
Executive

25 July 2006

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services and the Director of Resources

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF MANOR SCHOOL

Summary

1. This reports sets out proposals from the Governing Body of Manor School to relocate the school and to increase its capacity. The report summarises the outcome of consultations with parents and the local community regarding these proposals. The report also sets out proposals for a land transfer between the Council and the Diocese, and an associated capital contribution to the scheme that will be needed in order to allow this proposal to proceed.
2. The report informs the Executive Committee about the reasons for proposal:
 - Firstly, the proposal supports the 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 ensure that limited resources are used effectively in supporting high quality provision.
 - 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 21st century education standards.
 - Thirdly, Manor School has been consistently oversubscribed for many years, with up to 50 appeals in some years. It is anticipated that the enlargement will allow those parents and carers 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.
3. 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).

4. The report outlines the statutory procedures and possible timescales to be followed in securing a new site and building the new accommodation. It provides information concerning the funding grant that has been awarded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

Background

5. 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.
6. 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

7. Two Ward Committees in Poppleton and Acomb Wards have been held. The responses at the meetings were supportive. One concern consistently raised was that sufficient thought and planning should be given to the management of traffic and safe access to the new school. A traffic consultant, who will work with the Local Authority Highways Division to achieve a satisfactory and safe outcome, has now been appointed by the architects to the scheme. It is expected that new arrangements will improve the current, hazardous school access at the junction of Low Poppleton Lane and Boroughbridge Road.

Minutes of the Ward Committees are included at Annex 1. These include a resolution from the Poppleton Ward Committee that "That residents accepted the broad principle of the school moving to the new site allowing the new school's development to move on to seek out the detail through the planning process."

8. A meeting was also held at the school for parents, prospective parents and local residents that attracted around 120 people. 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 responses received is attached as Annex 2. No objections were received.

9. Statutory Notices were published on March 23rd 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 Schools Organisation Committee and no objections were received by the due date.

ANALYSIS

Pupil Numbers and Admissions Process

10. Following the Local Authority's proposal (2003/04) 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 to the DfES in 2005 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 with the authority 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.

New School Design

13. 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 Hob Moor 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.
14. 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 social, dining and community facilities. The scheme will provide excellent 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.
15. The proposed timetable is as follows:

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

Corporate Priorities

16. The proposals support the following corporate priorities:
- increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
 - Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city;

Implications

Financial and Grant Aid arrangements

17. VA grant funding arrangements are largely dealt with by the Diocese and a dedicated section of the DfES at Darlington. In April 2005, the Diocese of York, with the support of the LEA, 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.
18. 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 allow Governors to meet their 10% of match funding through proceeds of sale, but not the statutory liability of 10%. In order to finance the project it is therefore proposed that the Local Authority contributes the Governors' statutory 10% from its share of the proceeds of sale, which is allowable under the rules.

Property

19. It is proposed that:-
1. there will be an agreement in principle with the Diocese that when the new school is built the land occupied by the footprint of the buildings will be transferred to the Diocese and the site of the footprint of the existing Manor school buildings will be transferred to CYC.
 2. the ownership of the land around the new school buildings will continue to be owned and held by CYC. However, please note that part of the proposed new site is currently owned by North Yorkshire County Council and so will need to be purchased from them. Please see paragraph 16 for further detail.
 3. responsibility for generating a capital receipt from the old Manor site will rest with CYC.
 4. CYC will guarantee a contribution of £3.5M to the Diocese to support the construction of the new school.

5. CYC will be responsible for generating capital receipts to support that contribution from the sale proceeds of the Manor and Lowfield school sites. Please note that there is already a commitment of £2M to support the development of the Oaklands School site from the same sale proceeds, giving a total requirement of £5.5m.

All of this is subject to planning permission being granted for the development of Millfield Lane, existing Manor and Lowfield sites. A collaborative Development Team approach (Property, LCCS, Planning, Highways, Archaeology, Housing representation) is being adopted to consider the development options that will best serve to generate and maximize capital receipts and at the same time protect appropriate levels of open space, playing fields and community need.

20. An area of land (approximately 3.5 hectares) at the north of the proposed new Manor site is currently owned by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC). This land had been declared surplus by NYCC at the time of Local Government Re-Organisation in 1996 and therefore the procedure to be adopted is that when the land is sold the sale proceeds are split with CYC receiving 22.3% of the capital receipt. CYC will need to purchase the land from NYCC and the cost of purchase (which will be 77.7% of the negotiated figure) will form part of the overall cost of the scheme. Including this area will enhance the sporting facilities available on the site.

Human Resources, Equalities, Legal, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology (IT) – Implications

21. There are currently no specific issues regarding these implications to report at this time. As the project develops specific issues will be considered and reported as required.

Risk Management

22. The key risks associated with the recommendation below concern the requirement for planning permission at the various sites and the need to secure the capital receipts needed to fund the council's contribution.
23. The Council and the Diocese has established a sound record in managing large scale TCF and PFI education capital projects in recent years however the deadlines for this project are challenging. Sufficient capacity and strong project management will be required in order to manage the project risks and ensure that this project, along with other major education schemes, is completed successfully.

Conclusion

24. This project timeline suggests that the new school will 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.

25. The Governors of Manor School are committed to working 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 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.

Recommendations

26. That the Executive:
1. Consider the outcome of the consultation regarding proposals to expand and relocate Manor School.
 2. Note that no objections were received during the four week statutory “representation” period following publication of statutory notices.
 3. Note that the statutory School Organisation Committee has supported the proposal to increase the size of Manor School to become a 900 place school, by increasing its Admission number by 56 children to 180 in September 2009 from 124 in 2006.
 4. Note that the Governing Body of Manor School intends to submit a planning application seeking permission to relocate the school to the new site off Millfield Lane.
 5. Approve the land transfer proposals set out in paragraph 19, subject to planning permission being secured for the new school.
 6. Approve and commit £3.5m to support the development of the new Manor school from capital receipts generated from the disposal of council assets at the existing Manor and Lowfield sites.

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All

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Background Papers:

Annex 1: Minutes of Ward Committee Meetings

Annex 2: Summary of responses to consultation