

Cabinet: 17/11/2015

**Report: Update on the decision about the proposer who has been agreed to run a new 630 place primary free (academy) school in Huddersfield South West by the Regional Schools Commissioner.**

Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes
Is it in the <a href="#">Council's Forward Plan</a> ?	No
Is it eligible for call in by <a href="#">Scrutiny</a> ?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Director</u> & name	Alison O'Sullivan 06/11/15
Is it signed off by the Director of Resources?	David Smith 09/11/15
Is it signed off by the Assistant Director – Legal, Governance and Monitoring?	Julie Muscroft 06/11/15
Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a>	Cllr Shabir Pandor Children's Services

**Electoral wards affected and ward councillors consulted:** Crosland Moor and Netherton

**Public or private:** Public

## 1. Purpose of report

To update members about the decision of the Regional Schools Commissioner on proposals to establish the new 630 place primary free (academy) school for pupils aged 4-11 years to serve the Huddersfield South West area..

## 2. Background

### 2.1 The provision of school places to meet “basic need”

Kirklees Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient high quality school places to meet the needs of Kirklees families and communities. This is described as “basic need”. Over the last 12-13 years, the school age population in Kirklees has increased by approximately 20% from the smallest pupil age group (which is now in the secondary schools) to the current reception and pre-school age groups. A similar pattern is repeated in most urban authorities nationwide. One of the areas where there is a need for school places is in the Huddersfield South West area.

Following a series of collaborative discussions between Kirklees Council and a strategic group, representative of providers in the South West Huddersfield area and following

exploration in outline of what is technically possible and affordable, the proposal to establish a new 630 place primary free (academy) school in Huddersfield South West has been developed. The proposal would enable sufficient primary school places to be available in order to meet the basic need in the Huddersfield South West.

## **2.2 The process to establish a new primary free (academy) school.**

In September, in a report to Kirklees Council Cabinet, an update was given that explained;

On the 24th March Kirklees officers had been authorised to develop plans for consultation about a proposal to establish a new 630 place primary school in a new building using part of the Moor End Academy site. (Moor End Multi Academy Trust has given their agreement in principle for part of the site to be utilised for this purpose).

- to cater for pupils aged 4 to 11
- with a PAN of 90 for 4-11 year olds, providing 630 primary school places.

The Council carried out a non-statutory consultation between April and June 2015 on this proposal in order to seek the view of key stakeholders and to gain feedback to inform the decision on the formal publication of an invitation to seek proposals from Department for Education (DfE) approved proposers.

The outcomes of this consultation were reported to Kirklees Council Cabinet on the 30th June and Cabinet authorised officers to proceed to seek invitations from proposers to run a new primary free (academy) school for Huddersfield South West. This process commenced on the 14th July. Officers have liaised with the DfE over publication of the invitation to seek proposals and followed relevant DfE guidance in the development and publication of these proposals.

The period for the invitation to seek proposals ended on the 24th August. The Council received one proposal. The proposal received has been reviewed against the Council's published assessment criteria, following this process a recommendation was sent to the DfE.

### **3. The Regional Schools Commissioner's decision**

New free (academy) school proposals are decided by the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC), on behalf of Secretary of State for Education. DfE advice states that the Council should await the Regional Schools Commissioner's decision before formally making public the outcome of any assessment.

It can now be confirmed to Cabinet that the proposal received and assessed by the LA was from Moor End Academies Trust, who currently are the Multi Academy Trust providing secondary education at Moor End Academy.

The outcome of the LA assessment, and the recommendation to the Regional Schools Commissioner was to approve the proposal to run the new school for the following reasons:

1. The proposer submitted an application that met the Council's assessment criteria, as set out in table 1 below.

**Table 1**

<b>Indicator</b>	
B1	Provides a clearly focused, coherent vision that underpins the application with a compelling rationale for establishing the school.
B2	Sets out how proposers will demonstrate they support UK democratic values
<b>Strategic Vision</b>	
C1	Explains the rationale for the proposed curriculum, how it reflects the needs of the anticipated pupil intake and the plans for their progression and transition.
C2	Sets out a viable curriculum plan with appropriate focus on breadth and balance, core areas of learning, and calendar and timetable.
C3	Shows how the staffing structure will deliver the planned curriculum.
C4	Sets out a clear strategy for ensuring that the needs of pupils with differing abilities are met
C5	Details the definitions and measures of success which will deliver their aspirations for pupil achievement
C6	Describes the admissions policy, confirming commitment to fair and transparent admissions practices
C7	Describes how the approach to behaviour management, pupil wellbeing and attendance will improve pupil outcomes.
<b>Educational capacity and performance</b>	
D1	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the respective roles of the company members, governing body and principal in running the school
D2	Shows how the proposer will access appropriate and sufficient educational, financial, and other expertise to deliver their vision
D3	Provides realistic plans for recruiting a high quality Principal, other staff and governors in accordance with the proposed staffing structure and education plans
<b>Operational Capacity and Governance</b>	
E1	Demonstrates how the proposer will work with and for the local community and is committed to work for the benefit of the wider education community.
<b>Relationships with Other Schools, the Council and the Wider Education Community (</b>	
Application form	Please provide evidence of financial experience of managing a school budget and an indication of budget plans for managing a new school.
<b>Financial Management</b>	

2. The proposer’s application provides strong, detailed and credible evidence that the Multi Academy Trust would be able to raise educational standards in the area by adding high quality places that will complement provision that already exists in Huddersfield South West.

3. The proposer currently provides secondary education in the Huddersfield South West area, and, has an excellent knowledge of the needs of local families, the community and existing strong partnerships with local schools.
4. The Multi Academy Trust has the capacity and approval to sponsor additional schools. There is clear evidence from the latest available outcomes for 2014/15 academic year performance data for Moor End Academy that the pupils at the school make very good progress and are achieving good results. This is a good indicator that Moor End Academy Trust is well placed and has the capacity to run the new free school whilst also sponsoring another primary school in Kirklees to raise educational outcomes. The application identifies and articulates a robust approach to a curriculum offer, the ethos and vision for the school and a proposed admissions policy that will meet the needs of families in the local area.
5. The proposer's application provides a robust financial plan for establishing the school. The skills and expertise across both the Trustees and the Multi Academy Trust staff have been clearly articulated and evidence has been provided of the proposer's financial experience of managing a school budget.
6. The proposer demonstrates a firm commitment to working collaboratively with the Council, in all matters that would be required to undertake the implementation of the new school. This includes dedicated project capacity which will be crucial for processes relating to the required new school building, set up activity in relation to staffing and pre-opening preparation and agreeing revenue funding to enable a smooth implementation

The Regional Schools Commissioner, via the DfE has now informed the LA of the decision to approve Moor End Academies Trust to run the new school.

## **4. Implications for the Council**

### **4.1 HR Implications**

There are no human resource implications for the Council. As the employer of staff in the new school, the proposer to be appointed by the Regional Schools Commissioner would have the responsibility to develop a staffing structure to deliver the planned curriculum of the new school.

### **4.2 Financial Implications**

#### **4.2.1 Revenue Budget**

The Council's Dedicated Schools Grant allocation would be used to provide funding to address the revenue costs of the new free (academy) school. This amounts to annual per pupil revenue funding allocated in line with the established local formula for funding schools and academies, pre-opening development costs and post-opening funds required to address the diseconomies of scale that would be present until the school has grown to its intended number of year groups. The Council is expected to work with the selected proposer to agree a reasonable and mutually acceptable funding plan to cover the pre and post opening costs. In addition, the successful proposer will receive a one-off grant payment of £25,000 towards the legal costs associated with establishing the new free (academy) school.

### **4.3 Capital**

There are direct capital implications, now the proposal has been approved for implementation by the Regional Schools Commissioner. The Council is responsible for providing a site for the proposed new school, and meeting all the associated capital costs.

There are sufficient capital allocations within the Council's approved capital investment plan to deliver the outcomes of the proposal if approved (i.e. the new build school and the temporary arrangements). From the formative work that has been completed so far, indicative costs for the new school building are £12M. The scheme is to be funded from grant.

## **5. Consultees and their opinions**

The Council carried out a non-statutory consultation on the proposal to establish a new 630 place primary free (academy) school for pupils aged 4-11 in Huddersfield South West as described in section 3 of this report. The outcomes of this consultation were reported to Cabinet on the 30th June.

Following the decision by the Regional Schools Commissioner, Moor end Academies Trust as the successful proposer will be required to carry out further consultation with key stakeholders on the new primary free (academy) school to establish whether the proposer should enter into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State.

## **6. Next steps**

The project will begin to move into pre-opening phase and the Council will work collaboratively with Moor End Academies Trust, the DfE and local families and schools to begin implementation in order that the first cohort of Reception children can be admitted from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016.

## **7. Officer recommendations**

To note the decision of the Regional Schools Commissioner, and that is in line with recommendations made by Kirklees Council, following a first stage review of the proposal.

To note that Officers will work in partnership with Moor End Academies Trust to deliver the new pupil places so they are available from September 2016.

## **8. Portfolio Holders' recommendation**

We are committed to ensure that there are enough high quality learning places available to meet demographic growth which is why the Council invited proposals to establish a new school for the Huddersfield South West Area. Due to the growing demand for primary places in south west Huddersfield, Kirklees Council is creating a brand new, 630-place school for children aged four to 11. It will welcome its first reception class in 2016.

The new-build school will be in the grounds of an existing secondary school - Moor End Academy - and be part of the council's work to meet the local need for places whilst also achieving the highest possible standards of care and education.

The new primary will be a separate school to Moor End Academy, which is also operated by Moor End Academies Trust and will continue as a secondary.

We warmly welcome the news that Moor End Academies Trust is sponsoring the new school. While the final decision was made by the government, Moor End Academies Trust had our full support. After viewing their proposals, we had recommended them as sponsors. This means a Kirklees provider which is already successful in the local area will be working with us to establish these new places, giving us a local solution to a local need.

Moor End Academies Trust have a clear focus on standards. They show ambition for local families and always have high expectations for what pupils and teachers can achieve. As a council, we are hugely committed to excellence in education. Despite government cutbacks, we are creating places in several parts of Kirklees - and this project for a new-build school is another very significant investment. We look forward to delivering this project in partnership for local families.

## **5. Contact officer**

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**Related Documents**

“Capital Funding for New School Places” National Audit Office – March 2013

“Policy Position Papers~ Orchestrating the System for the Benefit of Children, Young People and Families~ Education ~ Early Years ~” ADCS March 2015

“Rounded, Resilient and Ready - Vision for Learning” – Kirklees Council October 2014

“Securing sufficient school places to enable access for children and young people to an excellent local education system”. Kirklees Council June 2014

“The development of a strategy to develop new partnerships and approaches to establish new school places and to create and sustain a high quality, self-improving school system, working with new models of school governance, including academies and free schools” - Report to Kirklees Council Cabinet February 2013

“Whole System Reform: England’s Schools and the Middle Tier” Institute for Public Policy Research – September 2014