

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **CABINET REPORT**

**Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Mrs McCoy**

**AN UPDATE ON THE POSITION IN STOCKTON OF MAINTAINED SCHOOLS CONVERTING TO ACADEMY STATUS AND THE STRUCTURAL CHANGES UNDERWAY IN BOROUGH INCLUDING THE POST 16 REVIEW.**

1. Summary

The number of schools in Stockton converting to academy status has increased from a slow starting point in 2010. The majority of secondary schools are now academies and more primaries are beginning to convert.

The number of academy providers, with some large Multi-Academy trusts, is also increasing in Borough.

The Post 16 Review proposes some structural reforms to the offer of Post 16 education across the Tees Valley.

This report provides a summary of the position so far regarding structural reforms. This report sits alongside the regular reports to cabinet on attainment and outcomes in schools and settings. (The latest were September 2015, overview report, and October 2015 regarding performance of vulnerable groups.)

2. Recommendations

For cabinet to note the developments.

3. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, 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 and the business:-

- Affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- Relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

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**REPORT TO CABINET**

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET REPORT**

**An update on the position in Stockton of maintained schools converting to academy status and the structural changes underway in Borough including the Post 16 Review.**

**SUMMARY**

1. The number of schools in Stockton converting to academy status has increased from a slow starting point in 2010. The majority of secondary schools are now academies and more primaries are beginning to convert.

The number of academy providers, with some large Multi-Academy trusts, is also increasing in Borough.

The Post 16 Review proposes some structural reforms to the offer of Post 16 education across the Tees Valley.

This report provides a summary of the position so far regarding structural reforms. This report sits alongside the regular reports to cabinet on attainment and outcomes in schools and settings. (The latest were September 2015, overview report, and October 2015 regarding performance of vulnerable groups.)

2. Recommendations

To note the report.

**DETAIL**

**Background**

1. The schools White Paper 2010, *The Importance of Teaching*, set out a radical reform programme for the schools' system, which set out to free schools from what is described as the constraints of central government direction and place teachers firmly at the heart of school improvement. One element of this was for all schools to convert to academy status by 2015. This milestone has been passed but the Education and Adoption Bill 2015-2016 which seeks to amend the Education and Inspections Act 2006 includes measures to strengthen the Secretary of State's school intervention rights and its powers to force schools to become academies. The government's new target is for all schools to become academies by 2020.

2. Since 2010 schools in Stockton have been converting to academy status. The table below sets out the chronology of these conversions. When a school converts it loses its Ofsted judgement. Those with a new judgement are listed along with the date of the inspection. For those who are yet to be inspected, their previous judgement is given. (Grade 1 'outstanding', Grade 2 'good', Grade 3 'Requiring Improvement', Grade 4 'inadequate'.)

| School   | Sponsor   | Date converted | Ofsted Grade  |
|--|---|----------------|---|
| North Shore Academy  | Northern Education Trust                              | 01/09/2010     | Grade 3 Dec13   |
| Thornaby Academy   | Teesside University (new sponsor being sought)        | 01/09/2010     | Grade 3 Mar 14  |
| Conyers  | No sponsor  | 01/02/2013     | Grade 2 Dec 14  |
| St Gregory's Primary School  | Carmel  | 01/04/2013     | Grade 3 Mar 15  |
| All Saints Academy   | No sponsor  | 01/05/2013     | Grade 1 Feb 15  |
| Hardwick Green   | Enquire Trust   | 01/06/2013     | Grade 2 Jun 15  |
| Abbey Hill School Technology College   | Horizons Specialist Academy Trust                     | 01/08/2013     | Grade 2 Jun 15  |
| Westlands  | Horizons Specialist Academy Trust                     | 01/08/2013     | Grade 3 Jan 13  |
| Frederick Natrass Primary School   | Northern Education Trust                              | 01/09/2013     | (predecessor Nov 12: 2)   |
| The Oak Tree Primary School  | Northern Education Trust                              | 01/09/2013     | Grade 3 Jun 15  |
| St Michael's RC Voluntary Aided Comprehensive School   | Carmel  | 01/09/2013     | Grade 3 Jun 15  |
| St Bede Catholic Primary School  | Carmel  | 01/12/2013     | (predecessor Nov 12: 2)   |
| Norton Primary School  | Northern Education Trust                              | 01/01/2014     | (predecessor May 13: 3)   |
| Grangefield School and Specialist Technology College   | Northern Education Trust                              | 01/01/2014     | (predecessor Dec 12: 4)   |
| Yarm Primary School  | Enquire Trust as of 1st Sept 2015 formerly no sponsor | 01/02/2014     | (predecessor May 08: 1)   |
| Harrow Gate Primary School   | Enquire   | 01/09/2014     | (predecessor Mar 14: 3)   |
| Ash Trees School   | Ascent Trust  | 01/11/2014     | (predecessor Mar 13: 3)   |
| Ian Ramsey CE Aided Comprehensive School   | The Venerable Bede CE Academy                         | 01/12/2014     | (predecessor Mar 14: 4)   |
| Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy  | Carmel College Academy Trust                          | 01/02/2015     | (predecessor Jan 14: 3)   |
| St Patrick's Catholic College  |   |                | (predecessor Jul 14: 2)   |
| St Patrick's RC Primary School - Thornaby  |   |                | (predecessor Mar 09: 1)   |
| Christ the King RC Primary School  |   |                | (predecessor May 15: 2)   |
| St Therese of Lisieux RC Primary School  | Our Lady of Light Catholic Voluntary Academy Trust    | 01/09/2015     | (predecessor May 07: 1)   |
| St Paul's RC Primary School<br>St John the Evangelist RC Primary School, Billingham<br>St Joseph's RC Primary School, Billingham | St Thomas of Canterbury MAT                           | 01/03/2016     | (predecessor Jun 13: 1)<br>(predecessor Dec 10: 2)<br>(predecessor Jan 14: 2) |

3. There are also some anticipated conversions:

A Multi-Academy Trust Egglecliffe Secondary school, Junction Farm Primary School and The Links Primary School.

Bishopsgarth with Outwood Grange Academy Trust as the sponsor.

Rosebrook Primary School with Ad Astra Academy Trust as the sponsor.

There are also two Free Schools in the Borough, Ingleby Manor Free School established 2014 for 11-19 age range and Wynyard Church of England Primary Free School established in 2015.

### **Implications of academy conversions**

4. As the all secondary schools, apart from Northfield will be academies and a growing number of primary schools are converting – now totalling 18 – the group of schools in Stockton is changing rapidly.

5. There is also a range of academy structures:

- stand-alone academy converters (Conyers, All Saints);
- small, local, Stockton clusters (Horizons Specialist Academy Trust, Our Lady of the Light Catholic Voluntary Academy Trust, Primary Billingham Schools Cluster)
- small Trusts which cross a number of local, regional Local Authorities (Ascent, The Venerable Bede CE Academy, Carmel, Ad Astra, Teesside University)
- large Multi-Academy Trust providers (Northern Education, Outwood Grange, Enquire).

6. These academies all have different ways of working. In many cases, they maintain the services of the Local Authority but in other cases, the Trusts themselves provide support – this can include support for school improvement, HR and finance.

7. The Local Authority seeks to maintain collaboration across all schools and retain a vision of a family of schools through the following strategies:

- facilitating forums for senior leaders such as Education Matters, Secondary Headteachers and Principals Group (which is attended by the Director and Assistant Director), Safeguarding Forum;
- delivering practitioners' networks for subject leaders, Special Needs Coordinators and Designated Teachers;
- establishing the Campus Stockton Teaching Alliance which has representation from across Stockton;
- funding school to school support from peer Headteachers as School Improvement Advisers who work across Stockton;
- developing Borough wide initiatives to engage all schools, for example the Transition Guarantee.

8. More recently, Stockton has participated in the Tees Challenge work to support school improvement across the Tees. This has included presenting conferences and contributing to themes for raising performance. This work has embraced wider academy partners who work across all the Tees authorities.

## Monitoring performance and issuing challenge

9. The Stockton School Improvement Framework is issued to all schools regardless of their status and is applied equally. All providers receive a profile of their performance against the challenge criteria within the framework. Where a provider has hit a trigger, there are consequences which again apply to all.
10. In September 2014, 9 schools hit the trigger for a meeting with the Director (4 secondary schools, 5 primary schools). Of these 9 schools, 5 were academies.
11. In 2015, 11 schools hit the trigger (4 secondary schools, 7 primary schools). Of these, 6 were academies.
12. The meeting with the Director signals the serious underperformance of the school and gives rise to the Director considering use of her statutory powers of intervention. For maintained schools, this is the consideration of issuing a Warning Notice. No maintained school has yet been issued with a formal Warning Notice, although several have received formal letters that indicate the need for compliance with particular strategies as a 'pre-warning notice letter'.
13. One maintained school that has been encouraged to become part of a multi-academy trust is Bishopsgarth. Whilst its performance improved significantly in 2015, it remained just below floor standards and has experienced considerable challenge in its staffing making it vulnerable again. Outwood Grange Academy Trust is a welcome sponsor as they will bring leadership and teaching capacity to invest in the school immediately.
14. For academies, the Director considers her obligation to inform the Regional Schools Commissioner of any academies that are causing concern. This is a function that the Director has carried out in her meetings with the regional Schools Commissioner for the North – Jan Renou. If the concern is serious, the Regional Schools Commissioner considers allocating a different sponsor to the academy. This has happened earlier in Stockton when the sponsor of North Shore was reallocated to Northern Education. More recently, the sponsorship of Thornaby Academy is being reviewed; it is being relinquished from Teesside University as the sponsor and a variety of potential sponsors have come forward.

## Financial implications

15. **Educations Services Grant** – As schools convert to academies they take Education Services grant funding with them and at the same time reducing the amounts received by the council. ESG is provided for services that local authorities provide centrally to maintained schools but that academies must secure independently eg education welfare services, school improvement etc. Since 2013/14 the Education Services Grant that is received by the LA will have reduced by £1.8m per annum from £3.8m to £2m in the current year. The Government have also announced a reduction of £600m in the Education Support Grant (ESG). This sum could be seen as representing around 75% of the national total. Over time this could mean that all the grant funding is at risk for Stockton.
16. **Delegation / De-delegation** - There are some services which should be delegated unless the Schools Forum agree can be de-delegated (or put another way centrally managed by the Local Authority) for Maintained Schools. The Schools Forum have agreed de-delegation across both primary and secondary schools in Stockton. However, for academies they must be delegated and in Stockton this applies to the following services:-
  - Checking Free school meals eligibility
  - Staff costs – supply cover for Trade associations
  - Support for minority ethnic pupils and underachieving groups
  - Behaviour support services.

17. Between 2013/14 and 2016/17 there has been a reduction in funding of in excess of £250k per annum to the LA which has instead been transferred to Academies. In order for the LA to continue to provide services, where relevant, SBC would have to follow and be successful in whatever procurement exercise the academy puts in place and enter into a contract (or service level) agreement to continue to provide these services.
18. **Trading or Buy Back Services** - these tend to be covered by Service Level Agreements in place between Local Authority support services and schools. Whilst schools currently have the freedom to choose their providers for support services many buy back existing LA services, but the greater autonomy and configuration of academies, particularly as more become part of Multi Academy Chains, means as a result they will not necessarily renew with the Local Authority. Currently the LA receives over £4m pa in trading income from schools and any loss of income may call their continued viability into question. A Children and Young People scrutiny review will be examining this further in 2016/2017.
19. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - there are a number of services / posts funded from dedicated schools Grant e.g. admissions, early years post, central support costs etc. Whilst these are not directly related to academy conversion if the Government change DSG from 2017/18 it may put this funding at risk.

### **Future changes to Local Authority functions as regards school improvement**

20. The government has announced there will be a white paper on education this year which will set out further reforms to strengthen school sector led improvements and reduce the Local Authority's role in education. Statutory duties of the Local Authority may be removed and the Education Support Fund is to be cut.

### **Post 16 review**

#### **Overview**

21. On 8 September the government published a plan to carry out a national programme of area-based reviews of post-16 education and training providers. The aim of these reviews is to help achieve more financially stable and efficient institutions and to improve collaboration across the different types of providers.
22. The review for the Tees Valley area has now commenced and a local steering group has been established to oversee this; the Local Authority is represented on this steering group. The Tees Valley review covers providers within the local authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees.
23. The government is encouraging all post-16 institutions, including school sixth forms, to look again at how they collaborate in order to help drive efficiencies. As part of this, the reviews will shine a light on where there is very similar provision in a number of institutions in a small geographical area.

### **Implications for Stockton**

24. It is likely that provision across the Tees will change with institutions merging, specialising and focusing on particular curriculum offers. Potentially there will be recommendations to reduce the amount of general FE provision and merge sixth form provision.

25. Within Stockton collaborations have already been formed between Stockton Sixth Form and Prior Pursglove in Guisborough. Stockton Sixth Form is also interested in becoming an academy trust which would enable it to partner with secondary schools.
26. Stockton Riverside College is in a strong position to retain its FE offer with its new relationship with NETA who offer apprenticeships and skills learning.

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