

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES – 12 JUNE 2019

New primary school for NE Wantage (Crab Hill / Kingsgrove): update on selection process for approved providers

Report by Director for Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member FOR Education & Cultural Services is RECOMMENDED to ratify the additional information to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Education for final agreement.

Introduction

1. The Cabinet meeting of 4 September 2012 approved a process for the identification of sponsors for new academies to meet the needs of population growth such as the one at NE Wantage. This was amended in the Cabinet meeting of 15th July 2014 to give the decision to the Cabinet member unless there are special circumstances. There are no special circumstances in this case.
2. The approved specification for NE Wantage sought providers for a new primary school. The school will be a 2-form entry, 2-11 age range primary school, with an Admission Number of 60.
3. The specification did not impose restrictions on the nature of provider – e.g. faith organisations, or existing providers – given that the local consultation was inconclusive on these issues.

Exempt Information

4. The Department for Education has instructed that any recommendation should not be made public until the Secretary of State has made a final decision on this matter.

Background

5. Following the completion of the process referred to above, the Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services approved a preferred sponsor on 18 January 2019, which was submitted to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

6. Following its meeting on 26th April the Headteacher Board (HTB) that advises the Regional Schools Commissioner for our area has requested further information from the authority before issuing a decision on the approved sponsor for this school. The delays in issuing that decision mean that the consideration of that additional information must be ratified by Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services in confidential session to comply with OCC governance in respect of new schools. A final decision is needed from the HTB at its meeting on 26th June to ensure statutory consultations can take place in time for this school to open as planned in September 2020.

Financial and Staff Implications

7. There are none arising directly from this report. However, once an approved sponsor has been confirmed by the Secretary of State there will be a need for significant and on-going liaison with council officers.

LUCY BUTLER

Director for Children's Services

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