

**Report of the Governors of Manor CE Secondary School**

**Proposals for the Enlargement and Relocation of Manor Church of England Secondary School (VA)**

**Purpose of Report**

1. In seeking the approval of the SOC for the development of Manor CE Secondary School, the report informs the Committee about the reasons for the development and its three main purposes as follows:
  - Firstly, it is the Governors' wish to support the City of York Council's planned restructuring of education provision on the west side of the city. This has been driven by the Local Authority's need to remove surplus places where possible in order to achieve the Audit Commission's requirement of best value education consistent with raising standards.
  - Secondly, it is planned to replace the unsuitable and seriously undersized present school building, which is completely inaccessible for wheelchair users or others with mobility problems, with a new building to provide accessible education facilities for the children of York, appropriate to 21<sup>st</sup> century education standards.
  - Thirdly, Manor School has been consistently oversubscribed for many years, with up to 50 appeals in some years. It is hoped that the enlargement will allow those parents who wish to send their children to this popular and successful school to be able to achieve this wish, contributing to City of York Council's objective of meeting parental preference as far as reasonably possible.
2. The report informs the Committee of the outcome of the recent consultations, following the publication of statutory notices proposing the enlargement of Manor CE Secondary School from 630 places to 900 places and its relocation to a new building on a site off Millfield Lane (some 400 metres from the present location).
3. The report outlines the statutory procedures and possible timescales to be followed in securing the new site and building the new accommodation. It provides information concerning the funding grant from the Department for Education and Skills which has been achieved by the Diocese of York and the process of obtaining the grant over the period of planning and construction.

**Background**

4. After a number of years during which secondary school numbers have grown, the city now faces a period of contraction. In order to consolidate the provision of education for about 1800 children from the west side of York over the next decade, it has been necessary to undertake a major review of possible solutions. Consultations and discussions between the Local Authority, the Diocese of York and the schools concerned, undertaken over the last 3/4 years,

have led to the proposals for a new secondary school for the combined pupil populations of Lowfield and Oaklands and an enlargement of Manor School which requires relocation on a new site.

5. Discussions between the Diocese of York and the Governors of Manor School have also taken place over a similar period about the unsuitable nature of the present school building. There has been considerable concern over the limitations it places on sports activities and community access in particular and its overall inaccessibility and failure to meet modern building standards. Built in the 1960s, originally for 350 children, piecemeal extensions and additions on a number of levels have been added to accommodate, with difficulty, its present population of 630 children.

### **Statutory and other Local Consultations**

6. Two Ward Committees in Poppleton and Acomb Wards have been held. The responses at the meetings were overwhelmingly supportive. The only concern consistently raised was that sufficient thought and planning should be given to the management of traffic and safe access to the new school. (In the light of that, the Committee will wish to be reassured that a traffic consultant, who will be obliged to work with the Local Authority Highways Division to achieve a satisfactory and safe outcome, is about to be appointed by the architects to the scheme. It is hoped that the new arrangement will improve the current, hazardous school access at the junction of Low Poppleton Lane and Boroughbridge Road,)
7. A meeting was held at the school for parents, prospective parents and local residents. A questionnaire was handed out to those present who were asked to return them to the school or the Diocese when completed. A summary of the overwhelmingly supportive response is attached as Annex 1. No objections were received.
8. Both local MPs, Hugh Bailey and Anne McIntosh, have been informed. Hugh Bailey has visited the school and has offered his strong support. During early discussions about the project, he was active in assisting the LA and the Diocese in their initial search for funds. Anne McIntosh is also supportive and will be visiting Manor School in the next few weeks.
9. Statutory Notices were published on March 23<sup>rd</sup> for the period of one month, in accordance with the requirements laid upon Governors of a Voluntary Aided school. Views and responses were directed, as legally required, to the Clerk of the SOC and no objections were received by the due date.

### **Pupil Numbers and Admissions Process**

10. Following the Local Authority's proposal to the Governors of Manor School that the school should be enlarged to accommodate approximately 250 more children, the Governors resolved to meet the need. The successful funding bid was therefore made to effect the provision of a school for 900 children.
11. Manor School is a maintained secondary school and integral to the provision of mainstream education in the City of York. As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school, it also has close links with the Diocese of York which appoints its

Foundation Governors. Voluntary Aided school governors have additional responsibilities as part of their duties. Among these is the requirement to be their own Admissions Authority. Practice varies nationally and locally regarding admission zones for VA schools according to local conditions and historical arrangements. However, a number of them agree a Priority Admission Zone (PAZ). This is agreed with the LA and also meets Local Authority and Government aims to satisfy parental preference and local diversity of provision as far as possible. As a VA school, Manor has agreed a PAZ on boundaries identified in Annex 2 and whilst maintaining an appropriate balance of foundation and community places, will establish policies to maximise the admission of children from its PAZ.

12. Within the legal framework of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the agreed planned admission number of 124, Manor currently sets the number of Foundation places at 74(60%) and the number of Community places at 50(40%). Governors also set out the criteria by which their Foundation places are allocated, related largely to regular parental Church attendance. Many of the Foundation places are allocated to children who are already resident within the school's Priority Admission Zone. For the school year September 2005 - July 2006, for example, places were allocated as follows:

Community	50 (40%)
Foundation within PAZ	46 (37%)
Foundation outside PAZ	28 (22.5%)

The Governors believe that the maintenance of their Foundation places plays a significant part in securing the ethos as a Church school. The Admissions Policy is consulted upon locally as statutorily required and is subject to annual review and revision. From 2009 Manor is proposing that the PAZ will account for 49% of its places as well as those from the PAZ that are successful in obtaining a foundation place.

### **Financial and Grant Aid arrangements**

13. VA grant funding arrangements are very complex and are largely dealt with by the Diocese and a dedicated section of the DfES at Darlington. In April 2005, the Diocese of York prepared and submitted a Targeted Capital Funding bid (TCF) to the Voluntary Aided Capital Funding team in the DfES. In October 2005, it was announced that the bid, amounting to a value of £17.5 million, was successful and that £13.8 million grant aid would be allocated to add to the required Governors' liability of £3.7 million. In the case of TCF, the normal statutory Governors' liability of 10% is added to by a further 10% match funding, making 20% in all for the Governors to source.
14. In order to meet their liability, the Governors need to generate £3.5 million from the proceeds of sale from the present site. The site is in the joint ownership of the Diocese and the Local Authority. The rules of the Targeted Capital Fund only allow Governors to meet their 10% of match funding through proceeds of sale, but not their statutory 10%. To achieve the project, it has been requested that the LA meets the Governors' statutory 10% from their share of the proceeds of sale, which is allowable under the rules. It is understood that this matter is shortly to be resolved.

## New School Design

15. With support from the Diocesan Education team throughout the project, the new school will be designed and project managed by a recommended architect with education experience and excellent reputation. The architect is also known and approved by the City of York Council through his work on the City's recent schools PFI scheme, more particularly through his design of the Hobmoor Children's Centre. As with all Voluntary Aided projects, the design and the management of the finances are overseen by the DfES own architects, Norfolk Property Services who must approve every aspect of the project before funding is released on an interim payment basis through the Diocese.
16. It is planned to produce a landmark building design for a sustainable school with excellent facilities for IT, science and technology, the humanities and sport. The hub of the school is planned to be its Learning Resources Centre and a state of the art Learning Support Unit for its special needs children. As a Performing Arts College, its drama and music facilities are planned to be an important aspect of the design, along with excellent social, dining and community facilities. It is hoped to provide good community access for a part of the city with limited facilities, especially through its sports and playing field provision, but also through its drama and music suite.
17. The Diocese has gained considerable experience of managing major school building programmes through its VA schools across the Diocese, including its own PFI scheme in Stockton on Tees in 2002/3.
18. A proposed timetable follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
February/ September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Architect, commence planning process for site acquisition and design of new school</li> </ul>
March/April 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of information document and statutory notices</li> <li>• Start of 4 week period for comments on the proposal.</li> <li>• Ward Committees and Information Event held at Manor School.</li> </ul>
June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to SOC</li> </ul>
September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission of Planning Application</li> <li>• Normal intake of 124 children</li> </ul>
May 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to planning, construction work begins on site</li> <li>• Recruitment starts for the admission of 150 Year 7 pupils for September 2007</li> </ul>
September 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admission of 150 Year 7 pupils</li> </ul>
September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admission of 150 Year 7 pupils</li> </ul>
January/ March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer to new school</li> </ul>
September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admission of 180 Year 7 pupils</li> </ul>

- This suggests that the new school could be established in January/March 2009 (depending upon timely completion of new school building) with a

graduated intake over the intervening period to absorb all necessary admissions. It is well understood that the planning process is complicated by the green field/green belt nature of the site and every effort is being expended to achieve a successful outcome. The Diocese, the Local Authority and the Governors of the school are working in close partnership to put as much support into the project as possible.

## **Conclusion**

19. The Governors of Manor School have been happy to work with the Local Authority and the Diocese of York in helping to resolve some of the school planning issues on the west side of the city. The school is popular and successful and wishes to offer its particular strengths and ethos to a wider range of children than has hitherto been possible because of the limitations of its site and its buildings. As with most small schools nationally, its budget is very limited and it recognises the need to update its facilities and environment to provide a truly modern and progressive education. This can only really be achieved through a replacement of the present building. The Governors are anxious to extend the ethos and opportunities provided by the school to as many of the children of York as the Authority requests of it in the number of places it can safely offer. Its Foundation places are there to retain its ethos and its distinctiveness as a Church school, particularly in view of an expansion of its numbers. They are not intended to be there as a covert means of selection.

## **Recommendations**

20. Following publication by the Governors of Manor School of Statutory notices on March 23rd<sup>th</sup> and in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 the Committee is asked to approve the following change to school organisation in the City of York:

**The enlargement of Manor CE Secondary School to a 900 place school, to be achieved by increasing its Admission number by 56 children to 180 in September 2009 from 124 in 2006.**

The Committee is also asked to note the following:

- The relocation of the school to the new site off Millfield Lane, subject to Planning Permission
- To note that no objections were received during the four week statutory “representation” period following publication of statutory notices
- To note the strong support of the parent body
- To note that no objections were received during the local consultation period following meetings and the wide circulation of an information leaflet produced by the school and the Diocese.