ from those submitted and approved in SfC2;
- 3) if, during the feasibility study, other potentially viable options are identified, the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care (CESC) be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and

Young People, to authorise similar feasibility work to be undertaken on these new options

- 4) a further report be brought to Cabinet outlining the results of this additional work for consideration by Cabinet, prior to informing an extensive programme of public consultation.

DETAIL

1. The Council's BSF strategy is informed by projections of future student numbers supplied by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (JSU). The latest figures suggest that a total of 2,850 secondary school places (11-16) will be needed across Eaglescliffe, Ingleby Barwick and Yarm in 2018. All the options considered in this report are based on that projection.
2. In January 2009 a total of 1,411 students of secondary age (11-16) lived in Ingleby Barwick and attended schools maintained by the Council (including Catholic schools). In January 568 Ingleby residents attended All Saints Church of England School in Ingleby Barwick, 536 attended Conyers School in Yarm and a further 180 went to Eggescliffe School. The Council provides transport for these students.
3. The number of students from Ingleby Barwick attending Eggescliffe School is likely to increase over the coming years as some 1,000 new homes remain to be built in the north of Ingleby Barwick (the area zoned to Eggescliffe School). The school-age population of the south of Ingleby (the area zoned to Conyers) is likely to decline gradually in the absence of any significant housing development in that area. Without any changes to school capacities, it is possible that by September 2018 the distribution of Ingleby Barwick residents might be 600 to All Saints, 500 to Conyers and 400 to Eggescliffe. This could mean up to 900 students travelling from Ingleby Barwick to attend Conyers and Eggescliffe Schools. Any action to reduce that number would be beneficial for the community of Ingleby Barwick, for the Council and for the environment. It would also have an impact on all three schools and potentially on the communities of Eaglescliffe and Yarm.
4. Parents may choose to apply for a place at any school. Of the 297 students resident in Ingleby Barwick who applied for places to start at secondary schools in September 2009, only five did not get a place at the school they named as first preference on their application form. One of these was an unsuccessful application for All Saints School.
5. The present arrangements for allocating school places to individual students include a defined geographical area around each school. This is known as the school's admission zone. The purpose of the admission zone is to ensure that as far as possible students are able to access places at a local school if that is their preference. When there are more applications than places available at any school, students resident within the admission zone normally receive priority over those outside it. Major changes to the size or location of any school would require a review of all admission zones in that area. This is a matter of considerable importance to parents, and it is essential that any review of admission zones should include full public consultation. Recommendations for a review of admission zones would be included in a future report to Cabinet.
6. This report recommends feasibility studies on four options:
 - A: The current preferred option set out in the BSF Strategy for Change agreed by Cabinet and approved by government.
 - B: To create a second school in Ingleby Barwick.
 - C: To increase the capacity of All Saints School beyond 900 places.

D: To relocate Egglecliffe School to a site within Preston Park.

7. Each option will be assessed for the extent to which it might deliver the Council's strategic objectives for BSF as stated in the approved BSF Strategy for Change:
- Putting the learner first
 - Every school a good school
 - Schools at the heart of the community.

Issues for investigation:

8. Would all three schools be of viable size and able to offer a broad range of curriculum options?
9. Would each of these distinct geographical areas retain a school at the heart of its own community?
10. Would each geographical area have sufficient school places for all resident students?
11. What would be the impact on the three most successful and popular schools in the borough?
12. How would the requirement for students to travel every day be minimised and reduced?
13. Impact on post 16 provision in the Borough, particularly at Conyers School.
14. The views of the Diocese of York in relation to the development of All Saints School.
15. Would there be any requirement for any new sites? If so, what funding source would pay for this?
16. Does the present economic climate change the availability of land suitable for a new school development?
17. Availability of any additional playing fields to comply with regulations.
18. Would there be any opportunity to obtain capital receipts to contribute to the cost?
19. The suitability of any proposed new site, e.g. topography, accessibility, flooding.
20. The suitability and condition of existing school buildings and facilities.
21. The potential response of the communities of Yarm, Ingleby Barwick and Egglecliffe during statutory consultation on any of these options.
22. The implications of Section 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which requires that a competition must normally take place when a need for a new school has been identified.
23. The impact on the existing PFI facilities management contract at All Saints school.
24. Traffic Impact Assessment for each option.
25. Planning Assessment of relocating a school on land at Preston Park and the environmental and community impact of such a development.

26. Contribution of a school project to delivering the Preston Park Master Plan.
27. Other issues that may arise during this process will also be investigated.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

28. A feasibility study would investigate the financial and legal issues that would arise if any of the suggested options were to be implemented.
29. A future wave of BSF funding will be the main source of finance for any development carried out on these schools. That funding will be limited to the amount that the BSF programme drives out from the funding allocation modelling based on projected student numbers. These feasibility studies are necessary to provide clarity about project affordability.
30. Should any of the options investigated result in the need for the Council to acquire additional land it will be necessary to identify the potential cost of that land and a source of funding through which that land could be acquired.
31. The estimated cost of dealing with the study has been assessed and will be funded from the resources currently identified to support the BSF Programme (£1m pa from 2010/11).

RISK ASSESSMENT

32. A comprehensive risk register is maintained for the BSF programme. This report seeks the agreement of Cabinet to carry out feasibility studies only. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Regeneration and Transport

33. The proposed feasibility studies would include a full assessment of the transport implications of each option.

Safer Communities

34. No negative implications.

Children and Young People

35. The BSF programme is intended to improve services for children and young people.

Health and Wellbeing

36. No negative implications.

Environment and Housing

37. No negative implications of this work.

CORPORATE PARENTING

38. The Council's BSF strategy includes targets to raise educational achievement and improve life chances for all children and young people in the borough including those looked after by the Authority.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

39. The BSF programme has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and has been judged to have a positive impact. Any firm proposal for change that might arise from feasibility studies would be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment at that stage.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

40. The current preferred option emerged following public consultation on initial options in autumn 2007. That consultation included distribution of a consultation booklet, public meetings, internet questionnaire and meetings of school governing bodies. The preferred option was included in SfC1 and SfC2 documents agreed by Cabinet before submission for government approval. Those documents were subject to further consultation including members' seminars and meetings with ward councillors, and regular meetings with headteachers in the BSF Change Management Group.
41. If the recommended feasibility studies are agreed by Cabinet, the outcomes will be notified to members and made public via Stockton News, information leaflets and through the Council website. Full public consultation will take place to determine which of the feasible options will be adopted as part of the Council's BSF programme. That consultation will include members' seminars, public meetings in each of the South of the Borough areas, and the distribution of a consultation paper.

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Background Papers:

Building Schools for the Future Strategy for Change Part 2
Report to Cabinet dated 5 February 2009

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Eaglescliffe
Ingleby Barwick East
Ingleby Barwick West
Yarm
Western Parishes

Property

No implications at this stage