

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## DELEGATED DECISION

16<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2013

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE CONSULTATION FOR THE RELOCATION OF FOXFIELD SCHOOL</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>YES</b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Authority has been successful in securing capital grant funding under the national Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) which will result in the rebuild of Foxfield School. Early dialogue with project managers within the Education Funding Agency, Children and Young People's Department and the school explored a preferred location for the new building. Co-location of Special Schools with a main stream school is the preferred option and a suitable site on New Hey Road, Woodchurch has been identified and would allow co-location with Woodchurch High School. As the distance between the current location of Foxfield School and the proposed site is more than 2 miles in a straight line, national regulations mean that a "prescribed alteration" notice must be issued for which consultation must take place.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Foxfield School is located on Douglas Drive, Moreton, and is a local authority maintained special school for boys and girls aged 11 to 19, who have statements of special educational needs because of complex learning difficulties. The national Priority School Building Programme has given the Local Authority the opportunity to consider the best location for Foxfield School. The current school was not purpose built and the site is too small for a large construction project to be undertaken whilst the school and its pupils remain in its current building.
- 2.2 The Council's Special School Review in June 2010 concluded that any proposals to build new Special Schools for secondary aged pupils would consider the co-location on a Secondary School site. As a result of this recommendation, a suitable piece of land owned by the Council has been identified which is adjacent to Woodchurch High School, Birkenhead.
- 2.3 The distance between the two sites is 2.5 miles therefore because it is greater than 2 miles in a straight line; this means that a "prescribed alteration" notice must be issued. Accordingly, it is recommended that Cabinet approve a formal consultation lasting at least 4 weeks to be carried out with various stakeholders including the governing body, parents/carers, staff and pupils of Foxfield School, local residents, ward members and local MP's. The outcome of the consultation would then be reported to Cabinet in the summer for consideration.
- 2.4 The identified site will be suitable to support the Priority School Building project which will result in a new facility for 140 pupils, individually designed teaching spaces for pupils with complex learning difficulties, designated spaces for medical and therapy sessions and including hydrotherapy and swimming facilities. Additional Capital funding has been approved within the Council's Capital Programme for a hydrotherapy pool,

demolition of the existing building and places for an additional 15 pupil places more than the Education Funding Agency allocation for the scheme.

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 3.1 Risks associated with obtaining planning permission on the proposed site have been identified. However, initial discussions with the planning authority have been positive given the specialist facilities the new school building would provide adjacent to the high school, and improvements planned to the remainder of the site.
- 3.2 The failure to secure the site for the relocation could result in funding being withdrawn from this scheme.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The current site was considered for the new building however, this would have meant that pupils would be required to use temporary accommodation and this is not suitable for pupils with complex needs.
- 4.2 Other sites were explored for co-location but various factors such as transport routes, available land, complex PFI contracts and schools' expressions of interest to co-locate with a special school favoured the identified site.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 In order for all stakeholders to have access to relevant background information and have the opportunity to comment and respond, the following methods of consultation will include:
- (i) Consultation leaflet to all parents/carers of pupil attending Foxfield School and their feeder primary schools, councillors, staff.
  - (ii) Council website and intranet sites.
  - (iii) The consultation leaflets available in local post offices, one-stop shops and libraries.
  - (iv) Meetings to be held for all interested stakeholders to be held at Foxfield School.
  - (v) Copy of the consultation leaflet is attached to this report.

#### Consultation Timeline

Authority to consult (Delegated report)	16 May
Initial Consultation	Until 20 June
Report on outcome of consultation (permission to waive call-in period required)	11 July Cabinet
Statutory Notice Period (6 weeks)	15 July – 25 August
Delegated authority for relocation proposals	Week beginning 2 <sup>nd</sup> September
EFA notification of consultation outcome	Week beginning 9 <sup>th</sup> September

### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

- 6.1 The new building will provide more opportunities for specialist facilities to be made available to the most vulnerable groups at a location which is central to the Borough.

## **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

- 7.1 The cost of the new building will be met from the Education Funding Agency with an additional amount being made from Council Capital for additional hydrotherapy facilities, demolition and additional pupil places. The school will also contribute to the new facility from its delegated budget.
- 7.2 IT would be provided within the contract to a specification suitable for a special school.
- 7.3 As this is a relocation project, it is expected that all current staff will transfer to the new building.
- 7.4 The new building is being funded via grant and procured by the Education Funding Agency as part of a regional contract and will become a Council asset upon completion. The current site of Foxfield School will be considered for disposal or the possible use by another education establishment, but would be subject to a further report.

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report. The Legal and Member Services Section within the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management will arrange the contract with the successful contractor.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?
- (a) Yes and impact review is attached

## **10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Increase in Carbon usage will be minimal due to the low energy building components being specified and the transfer from a less efficient building. No other environmental issues have been identified at this stage with the project.

## **11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Planning approval will be necessary for the proposed construction.
- 11.2 Replacement of schools allow the most vulnerable accommodation to be removed and other security improvements carried out to ensure the site is safe and secure.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 12.1 That permission to consult is approved.

## **13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 13.1 To meet schedules 2 and 4 of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to maintained Schools (England) Regulations 2007) a consultation process prior to publishing "notice" of the change of site must take place as the main entrance of the new site is more than 2 miles of the main entrance of the existing site.

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## **APPENDICES**

Consultation leaflet

Plan of proposed site

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

No background information was used for the drafting of this report.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>

# Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (from May 2012)

## Section 1: Your details

**EIA lead Officer:** Jeannette Royle

**Email address:** jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk

**Head of Section:** Andrew Roberts

**Chief Officer:** Julia Hassall

**Department:** Children & Young People

**Date:** 13 May 2013

## Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

Construction of a new school on a new site

## Section 2b: Will this EIA be submitted to a Cabinet or Overview & Scrutiny Committee?

No

If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/children-young-people>

**Section 3:** Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing)

**Section 4:** Does the proposal have the potential to maintain or enhance the way the Council ..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advances equality of opportunity
- Fosters good relations between groups of people

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 5.

- No** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing)

**Section 5:**

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any of the protected groups (race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals.

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

<b>Which group(s) of people could be affected</b>	<b>Potential positive or negative impact</b>	<b>Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact</b>	<b>Lead person</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
Pupils i.e. age, race, gender, religion, disability	Positive – enhancement of resource and learning space being created within the school. Improved access around the site for pupils/staff with physical disabilities as mobile accommodation will be removed. Good design of the space to be achieved by working with architects and staff including accessibility of space.		Headteacher	Completion January 2015	Capital resources identified
Community	New accommodation with specialist facilities will allow use by the community out of school hours. The use of the space will be managed by the school		Headteacher	January 2015	Capital resources identified

**Section 5a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?**

The Capital project will be monitored by the school and LA at site meetings and monthly Capital monitoring meetings.

**Section 5b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?**

Provided that the space is used by the school as intended, there will be no negative impacts on the function of the school.

**Section 6: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?**

The project will be drawn up by architects in consultation with the school, using Building Bulletin 99 for guidance on curriculum space and DDA guidance.

**Section 7: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?**

**No** – (please delete as appropriate)

**If 'yes' please continue to section 8.**

**If 'no' please state your reason(s) why:**

The project is primarily for use by the school population, although planning permission will be required.

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing)



## **Section 8:      How will consultation take place and by when?**

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to [equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk) via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal requirements. The EIA will be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 5. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk) for re-publishing.