

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Falmer Academy: Progress to date and submission of the Final Business Case</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 September 2009</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Rod Derbyshire</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 29-3589
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<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Forward Plan No: CAB11428</b>	
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 At the Cabinet Meeting on 11 June 2009, Members received a detailed report of progress up to that date. The report also informed Members of the requirement for Cabinet approval in September of the Final Business Case. Approval was given by Cabinet for the preferred bidder to undertake the demolition of the central block and removal of trees as required, during the school summer holiday period, to minimise the health and safety implications of that work.
- 1.2 Prior to the Design and Build contract being signed, the Council must submit a Final Business Case (FBC) for approval by Partnerships for Schools. The Cabinet meeting in September 2009 is asked to endorse the FBC before its submission.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the current progress status of the Falmer Academy project.
- 2.2 That Cabinet endorses the Falmer Academy Final Business Case.

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 Further to the progress report tabled to Members on 11 June 2009, following Cabinet approval, the demolition of the central block and removal of related trees (the Enabling Works) commenced on 27 July 2009 and this work will be completed by 31 August 2009.
- 3.2 Some minor initial security issues were experienced at the start of the Enabling Works but measures were implemented to enhance site security which resolved these issues.
- 3.3 Informal daily and weekly Liaison Meetings have been held with representatives of the Falmer High School Staff which have been extremely positive and constructive.

- 3.4 The Preferred Bidder's Project Manager has established very good working relationships with the School Staff and the experience gained and relationships established during the Enabling Works will be highly beneficial when the Main Works are implemented.
- 3.5 The Main Works building programme is scheduled to start in October/November 2009. The Academy will open in September 2010 in a mix of existing and new buildings. The complete construction is scheduled to be open at the end of 2011. Once the development of the Academy is complete, the surplus land as previously agreed will be available for development.
- 3.6 The Detailed Planning Application was submitted as programmed on 13 July 2009 and is currently expected to be considered by the Planning Committee on 23 September 2009.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 To ensure that the local community were fully informed about the development, following Press Notices and issue of Newsletters, two Public Exhibitions of the proposals have been held. Although attendance was limited, the proposals were well received and some very positive comments were made.
- 4.2 A number of Liaison Meetings have now been held with the Sponsors and Contractors involved in other major projects in the Falmer area which have been extremely constructive.
- 4.3 Prior to the summer holiday period, Staff at the school were kept constantly informed via a number of mechanisms. These include monthly School Engagement Group Meetings, weekly drop-in Surgeries, Union Representatives and Governing Body Meetings. The engagement process will continue up to and through to the opening of the Academy and significant training opportunities funded by the DCSF will be available to staff at the school.
- 4.4 An interim verbal Progress Report was submitted to the CYPT Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 June 2009.
- 4.5 The scheme proposals have been presented to one of the local Community Action Groups and it is anticipated that other such Groups will take up the offer of presentations after the summer holiday period. Following their presentation, the Tenantry and Meadowvale Community Action Group advised that they would be submitting a letter of support for the proposals to the Planning Department.
- 4.6 Presentations have been arranged at the four feeder Primary Schools in September and these will be attended by the Principal Designate.
- 4.7 Two Meetings of the Falmer Academy Parents' Council (now established as the Parents' Forum) were held prior to the summer holiday period and these will continue from September 2009 onwards.

## 5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The funding envelope for the Design & Build contract is £26.041m. There is a separate £2m contract for ICT to be let in 2009. This funding is provided by the DCSF Academy Programme and includes a contribution from the council's capital resources of £0.557m toward the redevelopment of the caretaker's flat and the Swan Centre within the Academy. A further £2m will be contributed by the Sponsor in the form of an endowment. With regard to project support, £0.300 million has been drawn down from DCSF funding to move the Project from the initial Expression of Interest through the Feasibility Stage and into the current Implementation Stage. The council is also required to provide resources to meet its obligations in relation to the Design and Build Contract and the delivery of the build programme. These project support costs are set out in the FBC and in February 2009 Full Council approved an allocation of £0.200 million from the Strategic Investment Fund to provide resources for 2009/10. The Council also approved allocations from future Strategic Investment Fund resources to cover project support costs in 2010/11 and 2011/12.
- 5.2 Recent changes (falls) in interest rates have meant that cost assumptions made in the original DCSF funding model are now lower than expected and are expected to provide up to £2 million additional value to the scheme. Bidders were clearly instructed to provide evidence of additional value for money within their design and build tenders and this has been considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 5.3 The Final Business Case sets out the full costs and benefits of the project which are within the overall financial envelope and commensurate with current market conditions. Project management costs for the overall project management are met by the DCSF via its engagement of PKF (Accountants & Business Advisers) while Project Management costs for the building of the Academy are met by the Council as mentioned above.
- 5.4 The Sponsor has already expressed the desire to develop a broader offer to promote the aspiration of young people in the area. This will build on work already undertaken to promote the concept of a 'good adolescence'.
- 5.5 The revenue budget for the Academy and Swan Centre will be based on the existing Falmer High School and Swan Centre budgets.

*Finance Officer consulted: Nigel Manvell*

*Date: 04/09/09*

### Legal Implications:

- 5.6 Heads of Terms have been agreed by the Council's and the Sponsor's lawyers enabling the Academy development to take place. The building contract with the preferred builder will accord with the national requirements for Academy development and will be let once the Final Business Case is approved by Cabinet.

- 5.7 A site agreement regulated the tree removal and demolition works referred to in paragraph 3.17. These were carried out by the preferred bidder on a fixed cost basis in the period.

*Lawyer consulted:*

*Bob Bruce*

*Date: 04/09/09*

Equalities Implications:

- 5.8 Young people leaving Falmer High School are presently the highest group in the City in terms of Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) being 10.5% in 2008, almost double the 5.9% average for the City. Although the figures for pupils undertaking further education have increased over the past few years, this rate in 2008 at 81.2% is lower than the average of other schools in the City where sixth form provision is provided in the school environment. It is therefore hoped that over time, provision of the sixth form will increase the number of pupils fully engaged in post-16 education widening participation of the young people in this area of the City in further education thus improving the high number of working age adults in the area who have no formal qualifications, currently 35%.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.9 The construction of the proposed Academy will adhere to DCSF guidelines (Building Bulletin 98) and will be in line with stringent new targets issued by the Government in March 2008 to reduce school carbon footprints to 60% for all new school buildings. Thus the proposed new building will take full advantage of all appropriate environmentally sustainable energy and recycling systems including proposals bio mass boilers, green roofs and solar panels. The proposed design meets the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Model (BREEAM) Excellent standard. Thus the proposed Academy will be a flagship for environmentally sustainable schools for Brighton & Hove for the future and will be one of the “greenest” buildings in the City.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.10 A preliminary risk register has been compiled and a full risk register must be undertaken and submitted to Partnerships for Schools as part of their approval process for the Final Business Case.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.11 Throughout the development of the proposed Academy, consultation with both community groups and the Community Safety team and police liaison officers will take place. Sussex Police Service endorse the view that the engagement of the community in the use of the facilities at the Academy and with the availability of those facilities outside normal school hours, it is envisaged that crime and disorder in the local area will be reduced, as will the numbers of pupils not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.12 The development of an Academy on the Falmer High School site is in accord with the DCSF's policy on developing a range of schools in each Local Authority, thereby increasing the variety of types of school available to parents. As part of the development of the Academy, careful consideration will be given to developing the community use of the facilities and a community engagement plan. The City's Neighbourhood Manager for the area has taken an active part in the community engagement and the Parents' Council as have a range of voluntary and YMCA organisations.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 To brief Cabinet on the current status of the project.
- 7.2 PfS require confirmation of the Authority's support for the project before agreeing release of funding.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. The Falmer Academy Final Business Case dated August 2009
2. Falmer Academy Summary of Verbal Report to CYPT Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Wednesday, 17 June 2009

**Documents in Members' Rooms**

1. Appendices to Falmer Academy Final Business Case.

**Background Documents**

1. Report to Cabinet dated 11 June 2009.

