

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CABINET MEMBER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

5 November 2019

Report of the Executive Director for Children's Services

**NEW PRIMARY SCHOOLS AT BOULTON MOOR AND HIGHFIELDS FARM –
YOUNG PEOPLE**

1. Purpose of Report

To update the Cabinet Member on the progress with the new primary schools at Boulton Moor and Highfields Farm, and to obtain Cabinet's approval for the funding of the Project Development Fund and post-opening support for the new schools.

2. Information and Analysis

Boulton Moor

On 24 November 2015 (minute number 407/15), Cabinet approved a consultation on the opening of a new primary school at Boulton Moor to accommodate the pupils from the first phase of a development with 1058 houses . On 12 July 2016 (minute number 203/16) Cabinet received a report on the outcome of that consultation. Cabinet approved the process of inviting expressions of interest from multi academy trusts to run the school. This process was known as the 'free school presumption' under Section 6A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and the interviews with the multi academy trusts took place in December 2017. The Authority's assessment of the applications was forwarded to the Department for Education (DfE) and Spencer Academy Trust was selected. Since then the Authority has been working with the Trust to develop the project with a view to opening the school in September 2020.

Under the terms of the Section 106 agreement, the developer was required to provide £4,149,170 in capital funds for the primary school and those funds were reported to Cabinet on 14 September 2017 (minute number 253/17) and 21 March 2019 (minute number 65/19). On 26 July 2018, Cabinet approved an additional £1,761,590 (minute number 190/18) to provide a total of £5,910,760 to build a one form entry school with core facilities to allow it to be expanded to a 2 form entry school if necessary to meet the demand from later phases of the housing development. The

contract for the school was awarded under the SCAPE framework as reported to Cabinet on 18 April 2019 (minute number 84/19) and construction was due to start over the Autumn. There were delays gaining access to the site and that has impacted on the construction programme. As a result, the completion is likely to be delayed and it has been agreed with the Trust that the school should open in September 2021.

Highfields Farm

On 14 September 2017 (minute number 252/17), Cabinet approved a consultation on the opening of a new primary school at Highfields Farm to accommodate the pupils from a development of 1200 houses. On 11 January 2018 (minute number 11/18) Cabinet received a report on the outcome of that consultation. Cabinet approved the process of inviting expressions of interest from multi academy trusts to run the school under the 'free school presumption' process and interviews with various multi-academy trusts took place in May 2018. The Authority's assessment of the applications was forwarded to the Department for Education (DfE) and Spencer Academy Trust was also selected for this second school. Since then the Authority has been working with the Trust to develop the project with a view to opening the school in September 2020.

Under the terms of the Section106 agreement, the developer was required to provide £4,384,581 in capital funds for the primary school and those funds were reported to Cabinet on 11 July 2019. On 26 July 2018, Cabinet approved an additional £1,126,000 (minute number 190/18) to provide a total of £5,510,581 to build a one form entry school. The final contract price exceeded the available budget and therefore on 16 September 2019, a further £689,419 was approved by the Executive Director through an urgent paper making the final budget £6,200,000. The content of that paper will be reported to Cabinet separately in due course. The contract for the school was also awarded under the SCAPE framework approval for which was given by Cabinet as detailed above and construction started over the Autumn. In view of the short timescales for delivering the school, a modern form of construction (modular) was selected. Under this form of construction, the sections of building are constructed off site under factory conditions and then craned into position on site. This is the first time Derbyshire County Council has used this form of construction for a complete school but a similar school has recently been delivered for Derby City Council as well as other Authorities across the Country.

Funding Support

Under the 'free school presumption' process, the successful Multi Academy Trust is entitled to a project development fund for each school however where the same trust is opening two schools in the same year there are expected to be economies of scale and the second payment is reduced. The payments are in line with funding paid by the DfE for Free Schools delivered directly by the Department and are £212,750 for the first school and £150,000 for the second. The total for these two school would therefore be £362,750 payable from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Growth Fund Reserve.

Once the schools are open, the Authority also becomes responsible for providing growth funding whilst the schools' pupil rolls increase towards their full capacities. This post-opening support, which will be based on the rates set out in the DfE guidance, "A guide to new mainstream free school revenue funding 2019 to 2020, recognises that in the early years of operation the pupil numbers at the schools are insufficient to fund fully the schools' running costs. It is difficult to state precisely the level of post-opening support required as this will be driven in part by the profile of pupil admissions and the number of pupils at the schools. However, a figure of £0.350 million per school, spread over the 7 years after opening would be a reasonable estimate. This total is made up of two elements. The non-staffing resources element is based on the number of new children starting each year funded at £250 per pupil. The second element, known as the Leadership support, is a lump sum payment of between £13,500 and £80,500, the amount payable being determined by the number of year groups that do not yet have pupils. This funding will be met from the current and future years' Growth Fund allocations within the Schools Block and the allocations are a matter for the Schools Forum.

Finally, the schools will both be funded by the local authority's approved mainstream funding formula. However, due to timing issues, children starting in each September will not trigger DSG funding until the following April. Funding for each new year group for the period September to March will therefore also have to be met from the Growth Fund. The call on the Growth Fund will depend on the number of pupils and their characteristics e.g. levels of deprivation and prior attainment. However, it is estimated that an average of around £0.060 million per school per year will be required for the next 7 years.

Derbyshire's Growth Fund allocation for 2019-20 was £2.352 million and is available to support Key Stage 1 classes and significant in year increases in pupil numbers, including those arising from new schools to meet basic need requirements. The estimated level of financial support to the new schools set out above should therefore be affordable. However, if future years' Growth Fund allocations were to reduce the post-opening support and formula funding allocations might have to be met partially by a reduction in other schools' formula budgets.

3. Financial Considerations

The financial considerations are outlined in Section 2 of the report.

4. Social Value Considerations

This funding is to increase the capacity of the school and ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet the need generated by the new housing.

5. Legal Considerations

Local Authorities under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 have a duty to secure efficient primary and secondary education are available to meet the needs of the population in their areas.

6. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered:- prevention of crime & disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, human resources, property and transport considerations.

7. Key Decision Yes

8. Call-in

Is it necessary for the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed in the report? No

9. Background Papers

These are held on file in the Children's Services Development Section.

10. Officer Recommendation

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member:

10.1 Considers the progress on the new primary schools at Boulton Moor and Highfields Farm

10.2 Considers and approves the funding of the Project Development Fund amounting to £362,750 to be paid to Spencer Academy Trust

10.3 Consider and approves the payment of post-opening support in line with DfE guidance referred to in section 2.

Jane Parfremment
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