



***Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children,
Education & Families***

***Monday, 10 February 2014 at 12.00 pm
County Hall, Oxford***

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 18 February 2014 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter G. Clark." The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Peter G. Clark
County Solicitor

January 2014

Contact Officer: **Deborah Miller**
Tel: (01865) 815384; EMail:deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 10 March 2014

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. Petitions and Public Address

4. Specification for Future New Primary School at Barton West

(Pages 1 - 16)

Forward Plan Ref: 2013/159

Contact: Diane Cameron, School Organisation Officer Tel: (01865) 816445

Report by Director for Children's Services (**CMCEF4**).

This report follows a public consultation run from 6 November 2013 - 18 December 2013 to gauge local opinion on the type of new school required for Barton West (Barton Park) housing development in Oxford.

Following the consultation, the results of which are summarised and discussed in this report, an educational specification for the new school has been written and is attached at Annex 1 for approval by Cabinet Member.

This complies with the agreed policy procedure for selecting a recommended sponsor for a new school in Oxfordshire.

The Cabinet is asked to note the outcomes of the consultation into a new school for Barton West (Barton Park) and RECOMMENDED to approve the specification as the basis for seeking academy providers for the school.

5. Report on Consultation into New Schools in Bicester (Pages 17 - 32)

Forward Plan Ref: 2013/168

Contact: Diane Cameron, School Organisation Officer Tel: (01865) 816445

Report by Director for Children's Services (**CMDCEF5**).

This report follows a public consultation run from 18 November 2013 - 17 January 2014 to gauge local opinion on the strategy for education across Bicester and the type of new school required for the North West Bicester (Eco-Town) housing development.

Following the consultation, the results of which are summarised and discussed in this report, an educational specification for the first new primary school has been written and is attached at Annex 1 for approval by Cabinet Member.

This complies with the agreed policy procedure for selecting a recommended sponsor for a new school in Oxfordshire.

A further report will go before Cabinet Member in the near future, setting out a proposed school capacity strategy for the Bicester area.

The Cabinet is asked to note the outcomes of the consultation on a school capacity strategy for Bicester and into a new school for North West Bicester (Eco-Town) and RECOMMENDED to approve the specification as the basis for seeking academy providers for the school.

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Division(s): Barton Sandhills & Risinghurst, Headington & Quarry,
Churchill & Lye Valley, Marston & Northway

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES - 10 FEBRUARY 2014

NEW SCHOOL FOR BARTON WEST (BARTON PARK): REPORT ON CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL FOR SPECIFICATION

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. Outline planning permission has been granted by Oxford City Council for up to 885 new homes in the area to the north east of Oxford city between Barton and Northway. As part of the supporting infrastructure, a new primary school will be opened to serve the community.
2. The legal agreement accompanying the planning permission would require the new school buildings to be built by the time the development is expected to have generated 90 children of primary school age. However, it is intended to open the school sooner, to provide places for the children moving into the development early on. This will be achieved by opening the school in temporary accommodation on the site of Bayard's Hill Primary School, in Barton. The children on the new school's roll would then transfer to the new school building when it is ready. The exact dates will depend on the progress of the housing development but we are currently anticipating that the school would open initially in its temporary home in September 2015, and then move to its new buildings once completed, currently due to be 2016.
3. A site for the new school has been agreed with the developers, who will also be funding the construction costs in line with their expected pupil generation. In addition, Oxfordshire County Council is also working with existing secondary schools in Oxford to investigate ways of creating additional secondary pupil places as they become necessary. Funding for this has also been secured from the developers.
4. The primary school is expected to eventually grow to 2 form entry, which means it will eventually admit up to 60 children into its Reception class each year in two classes of 30. (As the local population grows; it is likely that the school would admit fewer children than this to start with.) When the school is full, it will accommodate up to 420 children from Reception to Year 6.

Background

5. Oxfordshire County Council will not run the new school. The 2011 Education Act says that all new schools are expected to be academies. This law means that they are not run by the county council except in exceptional circumstances. Instead, academies are run by independent academy trusts.

These trusts can be set up by lots of different organisations, including educational specialists, employers, existing local schools, charities, religious groups and community groups.

6. Oxfordshire County Council's role is to plan for and secure sufficient school places and to find a potential sponsor for the new school. The government has set out a bidding and selection process by which new school providers are chosen. The first part of the process is to write an educational specification for the new school in order to invite bids from potential academy trusts wanting to run the new it. The county council has completed a public consultation and has used responses received to it to inform the writing of the school's specification.
7. The Cabinet meeting of 4 September 2012 approved a new process for the identification of sponsors for new academies to meet the needs of population growth such as this:
 - i. Undertake a public consultation to identify the academy model to be implemented.
 - ii. Invite initial expressions of interest in running the school through DfE website set up for this purpose.
 - iii. Assess expressions of interest and then invite detailed bids from three or fewer providers to show clear plans of how they will contribute to the raising of education standards, add diversity of choice and which best fits the local requirements and meets the needs of those within groups offered specific protection under s149 Equality Act 2010.
 - iv. Assess bids against criteria and rank in order of preference. Agree a preferred option to be approved by Lead Member for Education or Cabinet as appropriate.
 - v. Submit report to Secretary of State for decision.
 - vi. Proposal developed with provider approved by Secretary of State through sharing vision of community, county and sponsor.
8. The public consultation to inform the development of a specification for the new school at Barton West (now named Barton Park), has now taken place. On the basis of this a draft specification for the new school has been developed. The purpose of this Report is to provide information on the outcomes of the consultation, and seek Cabinet Member approval to move onto the next stage of the academy process, inviting interested parties to submit outline expressions of interest to run one or more of the new schools, based on the proposed specification at Annex 1.
9. The expected pupil generation of new housing in Barton West (Barton Park) has been modeled using the council's PopCal tool, based on current knowledge about the timing of house building and the types and sizes of housing. The timing of houses could vary depending on housing market conditions.

Consultation

10. The public consultation to inform the development of a specification for the new school was conducted by the School Organisation & Planning team 6 November – 18 December 2013:

- To gather local community views to help shape the specification of the school and choice of sponsor.
 - To invite organisations and individuals with specialist knowledge to provide evidence on local need.
 - To act as pre-notification to potential sponsors of the future bidding rounds.
11. The consultation was publicised through the county council website and local media as well as through posters and leaflets distributed by schools, libraries and local networks such as the local churches and community centres. Two “drop-in” sessions were held in Barton to allow interested parties to talk to officers about the proposals. Briefing sessions were also held for local Members and for both Cherwell and Headington schools’ partnerships.
12. We received 45 responses to the consultation. 35% of these were from parents of children currently at primary school; 20% from parents of children currently at secondary school; 8% from parents of children not yet at school. (NB some respondents counted in more than one of these categories.)
13. There was a strong theme expressed by respondents on what type of academy trust they wanted to run the new school. (33 respondents) expressed a preference for a school with a broadly Christian or Church of England ethos, open to people of all faiths and none. Of these, 14 respondents were parents and others were local church members, a youth worker in Barton and the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education. Reasons given for this preference included:
- No nearby church schools. The nearest being St Andrews CE Primary in Headington, which is consistently over-subscribed.
 - Desire for the school to have a strong moral ethos.
 - Desire for the school to care for the “whole child” to support them whatever their ability and as part of their community.
 - Perception that church schools are popular with parents.
 - Perception that church schools have good local links in the community.
14. Although a high percentage of returns expressed a preference for a Christian ethos, this represents a small number of parents, and there were also responses that disagreed with the school being of a faith-based nature. The consultation is therefore not conclusive on this aspect.
15. Another strongly expressed theme to emerge from the responses was that local people want the school to establish innovative, creative and strong links with the local community and become a hub for all to use. There was a strong feeling that the new school must work with existing groups in Barton (18 respondents) and that it should have an inclusive ethos in terms of opening itself to the community in everything it does (17 respondents). Concern was expressed that if this were not the case, the new school would be isolated and cause division between “old” and “new” Barton.

Proposed specification for the new school at Barton West (Barton Park)

16. On the basis of the data available and the consultation responses, the draft specification seeks a provider for the new primary school at Barton West (Barton Park).
17. It is not proposed that the specification imposes restrictions on the nature of provider – e.g. faith organisations, or existing providers – given that the local consultation was inconclusive on these issues.
18. The specification requires 8 places reserved for specialist resourced provision, primarily for children with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
19. The school will be located on the site previously identified within the Barton West (Barton Park) master plan.

Next steps

20. Cabinet Member is requested to approve the draft specification attached as Annex 1 as the basis for stage (ii) of the academy provider process outlined in paragraph 7 above, the invitation of expressions of interest from potential providers. Such expressions of interest would be sought during spring 2014, and short-listed by officers, with short-listed applicants invited to submit a detailed proposal by the summer.
21. A further report would be submitted to Cabinet in July 2014 to seek a decision on which provider(s) the county council wishes to recommend to the DfE for approval.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

22. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.
23. The draft specification seeks to increase equality of access to education for children with disabilities by including the provision of additional SEN provision. It provides opportunities to increase equality of access to faith education, but potential faith providers will be assessed on the same criteria as non-faith providers.

Risks and mitigation

24. There is a degree of uncertainty about the precise timescale of the school's growth, as it will be influenced by factors outside the county council's control, including the housing market. To mitigate against this risk, providers will be sought who are able to be flexible in how quickly the new school will grow. Providers will be specifically asked in the application process how they will manage these uncertainties. Until a funding agreement is signed with each provider, the county council will be able to renegotiate details of timing should conditions change.
25. If the specification proves unattractive to potential sponsors, we may not be able to identify sufficient providers interested in running the school. In cases where an academy provider cannot be identified, the DfE expects to be able to assist.

Financial and Staff Implications

26. The direct financial implication of this report is the cost of the process of seeking expressions of interest, which is planned for and met within the normal CE&F budget provision. There are no significant financial implications or risks at this stage.
27. Additional revenue funding for specialist SEN resourced provision is referred to under "Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs". This funding will come from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block, and will be factored into allocation decisions for this budget.
28. Local authorities are required to make provision in their growth funds to support new schools prior to opening, to cover set-up costs, as well as during the period until the school reaches full capacity, as during this period they are not able to benefit from economies of scale. These costs will need to come from the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, and Schools Forum will be asked to approve the allocation mechanism for such funding during 2014-15.

RECOMMENDATION

29. **The Cabinet is asked to note the outcomes of the consultation into a new school for Barton West (Barton Park) and RECOMMENDED to approve the specification as the basis for seeking academy providers for the school.**

JIM LEIVERS

Director for Children's Services

Contact Officer: Barbara Chillman, Pupil Place Planning Manager
01865 816459

Background Papers:

January 2014

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES -10
FEBRUARY 2014**

**NEW SCHOOL FOR BARTON WEST (BARTON PARK): REPORT ON
CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL FOR SPECIFICATION**

**Oxfordshire County Council
New school for Barton
School specification document for potential sponsors of a
primary school in Barton, Oxford**

1. Background

- Why a new school is needed in Barton
- Existing educational provision in this area
- Consultation

2. Details of the new school

- Type of school
- Location
- Timescale
- Size and growth of school
- Design of school and capital funding

3. Service requirements

- Delivering excellence in education
- Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs
- Working in partnership
- Building stronger communities

4. How to apply

1. Background

Why a new school is needed in Barton

Outline planning permission has been granted by Oxford City Council for up to 885 new homes in the area to the north east of Oxford city between Barton and Northway. As part of the supporting infrastructure, a new 1.5 form entry primary school will be opened to serve the community.

Oxford city has experienced rapid growth in primary school numbers in recent years, and the new school forms part of the expansion strategy for school capacity in the city. As such, a site sufficient to allow the school to grow to 2 forms of entry has been secured, if required to provide sufficient capacity not only for the Barton Park development but also for other local population growth.

Existing educational provision in this area

The Barton area is a suburb of Oxford, lying just outside the ring road. There is one 2 form entry primary school in the existing Barton development, and another primary school in neighbouring Sandhills. Further primary schools are nearby within the ring road. The nearest secondary school is Cheney School, an 11-19 academy. There are four other secondary schools within Oxford, and some Oxford pupils also attend secondary schools in the neighbouring communities of Cumnor, Wheatley and Kidlington.

Further detail on the town's schools is available in the Oxfordshire Pupil Place Plan, available from the OCC website.

Consultation

Local consultation was undertaken by the county council from 6 November to 18 December 2013:

- To gather local community views to help shape the specification of schools and choice of sponsor.
- To invite organisations and individuals with specialist knowledge to provide evidence on local need.
- To act as pre-notification to potential sponsors of the future bidding rounds.

The consultation resulted in 45 responses.

On the basis of this consultation, the following are features which would be sought for the new school:

- A strong focus on educational excellence.
- Care and support for the whole child, and for all children.
- A strong moral ethos.
- Open to families of all faiths and of none.
- Innovative and strong links with the local community, acting to build links between the "old" and "new" Barton communities.
- A hub for all the community to use.

The consultation results have informed this specification, which was approved by the Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families on 10 February 2014.

2. Details of the new school covered by this specification

Type of school

This school will be:

- A 1.5 form entry school in the first instance, with potential to grow to 2 form entry if required by local population growth.
- Age range: 3-11.
- Admission number: 45
- Total places provided for Reception to Year 6: 315 places.
- Nursery places provided: 26 full-time equivalent places.
- Inclusive of 8 places reserved for specialist resourced provision (refer to section below on 'Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs').

Location

A site has been secured for the school towards the eastern end of the new development.

The school's site is designed for joint use. During the school day the school will have use of a multi-use games area and an all-weather pitch; outside school hours this section of the school site will only be available for community use.

The grass pitch within the school site will be made available to the community outside school hours.

Master plan of the Barton Park Development:



Indicative site plan for the primary school (school site edged in red):



Timescale

Work is already underway on designing the new school. The new school's buildings are currently due for completion in 2016. However, in order to support the

development of the new community, it is proposed that the school should open in September 2015, making use of temporary accommodation on a neighbouring school site, Bayard's Hill, and entering into a collaborative arrangement with the incumbent school regarding use of playing fields, catering etc.

Size and growth of schools

The school will need to be flexible in how it organises classes to respond to the growth in local school-age population, including children who move to the development after the normal age of starting school.

Proposers will be expected to demonstrate how they will ensure the needs of new residents of the new development are met without promoting or encouraging a large scale relocation of existing pupils from other schools.

A possible timescale for the school's operational growth would be:

- September 2015: A Reception/Key Stage 1 class and a Key Stage 2 class.
Total approximately 30 children Reception – Year 6
- September 2016: A Reception/Nursery class, a Key Stage 1 class and a Key Stage 2 class.
Total approximately 60 children Reception – Year 6 plus nursery.
- September 2018: A Reception/Nursery class, two Key Stage 1 classes and two Key Stage 2 classes.
Total approximately 120 children Reception – Year 6 plus nursery.
- September 2020: 1 form entry size throughout.
Total approximately 210 children Reception – Year 6 plus nursery.
- September 2021: Increase to 1.5 form entry from Reception.

However, if there is further population growth in the area, the school may grow more quickly, and may in due course expand to 2 forms of entry.

While pupil numbers are growing, the school will have surplus accommodation, and it is hoped that the academy provider will work constructively with the county and city council, and other groups, to identify ways in which this can be used to support the local community.

Design of school and capital funding

Under Section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act, 1990, the county council has negotiated a site and capital funding for the school.

The primary school site is 2.2ha (combined school and accessible community land). The site is expected to be made available to the academy on a 125 year lease, with the usual terms pursuant to the 2010 Academies Act.

In order to meet the opening dates the design and build process for the primary school is already underway. The selected academy provider will not, therefore, have the opportunity for any involvement in the early stages of the design of the school building.

The new building will be designed in accordance with the county council's approved space standards including provision of extended school facilities for community use outside school hours (as set out in the Cabinet report of September 2013, available from www.oxfordshire.gov.uk).

3. Service requirements

Our vision is for Oxfordshire to be a dynamic and forward looking place for education and learning, providing the best quality experiences for children and young people to grow up, learn, develop and achieve.

An academy sponsor is sought who is committed to providing a high quality educational experience, focusing on the environment as inspiration and context for the whole curriculum, and also to ensure the school plays a key role in building a strong and sustainable community.

Delivering excellence in education

Every child and young person in Oxfordshire should be able to attend a good or outstanding school or setting, access the best teaching, achieve well and as they become an adult, have opportunities for an independent economic and social life. Through providing the best start in life, whatever their background, children should be able to thrive at school. Education and skills provision also needs to be shaped around the needs of the Oxfordshire economy, alongside ensuring that good quality services are available for the vulnerable.

Sponsors will be expected to:

- Provide a sustainably good or outstanding school with an exciting and inspiring broad and balanced curriculum.

- Rigorously focus on educational standards to ensure that every child achieves their potential, and goals and national expectations are met or exceeded.
- Ensure an inclusive learning environment in which all pupils, including those with special or additional educational needs and those with disabilities, are supported and enabled to make appropriate progress.
- Develop a strong moral and caring ethos, ensuring care and support for the whole child.
- Seek out and share best practice within and beyond the school, promoting innovation and creativity in learning and teaching.
- Implement rigorous processes of self-evaluation and continual improvement, including recognising the importance of Pupil Voice in these processes.
- Secure outstanding and dynamic leadership, management and governance.
- Attract, retain and develop the highest quality teachers and support staff to ensure good or better teaching and learning, and effective and motivated workforces.
- Provide evidence of robust and effective financial management.

Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs

The needs of vulnerable children and young people should be met locally wherever possible. The new school should promote inclusive opportunities for the most vulnerable children and have a strong focus on equalities, early intervention, and supporting the needs of the local community.

Resourced provision is part of the continuum of support available to children with special educational needs in local areas. The reserved places for specialist resourced provision will primarily be for children with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. In accordance with funding arrangements for high needs children, the school will receive an allocation, currently set at £10,000 per place.

Sponsors will be expected to:

- Provide specialist support to address each learner's specific needs and to improve their progress.
- Provide a learning environment for learners to benefit from specialist small group teaching and interventions as part of a personalised learning programme.
- Develop a lead practitioner role in inclusive practice to promote positive behaviours, in collaboration with other local schools.

Working in partnership

A key component of selection will be the proposers' willingness to work in collaboration with other providers and local partners to develop services which meet the needs of local children, young people and families in a coordinated way.

Sponsors will be expected to:

- Ensure the school is outward facing, playing a key role within its immediate community and the wider local economy, particularly through active facilitation of community use of the school facilities outside school hours.
- Engage parents/carers in supporting and encouraging their children's learning.
- Work in partnership with the county council and other educational providers to contribute towards meeting a collective responsibility to secure the best for all Oxfordshire's learners, including participating in school-to-school support, and cooperating with Fair Access protocols.
- Develop strategic alliances, partnerships and networks to better meet the needs of children and families in Oxford.
- Support the strategic responsibilities of the county council to ensure sufficiency of high quality school places and improved educational outcomes through agreed sharing of data and information.

Building stronger communities

Under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006, the county council has a duty to secure sufficient childcare for working parents; the involvement of the schools in meeting the childcare needs of the local community would be welcomed. The county council would also welcome the involvement of the schools in providing community access to appropriate facilities.

Sponsors will be expected to:

- Support the county council in delivering effective early intervention services, ensuring school readiness and supporting our most vulnerable learners and families.
- Work in partnership with wider services such as social care services, health and police to keep children safe, support families and build stronger communities.
- Provide children and young people with the skills they will need to play an active part in their local community and economy.
- Play a key role in the development of the Barton community, strengthening links between the older and newer parts of the community, for example through opening up facilities to the community, and participating in community activities.

4. How to apply

The County Council must receive outline Expressions of Interest by 31 March 2014 and requires one hard copy and one electronic copy of all documentation.

In the first instance, Expressions of Interest should be submitted using the Oxfordshire County Council New School Expressions of Interest Form. The Application Form and this Specification Document are available to download from www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/newschoolproposals

Further information is available from, and Expressions of Interest should be sent to:
Barbara Chillman, Service Manager – Pupil Place Planning
Children, Education & Families
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
Oxford OX1 1ND
Tel: 01865 816459
barbara.chillman@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Expressions of Interest will be assessed against their ability to meet the following broad criteria:

- the quality of the places being added into the system, based on the proposer's vision and educational plan;
- the capability and capacity of the proposer to deliver their proposal to time and on budget, based on their expertise and experience.

The County Council will short-list proposers on the basis of the Expressions of Interest received, and by 2 May 2014 will invite the short-listed proposers to submit a more detailed application by 13 June 2014.

The short-listed proposers will also be invited to deliver a presentation of their proposals, with a provisional date of 20 June 2014.

The County Council Cabinet will be asked to identify the preferred proposers at their July meeting, so that recommendations can be submitted to the DfE for final approval. It is hoped the decision would be available from the DfE by October 2014.

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Division(s): All

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES - 10 FEBRUARY 2014

NEW SCHOOLS FOR BICESTER: REPORT ON CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL FOR SPECIFICATION OF FIRST NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. Cherwell District Council is developing a new Local Plan to guide development of the district up to 2031, and significant housing growth is planned for Bicester. This plan includes proposals for:
 - North West Bicester (Eco-Town) – at least 5000 homes in total, 1793 of these by 2031, with new primary schools and a secondary school
 - Graven Hill – 1900 homes, with a new primary school
 - South West Bicester (Kingsmere) – 1631 homes already planned in Phase 1, with another 650 proposed for Phase 2, with new primary schools and a secondary school
 - South East Bicester – approximately 400 homesThere will also be other developments, including in surrounding villages.
2. The timescales of housing development on this scale are always subject to change, so it is important that the strategy for providing sufficient school places is flexible, and able to respond to emerging needs.
3. The first new school required is the first primary school on the North West Bicester (Eco-Town) exemplar site. It is expected that this school will open in 2016.
4. This report summarises the consultation, and seeks approval for the specification for the first Eco-Town primary school. The full strategy for providing sufficient school places in Bicester is not yet finalised, as it needs to be informed by the expected Department for Education decision on a Studio School application; depending on this decision, there may need to be some further consultation into the nature of secondary school provision. There will therefore be a further report in due course.

Background

5. Oxfordshire County Council will not run the new schools. The 2011 Education Act says that all new schools are expected to be academies. This law means that they are not run by the county council except in exceptional circumstances. Instead, academies are run by independent academy trusts. These trusts can be set up by lots of different organisations, including educational specialists, employers, existing local schools, charities, religious groups and community groups.

6. Oxfordshire County Council's role is to plan for and secure sufficient school places and to find a potential sponsor for the new schools. The government has set out a bidding and selection process by which new school providers are chosen. The first part of the process is to write an educational specification for the new schools in order to invite bids from potential academy trusts wanting to run it. The county council has completed a public consultation and has used responses received to it to inform the writing of the first new school's specification, which is the first primary school on the North West Bicester (Eco-Town) exemplar site.
7. The Cabinet meeting of 4 September 2012 approved a new process for the identification of sponsors for new academies to meet the needs of population growth such as this:
 - i. Undertake a public consultation to identify the academy model to be implemented.
 - ii. Invite initial expressions of interest in running the school through DfE website set up for this purpose.
 - iii. Assess expressions of interest and then invite detailed bids from three or fewer providers to show clear plans of how they will contribute to the raising of education standards, add diversity of choice and which best fits the local requirements and meets the needs of those within groups offered specific protection under s149 Equality Act 2010.
 - iv. Assess bids against criteria and rank in order of preference. Agree a preferred option to be approved by Lead Member for Education or Cabinet as appropriate.
 - v. Submit report to Secretary of State for decision.
 - vi. Proposal developed with provider approved by Secretary of State through sharing vision of community, county and sponsor.
8. The public consultation to inform the development of a specification for the first new school at North West Bicester (Eco-Town), and to hear views on school capacity strategy for the area generally, has now taken place. On the basis of this a draft specification for the first new school has been developed. Each new school will have a separate specification, which will be submitted for approval. The purpose of this Report is to provide information on the outcomes of the consultation, and seek Cabinet Member approval to move onto the next stage of the academy process, inviting interested parties to submit outline expressions of interest to run the first primary school for the Eco-Town, based on the proposed specification at Annex 1.
9. The expected pupil generation of new housing in North West Bicester (Eco-Town) has been modeled using the council's PopCal tool, based on current knowledge about the timing of house building and the types and sizes of housing. The timing of houses could vary depending on housing market conditions.

Consultation

10. The public consultation to inform the development of a specification for the first new school was conducted by the School Organisation & Planning team 18 November 2013 – 17 January 2014:
 - To gather local community views to help shape the specification of the school and choice of sponsor.

- To gather local views to help the future shape of a Bicester-wide educational strategy.
 - To act as pre-notification to potential sponsors of the future bidding rounds.
11. The consultation was publicised through the county council website and local media as well as through posters and leaflets distributed by schools, libraries and local networks such as Bicester Vision. Two “drop-in” sessions were held in Bicester to allow interested parties to talk to officers about the proposals. Briefing sessions were also held for local Members and for the Bicester schools’ partnership.
 12. 23 individuals and organisations responded to the consultation, including a detailed response from Cherwell District Council. Officers and members of Cherwell District Council were further consulted through two meetings to discuss the school needs of Bicester.
 13. The consultation will inform a strategy for ensuring sufficient school capacity across Bicester as the local population grows. This strategy will be influenced by the expected forthcoming Department for Education decision regarding a studio school application, and depending on what this decision is, there may need to be some further consultation on the nature of secondary school provision. There will, therefore, be a further report in due course on the full school capacity strategy.
 14. In order to secure an academy provider in good time to allow the first Eco-Town primary school to open in September 2015, approval is now sought for the educational specification for this school, which has been informed by this consultation.

Proposed specification for the new school at North West Bicester (Eco-Town)

15. On the basis of the data available and the consultation responses, the draft specification seeks a provider for the new primary school at North West Bicester (Eco-Town).
16. It is proposed that the school have a particular focus on sustainability and environmental education, both for its own pupils and also shared with the wider community.
17. It is not proposed that the specification imposes restrictions on the nature of provider – e.g. faith organisations, or existing providers – given that the local consultation was inconclusive on these issues.
18. The specification includes 8 places reserved for specialist resourced SEN provision, primarily for children with communication and interaction needs, physical or sensory needs.
19. The school will be located on the site previously identified within the North West Bicester (Eco-Town) exemplar site.

Next steps

20. Cabinet Member is requested to approve the draft specification attached as Annex 1 as the basis for stage (ii) of the academy provider process outlined in paragraph 3 above, the invitation of expressions of interest from potential providers. Such expressions of interest would be sought during spring 2014, and short-listed by officers, with short-listed applicants invited to submit a detailed proposal by the summer.
21. A further report would be submitted to Cabinet in July 2014 to seek a decision on which provider(s) the county council wishes to recommend to the DfE for approval.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

22. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.
23. The draft specification seeks to increase equality of access to education for children with disabilities by including the provision of additional SEN provision.

Risks and mitigation

24. There is a degree of uncertainty about the precise timescale of the school's growth as it will be influenced by factors outside the county council's control, including the housing market. To mitigate against this risk, providers will be sought who are able to be flexible in how quickly the new school will grow. Providers will be specifically asked in the application process how they will manage these uncertainties. Until a funding agreement is signed with each provider, the county council will be able to renegotiate details of timing should conditions change.
25. If the specification proves unattractive to potential sponsors, we may not be able to identify sufficient providers interested in running the school. In cases where an academy provider cannot be identified, the DfE expects to be able to assist.

Financial and Staff Implications

26. The direct financial implication of this report is the cost of the process of seeking expressions of interest, which is planned for and met within the normal CE&F budget provision. There are no significant financial implications or risks at this stage.

27. Additional revenue funding for specialist SEN resourced provision is referred to under "Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs". This funding will come from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block, and will be factored into allocation decisions for this budget.
28. Local authorities are required to make provision in their growth funds to support new schools prior to opening, to cover set-up costs, as well as during the period until the school reaches full capacity, as during this period they are not able to benefit from economies of scale. These costs will need to come from the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, and Schools Forum will be asked to approve the allocation mechanism for such funding during 2014-15.

RECOMMENDATION

29. **The Cabinet is asked to note the outcomes of the consultation on a school capacity strategy for Bicester and into a new school for North West Bicester (Eco-Town) and RECOMMENDED to approve the specification as the basis for seeking academy providers for the school.**

JIM LEIVERS

Director for Children's Services

Contact Officer: Barbara Chillman, Pupil Place Planning Manager
01865 816459

Annex 1 Draft specification for new school for North West Bicester (Eco-Town)

February 2014

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**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES -
10 FEBRUARY 2014
NEW SCHOOLS FOR BICESTER:
REPORT ON CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL FOR
SPECIFICATION OF FIRST NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Oxfordshire County Council
New schools for Bicester
School specification document for potential sponsors of a
primary school in Bicester's new eco-town**

1. Background

- About the North West Bicester eco-town
- Why new schools are needed in Bicester
- Existing educational provision in this area
- Consultation

2. Details of the new school

- Type of school
- Location
- Size and growth of school
- Design of school and capital funding

3. Service requirements

- Delivering excellence in education
- Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs
- Working in partnership
- Building stronger communities

4. How to apply

1. Background

About the North West Bicester eco-town

North West Bicester was identified as an eco-town by the Government in 2009 to demonstrate how new developments can be built to meet zero carbon standards. It is not only intended to kick-start a Bicester-wide transition to becoming a low carbon community but also to become a national exemplar.

The entire site will eventually be developed for up to 6000 homes and mixed use development, which could include up to 4 primary schools and one secondary

school. The first phase of 393 homes will include a primary school, shops, a business centre and an energy centre, and is currently under construction. A2Dominion is the lead developer of the site.

In addition to the new development providing the area with employment and housing, built utilising the latest sustainable technologies - great emphasis is also being placed on the social sustainability of the new place, with plans being established to ensure a vibrant and resilient community emerges, with environmental integrity at its core.

Another important characteristic of the development will be that a generous 40% of the site area will be given over to green space. The landscape design will aim to largely preserve and enhance existing landscape features and promote a rich mix of formal and informal spaces for recreation, biodiversity and food growing.

Further information on the unique sustainable features that underpin the Eco Town's development can be found from the developers' website: www.nwbicester.co.uk.

Why new schools are needed in Bicester

Bicester and its surrounding area is planned to grow by 9,000 homes over the next 20 to 25 years. The largest housing developments planned or being constructed are:

- Kingsmere in South West Bicester – 2,265 homes being built by 2022
- The North West Bicester eco-town – 5,607 homes in the draft Cherwell District Council Local Plan as well as the 393 homes permitted as part of the Phase 1 Exemplar project.
- Graven Hill – 1900 homes in the draft Cherwell District Council Local Plan
- Upper Heyford – 761 homes permitted.

There are also smaller developments proposed for South East Bicester and surrounding villages.

The number of extra children needing school places will depend on the size, type and timing of the houses, but we estimate that by 2024 there could be 1800 more primary aged children and 1400 more secondary aged children in the town.

This growing population will need new schools:

- SW Bicester – St Edburg's Primary School relocates and expands from 2014; a new school is included within the Phase 2 site, and current indications are that it could need to open by 2018, growing to 2 form entry.
- NW Bicester – based on current data, three (possibly four) primary schools will be required. The first school will be part of the exemplar site, and is the subject of this specification. The second school is currently expected to open no sooner than 2019, but this, and the timings of subsequent school(s) will depend on the progress of the housing development.
- Graven Hill will generate up to 2.5 form entry equivalent of pupils at its peak. The new school on this site is unlikely to open before 2017.
- The Upper Heyford development has already provided a free school, and no further school provision will be needed.

There will also be new secondary schools. SW Bicester includes a site for a 600 place school, and NW Bicester is expected to include a school of up to 1500 pupils.

Existing educational provision in this area

The Bicester area currently includes 16 primary schools (9 within the town and 7 in surrounding villages); two secondary schools; an all-through free school; and a special school.

School	Type (January 2014)	Admission number (2014)
Brookside Primary School	Community primary	45
Bure Park Primary School	Community primary	64
Charlton-on-Otmoor Primary School	Voluntary Controlled primary	15
Chesterton Primary School	Voluntary Aided primary	20
Finmere Primary School	Voluntary Controlled primary	7
Five Acres Primary School	Community primary	60
Fringford Primary School	Voluntary Controlled primary	15
Fritwell Primary School	Voluntary Controlled primary	30
Glory Farm Primary School	Community primary	60
Heyford Park Free School	All-through free school, opened 2013	60
King's Meadow School	Community primary	60
Langford Village Primary School	Community primary	60
Launton CE School	Voluntary Controlled primary	20
Longfields Primary School	Community primary	40
Southwold Primary School	Community primary	60
St Edburg's CE School	Voluntary Aided primary	60
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	Voluntary Aided primary	45
Bicester Community College	Community 11-18	240
The Cooper School	Converting to an 11-18 academy	220
Bardwell School	Special	n/a (52 on roll Oct 2013)

Further detail on the town's schools is available in the Oxfordshire Pupil Place Plan, available from the OCC website.

Proposed Studio School

At the same time as Oxfordshire County Council is planning for new schools in Bicester, a proposal has been submitted to the DfE to create a Studio School in Bicester, intended to open in 2015 (subject to Funding Agreement approval). This would provide 300 places for 14-19 year olds, and cover a 15 mile radius. It expects to draw approximately 50% of its intake from within 5 miles of Bicester, and therefore potentially offers approximately 150 additional places for the 14-19 age group to Bicester.

At the time of writing this specification, the Studio School application is awaiting approval by the DfE. Whether or not the Studio School is approved is not considered significant to this specification.

Consultation

Local consultation was undertaken by the county council from 18 November 2013 to 17 January 2014:

- To gather local community views to help shape the specification of schools and choice of sponsor.
- To invite organisations and individuals with specialist knowledge to provide evidence on local need.
- To act as pre-notification to potential sponsors of the future bidding rounds.

23 individuals and organisations responded to the consultation.

On the basis of this consultation, the following are features which would be sought for the new school:

- High educational standards.
- An exemplar of sustainability and environmental education.
- An outward facing ethos so that it is able to become an integral part of the new community.
- Collaborative working with other providers and local partners.

Full details of the consultation can be found online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/BicesterNewSchools

The consultation results have informed this specification, which was approved by the Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families on 10 February 2014.

2. Details of the new school covered by this specification

This specification is for the first new primary school on the eco-town development only. Future new schools will be the subject of separate specifications and approval processes.

Type of school

This school will be:

- A 2 form entry school, although it will take some years to reach full size.
- Age range: 3-11.
- Admission number: 60 once the school has grown to full size.
- Total places provided for Reception to Year 6: 420 places.
- Nursery places provided: 26 full-time equivalent places.
- Inclusive of 8 places reserved for specialist resourced provision, (refer to section below on 'Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs').

Location

The new school will serve the eco-town development to the north west of Bicester, lying within Cherwell District Council.

The school will form part of the first phase of this development, a 393 home exemplar project, which is underway and is due to be completed in 2018. The timescale of the remaining development is still to be confirmed: an outline planning application for the remaining 5600 home site is expected to be submitted to Cherwell District Council for consideration later this year

Work is already underway on designing the new school. The new school's buildings are currently due for completion early in 2016. However, in order to support the development of the new community, it is proposed that the school should open in September 2015, making use of temporarily spare accommodation on another school site and entering into a collaborative arrangement with the incumbent school regarding use of playing fields, catering etc.

Size and growth of schools

The build timescale for the housing in this development is still to be determined. The school will need to be flexible in how it organises classes to respond to the growth in local school-age population, including children who move to the development after the normal age of starting school.

Proposers will be expected to demonstrate how they will ensure the needs of new residents of the eco-town are met without promoting or encouraging a large scale relocation of existing pupils from other schools.

The build rate for the development is yet to be confirmed. Based on an assumption of 150 homes being completed per year, a possible timescale for the school's operational growth would be:

September 2015: A Reception/Nursery class, a Key Stage 1 class and a Key Stage 2 class.
Total approximately 45 children Reception-Year 6 plus nursery.

September 2016:	A Reception/Nursery class, a Key Stage 1 class and a Key Stage 2 class. Total approximately 75 children Reception-Year 6 plus nursery.
September 2017:	0.5 form entry size throughout. Total approximately 105 children Reception-Year 6 plus nursery.
September 2018:	Increase to 1 form entry from Reception.
September 2019:	1 form entry size throughout. Total approximately 210 children Reception-Year 6 plus nursery.
September 2020:	Increase to 1.5 form entry from Reception.
September 2023:	1.5 form entry size throughout. Total approximately 315 children Reception-Year 6 plus nursery.
September 2024:	Increase to 2 form entry from Reception.
September 2027:	2 form entry size throughout. Maximum total 420 children Reception-Year 6 plus nursery.

If the build rate is faster, the school would be expected to fill significantly more quickly. Proposers will therefore need to demonstrate the ability to respond flexibly to currently unknown and changing local circumstances.

While pupil numbers are growing, the school will have surplus accommodation, and it is expected that the academy provider will work constructively with the county and district council, and other groups, to identify ways in which this can be used to support the local community. This may include providing temporary accommodation for other new schools to allow them to open ahead of their permanent accommodation being available.

Design of school and capital funding

Under Section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act, 1990, the county council has negotiated a site and capital funding for the school.

The primary school site will be 2.2ha once it becomes 2FE; initially it will be a site of approximately 1.4ha. The site is expected to be made available to the academy on a 125 year lease, with the usual terms pursuant to the 2010 Academies Act.

In order to meet the opening dates the design and build process for the primary school is already underway. The selected academy provider will not, therefore, have the opportunity for any involvement in the design of the school building.

The new building will be designed in accordance with the county council's approved space standards, including provision of extended school facilities for community use outside school hours. (This is set out in the September 2013 Cabinet report, available from the OCC website.)

The building will be designed to a zero carbon standard whereby energy used for heating, hot water, lighting and power will be planned to be offset by exported renewable energy, which results in zero carbon emissions in any year. It is proposed that the primary energy source will be a community energy centre provided separately as part of the development.

3. Service requirements

Our vision is for Oxfordshire to be a dynamic and forward looking place for education and learning, providing the best quality experiences for children and young people to grow up, learn, develop and achieve.

The vision for the eco-town includes three strands of sustainability: social, economic and environmental.

An academy sponsor is sought who is committed to combining these two visions, to provide a high quality educational experience, focusing on the environment as inspiration and context for the whole curriculum, and also to ensure the school plays a key role in building a strong and sustainable community.

Delivering excellence in education

Every child and young person in Oxfordshire should be able to attend a good or outstanding school or setting, access the best teaching, achieve well and as they become an adult, have opportunities for an independent economic and social life. Through providing the best start in life, whatever their background, children should be able to thrive at school. Education and skills provision also needs to be shaped around the needs of the Oxfordshire economy, alongside ensuring that good quality services are available for the vulnerable.

Sponsors will be expected to:

- Provide a sustainably good or outstanding school with an exciting and inspiring broad and balanced curriculum.
- Demonstrate how sustainability and environmental education will be embedded into the school's curriculum and management.
- Rigorously focus on educational standards to ensure that every child achieves their potential, and goals and national expectations are met or exceeded.
- Ensure an inclusive learning environment in which all pupils, including those with special or additional educational needs and those with disabilities, are supported and enabled to make appropriate progress.
- Create, maintain and make full use of an inspirational and stimulating environment across the school, and draw upon the wider eco-town environment to support learning.
- Seek out and share best practice within and beyond the school, promoting innovation and creativity in learning and teaching, and ensure the school becomes an exemplar of environmental and sustainability education.
- Implement rigorous processes of self-evaluation and continual improvement, including recognising the importance of Pupil Voice in these processes.
- Secure outstanding and dynamic leadership, management and governance.
- Attract, retain and develop the highest quality teachers and support staff to ensure good or better teaching and learning, and effective and motivated workforces.
- Provide evidence of robust and effective financial management

Supporting vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs

The needs of vulnerable children and young people should be met locally wherever possible. The new school should promote inclusive opportunities for the most vulnerable children and have a strong focus on equalities, early intervention, and supporting the needs of the local community.

Resourced provision is part of the continuum of support available to children with special educational needs in local areas. The reserved places for specialist resourced provision will primarily be for children with communication and interaction needs, physical or sensory needs. In accordance with funding arrangements for high needs children, the school will receive an allocation, currently set at £10,000 per place. Specialist expertise will be available from SEN Support Services. Sponsors will be expected to:

- Provide specialist support to address each learner's specific needs and to improve their progress.
- Provide a learning environment for learners to benefit from specialist small group teaching and interventions as part of a personalised learning programme.
- Ensure suitably qualified and trained staff to advice and support the local workforce to deliver quality teaching and learning experiences for children with special educational needs, and support for their families.

Working in partnership

The schools will be part of the Bicester partnership of schools. A key component of selection will be the proposers' willingness to work in collaboration with other providers and local partners to develop services which meet the needs of local children, young people and families in a coordinated way.

Sponsors will be expected to:

- Ensure the school is outward facing, playing a key role within its immediate community and the wider local economy, particularly through active facilitation of community use of the school facilities outside school hours
- Engage parents/carers in supporting and encouraging their children's learning.
- Work in partnership with the county council and other educational providers to contribute towards meeting a collective responsibility to secure the best for all Oxfordshire's learners, including participating in school-to-school support, and cooperating with Fair Access protocols.
- Develop strategic alliances, partnerships and networks to better meet the needs of children and families in Bicester.
- Support the strategic responsibilities of the county council to ensure sufficiency of high quality school places and improved educational outcomes through agreed sharing of data and information.

Building stronger communities

Under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006, the county council has a duty to secure sufficient childcare for working parents; the involvement of the schools in meeting the

childcare needs of the local community would be welcomed. The county council would also seek the involvement of the schools in providing community access to appropriate facilities.

As the first school on the new eco-town development, this primary school will have a crucial role in helping to develop the new community. It will provide one of the main hubs of community activity, giving newcomers the opportunity to meet and get to know each other through the education of their children.

Sponsors will be expected to:

- Support the county council in delivering effective early intervention services, ensuring school readiness and supporting our most vulnerable learners and families.
- Work in partnership with wider services such as social care services, health and police to keep children safe, support families and build stronger communities.
- Provide children and young people with the skills they will need to play an active part in their local community and economy.
- Play a key role in the development of the eco-town community, for example through opening up facilities to the community, and participating in community activities.

4. How to apply

The county council must receive outline Expressions of Interest by the end of Friday 21 March 2014 and requires one hard copy and one electronic copy of all documentation.

In the first instance, Expressions of Interest should be submitted using the Oxfordshire County Council New School Expressions of Interest Form. The Application Form and this Specification Document are available to download from www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/newschoolproposals

Further information is available from, and Expressions of Interest should be sent to:

Barbara Chillman
Service Manager – Pupil Place Planning
Children, Education & Families
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND
Tel: 01865 816459
Fax: 01865 783185
academies@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Expressions of Interest will be assessed against their ability to meet the following broad criteria:

- the quality of the places being added into the system, based on the proposer's vision and educational plan;
- the capability and capacity of the proposer to deliver their proposal to time and on budget, based on their expertise and experience.

The county council will short-list proposers on the basis of the Expressions of Interest received, and by 22 April 2014 will invite the short-listed proposers to submit a more detailed application by 3 June 2014.

The short-listed proposers will also be invited to deliver a presentation of their proposals – the provision date for this is Wednesday 11 June.

The county council Cabinet will be asked to identify the preferred proposers at their July meeting, so that recommendations can be submitted to the DfE for final approval. It is hoped the decision would be available from the DfE by October 2014.