
PROPOSAL FOR AN ACADEMY IN DARLINGTON - UPDATE

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor McEwan – Children’s Services Portfolio

Responsible Director(s) – Margaret Asquith – Director of Children’s Services

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Members’ views on submitting an Expression of Interest in a City Academy for Darlington to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

Background

2. A Cabinet report was presented to Members on 1st November 2005 outlining the offer from the DfES to submit an Expression of Interest in the City Academies programme (attached at **Appendix A**). From this meeting, Cabinet referred the request to Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee for discussion, debate and recommendations. Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee met on 21st November and reconvened on 23rd November, and their recommendations are attached at **Appendix B**.

Information and Analysis

3. The proposal to submit an Expression of Interest in an Academy for Darlington has generated a considerable amount of interest and debate and officers have begun to hold information sessions in various parts of the community. The proposal was debated at a meeting of the Darlington Partnership Board on 9th November 2005, and the partnership agreed to support the proposal. The proposal was also discussed at a meeting of the Darlington Learning Partnership on 23rd November 2005 and this partnership also agreed to support the proposal.

Outcome of Consultation

4. No consultation was required in the preparation of this report as we are at the beginning of compiling the information that will be required for formal consultation. Extensive consultation will be undertaken should the Expression of Interest receive support from the DfES.

Legal Implications

5. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council’s approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

6. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

7. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework

Decision Deadline

8. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Key Decisions

9. This report constitutes a key decision as it affects more than two wards.

Recommendations

10. It is recommended that Members: -
 - (a) Note the comments from Lifelong Learning Scrutiny;
 - (b) Decide whether an Expression of Interest for an Academy in Darlington should now be developed, and if so,
 - (c) Receive a further Cabinet report detailing the Expression of Interest to be submitted.

Reason

11. To enable officers to progress work required to take forward a proposed Academy.

Margaret Asquith
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

Correspondence from DfES – 29 November 2004 – Wave 2 and 3 BSF Announcement
Guidance issued by DfES in relation to the Academy Programme
Darlington Partnership Board Minutes – 9th November 2005