

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families - Monday, 4 November 2013

Statement of Decision

Present:

Councillor Melinda Tilley, Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families

Officers: B. Chillman and D. Cameron (Children, Education & Families);
D. Miller (Law & Culture).

Also in attendance:

Other Members: Councillor Zoe Patrick, Local Councillor for Wantage & Grove.

Mr Simon Spiers, Executive Headteacher, King Alfred's Academy;
Mr Anthony Harker, Grove & Wantage Parish Council.

Strategy for Expanding Primary and Secondary School Provision in the Grove and Wantage Area

Documentation considered:

Report Strategy for Expanding Primary and Secondary School Provision in the Grove and Wantage Area

A copy is attached to the signed copy of this decision.

Summary of representations in person

Councillor Patrick, speaking as local member, welcomed the decision to build a Secondary School for Grove, particularly in light of the dangerous route children have to take currently to Wantage secondary provision and the wealth of community support for the project.

Mr Spiers spoke on behalf of the vale Academy Trust who supported and accepted the need for Secondary provision in the area. However, the trust remained concerned over the timing of the new provision as it would not be ready for the pupils coming up in 2016; therefore making King Alfred's over subscribed. The trust believed that they could cope with the additional children subject to the correct capital investment and strategic planning be put in place. He urged the Cabinet member to ensure that sufficient time was allowed for King Alfred's to work with officers over the coming years to form a Strategic Plan.

Mr Harker spoke on behalf of Grove Parish Council who acknowledged that there were two views in the local community, with a large number welcoming an extension of King Alfred's whilst a large number wanting to be seen as a separate community. He urged the Cabinet member to keep the parish Council involved in the process and in particular any decisions on interim arrangements. He informed the Cabinet Member that the Parish Council had set up a working group to look at the issue.

Cabinet Member’s Comments

I welcome the representations from everyone here today. It is clear from discussions that communications need to be in place to ensure that all sectors have an input into the future of school provision.

In response to the representation from Mr Spiers, Councillor Tilley gave an assurance that offices would contact the Academy to work up a timeline.

Decision

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before me, the representations made to me and the further considerations set out above, I confirm my decisions on this matter as follows:

to note the outcomes of the consultation into new schools for Grove & Wantage and approve the strategies set out in paragraphs 25 and 26 for expansion of school capacity in Grove and Wantage.

Signed
Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families

Date2013