

Cabinet

6 November 2008

Development of Academies in County Durham - Academy Sponsors and Proposals for Secondary School Re-organisation Key Decision LLL/CYPS/08/08



Report of David Williams, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services

**[Cabinet Portfolio Member for Children's Services, Councillor Claire
Vasey]**

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Cabinet on the position regarding sponsors for proposed Academies in Durham following the report presented to Cabinet on 21 February 2008.
2. To recommend further consultation on preferred options on the pattern of schooling in Stanley, Consett and the Durham City area.
3. The report also considers the impact of such developments on the Building Schools for the Future Programme.

Background

4. At its meeting on 21 February 2008, Cabinet gave delegated authority to the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Children's Services, to negotiate with the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Schools), Lord Adonis and representatives from the DCSF on its recommendation that:
 - (a) an Academy Board be established with "DEEP" i.e. the Durham Excellence in Education Partnership. This is a consortium led by Durham University, together with Durham Association of Secondary Head Teachers and North East Chamber of Commerce, with Durham County Council as co-sponsors, for all three potential Academies; and
 - (b) further discussions with Newcastle College, New College Durham and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) are undertaken with a view to formalising partnership working.
5. The Corporate Director and Lead Cabinet Member met Lord Adonis and Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) representatives on 3 March 2008. The outcome was that Lord Adonis agreed, in principle, that DEEP could sponsor one or two academies in the County. He had

reservations about DEEP sponsoring all three, indicating that he wanted greater diversity. He felt that no single sponsor should run all 3 Academies. The involvement of the other partners in (b) above was discussed. Lord Adonis asked for a revised proposal which took account of his views. DEEP was also asked to provide more detail about the proposed governance arrangements for the Academies they might sponsor.

6. The County Council looked at ways of providing the diversity that Lord Adonis was hoping for. As New College, Durham had submitted a strong bid which specifically expressed a preference to sponsor an academy in Stanley and Durham City it seemed appropriate to consider more closely New College acting as a sponsor for one of these proposed academies.
7. This view was strengthened at the end of March 2008 when the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families issued a press release confirming that the University-led consortium would, subject to more detailed planning, sponsor two Academies, one in Durham City and one elsewhere in the County. Stanley School of Technology has a strong history of working in partnership with New College to enhance curriculum provision. Standards have risen significantly in recent years at Stanley and this partnership approach has contributed to achieving this position. This has led to the proposal for sponsorship outlined in the following paragraph.
8. On 11 June 2008 the Lead Councillor wrote to Lord Adonis with revised proposals. These followed a range of discussions with DEEP and others. She also recommended a process to take forward the plans involving substantial further consultations with the schools and communities affected. It was stressed in this letter that the revised proposals were subject to Cabinet approval. In short she suggested:
 - That the County Council undertake public consultations in Autumn 2008 on specific proposals to close some of the existing secondary schools in the Consett, Stanley and Durham City areas, to be replaced by three Academies.
 - That feasibility studies should be undertaken on a proposal that DEEP sponsor an Academy in Durham City and in Consett and that New College sponsor an Academy in Stanley.
 - That the governance arrangements and precise membership of the consortium proposed by DEEP would be revised to make these as clear and transparent as possible.
 - That the County Council should be a co-sponsor of all three Academies.
 - That the County Council's Cabinet would need to agree these revised sponsorship arrangements.
 - That the proposed sponsors would consult on the nature of the Academies alongside consultations that would need to be undertaken by the County Council on any proposed closure.
 - All the above would take place before the County Council considered publishing statutory notices for school closures.

9. The Lead Councillor received a brief written reply to the above on 21 July 2008 but this did not indicate whether the proposals were acceptable to the Minister.
10. It is important that existing schools, the communities they serve and potential sponsors do not face prolonged uncertainty about the future. Cabinet is, therefore, asked to agree to move forward on the basis of the proposals described in paragraph 8 above and inform the DCSF that we wish an Expression of Interest to be developed based on these.
11. Cabinet should note the above approach has not, as yet, been endorsed by ministers.

Proposals for Re-organisation of Secondary Schools in Stanley, Consett, Durham City Area

12. Initial consultation on proposals for re-organisation was carried out in Autumn 2007. The outcomes were reported to Cabinet in February. Copies of responses are in the Cabinet Room and Members' Resource Centre.
13. Generally, schools and the wider communities felt that they would be in a stronger position to form a view on the proposals if they knew who the sponsors were likely to be. Comments were received on each of the options for re-organisation in the three areas.
14. In the Stanley area there were more options and there was also more response to the initial options for school re-organisation presented. A number of factors such as, standards, surplus places, proposed size of new schools, condition of existing buildings are considered when proposing options for re-organisation. As the size of a school can have an impact on curriculum delivery it is important to look carefully at projected rolls for the three schools involved – Stanley, Greencroft and Tanfield.
15. Projected rolls (11-16) for January 2008, 2009 and January 2013 (the earliest an Academy could be built) and actual figures for September 2008 are as follows:

School	Projected Roll January 2008	Projected Roll January 2009	Actual Roll September 2008	Projected Roll January 2013
Stanley	740	693	711	613
Greencroft	623	610	596	560
Tanfield	633	624	619	555

To leave any of these schools on its own would provide one relatively small school in the area which could have an impact on the breadth of curriculum that the school could offer. A larger school will help facilitate the offer of a broader range of curriculum choices for students. The actual number of 11-16 pupils across the three schools projected in January 2013 is 1728. It is advisable to propose a capacity of 1800, 11-16 pupils which builds in flexibility

for unforeseen changes in circumstances that can affect pupil numbers. A school for 1800 pupils would have a planned admission number of 360 with twelve form classes on entry.

16. If Cabinet approve the sponsors outlined in paragraph 8, with the County Council as co-sponsors, officers would recommend that the Council and sponsors jointly hold public consultation on the following options:

CONSETT

"To replace Moorside Community Technology College and Consett Community Sports College with one 11-16 or one 11-19 Academy for 1,500 aged 11-16 pupils (plus post-16 provision as appropriate) *to be sponsored by the Durham University led consortium, DEEP and Durham County Council as co-sponsors.* "

STANLEY

"To replace Stanley School of Technology and Greencroft School and Tanfield School with one 11-16 or one 11-19 Academy for 1800 aged 11-16 pupils (plus post 16 provision as appropriate) *to be sponsored by New College Durham and Durham County Council as co-sponsors*".

DURHAM CITY AREA

"To close Durham Gillesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre and close Belmont School Community Arts College.

To provide one 11-16 or one 11-19 Academy for 1,200 aged 11-16 pupils (plus post-16 provision as appropriate) *sponsored by the University-led consortium DEEP and Durham County Council as co-sponsors*, to serve the communities of Gillesgate and Belmont.

To provide one 16-19 School Sixth Form Centre in Durham City for 1,100 pupils."

The consultations would need to consider in detail how post-16 provision would be made in each area. The minister's preference is for Academies to cater for the full 11-19 age range. The current post-16 provision in the County is made through a complex pattern of school sixth forms, the Durham Gillesgate Sixth Form Centre, FE colleges and work based training providers. Officers do not believe it would be viable for the new Academies to replicate the traditional school sixth form model and that almost all post-16 providers will have to work collaboratively to ensure a broad curriculum offering and high educational standards. Academies would, in particular, be in a position to contribute to the radical solutions necessary to ensure such collaboration, especially through their subject specialisms.

17. Provisional Timetable for Further Consultation

If Cabinet agree the recommendations in this report consultation would be organised as follows:

November 2008 - consultation with DCSF regarding process for submitting Durham's Expression of Interest.

November 2008 - meetings with LA Officers, Governors, Head Teachers of schools that may be affected by Academy proposals to discuss arrangements for public consultation on preferred options.

November 2008-January 2009 - public consultation - wide distribution of consultation document, parents meetings, 'Information Sharing' evenings for the wider community.

February 2009 - report to Cabinet on outcomes of consultations and further recommendations.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) - Diversity of Provision

18. The Local Authority (LA) is required to secure diversity in the provision of schools to increase opportunities for parental choice. In short, the Government wants to see different types of schools being provided across the Authority. Currently, there are 36 secondary schools in Durham, 4 of which are Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic schools. The remainder are community schools. When LAs are submitting proposals for BSF funding it is important that the vision for the future presents a different pattern of schooling than currently exists, both to reduce surplus places and to promote diversity.
19. All Durham secondary schools and special schools with secondary aged pupils are expected to benefit from BSF funding over the next 10 years. Initially, the schools were divided into four groups to enable phasing of projects to be spread across the 10 year timescale. Planning for the first group of schools in East Durham is well underway and consultation has begun on proposals for the second group in South West Durham. With some schools proposed as Academies, Durham Johnston School having been brought forward and Framwellgate Science Campus project now included in the second phase of BSF, it may be possible to obtain approval for all remaining schools to be considered for BSF funding as one final group. This way the full BSF programme could be completed earlier.
20. A full list of Durham secondary schools is attached as Appendix 2. Appendix 3 illustrates what the future diversity of provision across the secondary estate could look like if proposals are agreed and appropriate BSF funding is available.

21. Risk Assessment

Academies will support the Authority's statutory duty to promote diversity in educational provision and high standards of achievement. Under an agreement with the Minister they will also allow increased capital funding and at an earlier date than might otherwise be the case. These advantages would be lost if the programme is not developed further.

Recommendations

22. Cabinet is asked to agree on the following:

- officers to work with sponsors and the DCSF to develop the Academies programme *based on DEEP sponsoring the proposed Academies in Durham City and Consett and New College sponsoring the proposed Academy in Stanley*, with the County Council as co-sponsors for all three academies.
- officers to begin further consultation on the preferred options outlined in paragraph 16.
- officers to seek DCSF support in the development of a formal “Expression of Interest” for Academies in Durham.

23. Cabinet is asked to note the proposed pattern of secondary schooling in Appendix 3. It is stressed that in all cases any major changes to the existing pattern of organisation would be the subject of specific consultation and approval by Cabinet.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Local Government Review

Further consultation will be on-going during 2008/2009 which could have implications for Local Government Review.

Finance

Academies running costs will be funded from Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), however, there is likely to be an amount of approximately £1.2m removed from DCC Support Services budgets to acknowledge the fact academies would be responsible for a greater range of functions than community schools.

Staffing

None.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and Diversity will be addressed at all stages during the process, particularly meeting needs of individuals at consultation events.

Accommodation

It is anticipated that any Academy in Durham would be new build.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Sustainability

Building design will be in accordance with national guidelines for sustainability but also providing sustainable education provision.

Human Rights

All pupils have the right to be educated in accordance with the Human Rights Act. This should be taken into account when considering the development of Academies.

Localities and Rurality

This report does not ask for decisions on where Academies may be located.

Young People

Academies will have a direct impact on young people. Young people have an opportunity to express their views during consultation.

Consultation

Further consultation is expected to take place during Autumn Term 2008.

Health

None.

Building Schools For The Future (BSF) Secondary School Phases

Phase 1 – East Durham and Sedgefield

Dene Community School of Technology	6 Community
Easington Community Science College	1 Aided and Post-16 Byron College
Seaham School of Technology	1 Special
Sedgefield Community College	
Shotton Hall School	
Wellfield Community School – Specialist Maths and Computing College	
St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School (incorporating Byron College Post 16 Facility)	
Glendene School and Community Arts College (Special)	

Phase 2 – South West Durham and Newton Aycliffe

Tudhoe Grange School	8 Community
Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College	1 Aided
Spennymoor Comprehensive School	3 Special
Greenfield School Community and Arts College	1 PRU
Woodham Community Technology College	
Bishop Barrington School	
King James I Community Arts College	
Sunnydale School	
St John's Catholic School and Sixth Form Centre	
Windlestone (Special)	
The Meadows (Special)	
The Oaks School (Special)	
The Pupil Referral Unit	

Phase 3 – North Durham, Weardale and Teesdale

Consett Community Sports College	9 Community
Moorside Community Technology College	1 Aided
Stanley School of Technology	2 Special
Tanfield School, Specialist College of Science and Engineering	
Greencroft School	
St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College, Lanchester	
Parkside School	
Teesdale School	
Wolsingham School and Community College	
Staindrop School A Business and Enterprise College	
Villa Real School (Special)	
Hare Law School (Special)	

Phase 4 – Chester le Street and Durham City

Belmont School Community Arts College	
Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre	
Durham Community Business College for Technology and) Enterprise serving the Deerness Valley)	Federation
Fyndoune Community College)	
Durham Johnston School	
Framwellgate School Durham	1 Trust
Hermitage School (Trust School)	8 Community
Park View Community School	1 Aided
St Leonard's RCVA Comprehensive School	2 Special
Roseberry Sports and Community College	
Durham Trinity School (Special)	
Elemore Hall School (Special)	

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

Proposed Pattern of Secondary Education in Durham from 2012

EAST DURHAM AND SEDGEFIELD

Dene Community School of Technology	-	Remodelled 11-16 School
Easington Community Science College	-	Remodelled 11-16 School
Seaham School of Technology	-	New Build 11-16 School
Sedgefield Community College	-	New Build 11-16 School
Shotton Hall School	-	New Build 11-16 School
Wellfield Community School - Specialist Maths and Computing College	-	Refurbished 11-16 School
St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School (incorporating Byron College Post-16 Facility)	-	Remodelled 11-16 Voluntary Aided RC School with Post-16 College
Glendene School and Community Arts College	-	Refurbished Special School

All schools above are expected to benefit from funding in the first wave of Durham's BSF Programme.

SOUTH WEST DURHAM AND NEWTON AYCLIFFE

Tudhoe Grange School/Spennymoor Comprehensive School	-	New 11-19 School open through competition
Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College	-	Remodelled 11-16 School
*Greenfield School Community and Arts College	-	Remodelled 11-16 School
*Woodham Community Technology College	-	Remodelled 11-19 School
*Sunnydale School	-	Remodelled 11-16 School
Bishop Barrington School/King James I Community Arts College	-	New 11-19 School open through competition
St John's Catholic Schools and Sixth Form Centre	-	11-19 Voluntary Aided RC School
Windlestone School	-	Special School
The Meadows	-	Special School possibly co-located on mainstream school site
The Oaks School	-	Special School
Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)	-	Possible remodelled existing PRU or new build depending on outcomes of strategic review of provision for disengaged secondary pupils

*These three schools intend to establish an educational trust.

Proposals for this group of schools are being developed and schools are expected to benefit from funding in the second wave of Durham's BSF Programme.

NORTH DURHAM, WEARDALE AND TEESDALE

Consett Community Sports College/ Moorside Community Technology College	-	New Build Academy
Stanley School of Technology/Greencroft School/Tanfield School, Specialist College of Science and Engineering	-	New Build Academy

St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College, Lanchester	-	11-19 Voluntary Aided RC School
Parkside School	-	11-16 School
Teesdale School	-	11-19 School
Wolsingham School and Community College	-	11-19 School
Staindrop School - a Business and Enterprise College	-	11-16 School
Villa Real School	-	Special School
Hare Law School	-	Special School

Proposals for schools listed above have not been considered yet within the BSF programme apart from those proposed as Academies.

CHESTER-LE-STREET AND DURHAM CITY

Belmont School Community Arts College/ Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre	-	New Build Academy + School Sixth Form Centre
*Durham Community Business College	-	11-16 School
*Fyndoune Community College	-	11-16 School
Durham Johnston School	-	11-19 School
Framwellgate School Durham	-	11-19 School (Proposal to develop into a 0-19 Science campus incorporating Framwellgate Moor Primary and Durham Trinity Special School)
Hermitage School	-	11-19 Trust School with Foundation Status
Park View Community School	-	11-19 School
St Leonard's Comprehensive School	-	11-19 Voluntary Aided RC School
Roseberry Sports and Community College	-	11-16 School
Elemore Hall School	-	Special School

* These schools are already running as a Hard Federation.

Proposals for schools listed above have not been considered yet within the BSF programme apart from those proposed as Academies and Framwellgate Science Campus proposal.