

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	15 July 2003
Subject:	School Re-Organisation and Post-16 in Harrow
Key decisions:	Yes
Responsible Chief Officer:	Executive Director – People First
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning
Status:	Public
Ward:	All
Enclosures:	Annexe A -14-19 Advisory Group Annexe B – Key Criteria

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 Cabinet received an Information Report at its meeting on 17 June 2003 updating Members on progress regarding school re-organisation and post-16 in Harrow. The purpose of this report is to set out and agree a timetable and strategy to meet DfES requirements on capital bids for school building and to confirm the next phase of post-16 work prior to consultation in the Autumn Term.

2. **Recommendations** (for decision by Cabinet)

Cabinet:

- (i) Approve the strategy and timetable for capital bids to the DfES to enable modernisation of school buildings and a change in the age of secondary school transfer subject to consultation and further Cabinet decision.
- (ii) Approve the criteria for the evaluation of models to increase choice at post-16 as set out in Appendix B.
- (iii) Agree the establishment of a cross-party Steering Group to meet with the London West Learning and Skills Council to oversee the development of options for consultation on increasing choice at post-16 along with the consultation strategy, following advice received from the 14-19 Advisory Group.
- (iv) Approve the establishment of a 14-19 Advisory Group, including membership and terms of reference as set out in Appendix A, to enable further work on the development of a 14-19 strategy to be progressed and to advise the joint Cabinet/LWLSC Steering Group on the development of options to increase choice at post-16 and the consultation process.

Reason: To further progress the work on School Re-organisation and Post 16 in Harrow

Consultation with Ward Councillors

N/a

3. **Policy Context**

3.1 In July 2002, Members received a report detailing the outcome of a debate on school organisation in Harrow and agreed recommendations for officers that develop options for consultation to address the major issues raised through the debate. Key areas were:

- A change in the age of secondary transfer from 12+ to 11+;
- Increasing choice for Harrow students at post-16;
- Strengthening provision at the Foundation Stage.

3.2 In addition, Cabinet requested that officers continue discussions with DfES officials on resourcing the significant capital works that a change in the age of secondary transfer would require.

4. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 School re-organisation and post-16 proposals will contribute to the Corporate Priority of Harrow as a centre of Lifelong Learning, by helping to raise attainment and improve the management of school places to meet demand, thereby ensuring investment in buildings for education and community purposes.

5 **Statutory powers**

5.1 The Learning Skills Council (LSC) holds the statutory role for the provision of post-16 education along with decisions on resources. The LSC exercises its statutory powers through regional structures. The London West LSC (LWLSC) has responsibility for West London which includes Harrow.

5.2 Local Education Authorities (LEAs) hold the statutory role for the provision of 14-16 education along with decisions on resources. However, recent announcements by the Government have indicated that a greater emphasis in policy terms will be placed on ensuring stronger cohesion across providers in the 14-19 age range. To underpin this new emphasis, proposals to undertake joint inspections of 14-19 provision across an area are being developed.

6. **Background Information**

6.1 School Re-organisation

6.1.1 As indicated in the report to Cabinet on 17 June the DfES has been consulting on its proposed capital priorities for the next round of bids due to be submitted early in the autumn 2003. At the time of writing the details of the timetable and format for capital bids 2003/04 are unknown. However decisions need to be made by Cabinet at this stage, based on advice from DfES officials, in order that work on providing the supporting evidence for the bids can be undertaken across the summer.

6.1.2 It is clear that a major focus for national bids for 2003/04 will be the continued modernisation of secondary school facilities and the development of extended schools. This community focus is in line with the central thrust of the PFI cluster proposals put forward in 2002 and 2003 and the Council's strategic policy on area delivery of services set out in the New Harrow Project.

6.1.3 This focus is likely to be additional to other DfES priorities such as addressing failing and underachieving schools and promoting social and education inclusion in areas with a high incidence of deprivation.

6.2 14-19

6.2.1 There are already well-established links between Harrow colleges and high schools, which provide for pupils with particular needs across the 14-16 age group, either on a part-time or block release basis. These links are being further encouraged and developed by the Government through funds being made available through the 14-19 Pathfinder, where Harrow is one of the pilot areas, and Increased Flexibility initiatives.

6.2.2 In order to respond positively to these developments, and build on the links and joint working already established, there is a need to undertake further work at this stage. This work will involve the various partners responsible for provision across the age group with an aim of developing a Harrow strategy for 14-19 based on meeting the needs of all students.

6.3 Post 16

6.3.1 As part of the work to inform and develop post-16 provision in Harrow, a study by independent consultants was commissioned jointly between the London West Learning and Skills Council and Harrow LEA. The study gathered a wide range of evidence, involving discussions with stakeholders, student surveys and the analysis of data on destinations, demand, attainment and progression. A discussion paper was produced and presented to all stakeholders and their comments were reported to Cabinet on 17 June as part of the Information Report. Members were given the opportunity to attend a presentation by the consultants on 10 July

7 **The Way Forward**

7.1 School Re-organisation

7.1.1 In order to meet the expected criteria for capital bids, Cabinet is recommended to approve the following:

- (i) Preparation of a bid which is based on the modernisation of secondary school accommodation, work necessary to bring about a change in the age of secondary transfer and the development of extended community schools.
- (ii) Preparation of a range of bids under the targeted capital programme to enable those primary schools in the Rooks Heath and Canons clusters through refurbishment and development of facilities, to become a community cluster of schools.
- (iii) A further report to be submitted to Cabinet in September or October, depending on the DfES published timetable, detailing the bids to be submitted under the next capital round.

7.2 14-19

7.2.1 It is proposed to establish a 14-19 Advisory Group to identify and oversee the work that needs to be undertaken in this area and integrate existing working groups on the 14-19 Pathfinder and Increased Flexibility initiatives. This Group will also offer advice on 14-19 issues to governing bodies of the partner organisations, as well as the LEA and LWLSC.

7.2.2 It is further suggested that the 14-19 Advisory Group be established in two phases. Phase one will involve representatives from Harrow schools, colleges and LEA and the LWLSC. The next phase will open the possibility of extending representation on the Group to other agencies involved in education and training for 16-19 in Harrow and West London, when this becomes appropriate. This phasing process will enable key issues to be addressed in the short term within a Harrow context and then, as the Group's work expands, to invite representative parents and students, other providers and partners to take part, as appropriate.

7.2.3 In addition to current work being undertaken at 14-19, the initial work programme of the 14-19 Advisory Group will include the following:

- A detailed analysis of curriculum provision at post-16 and from 14-16 across Harrow;
- An analysis of curriculum quality including student achievement and value added;
- Co-ordination of accommodation strategies for schools and colleges along with development plans;
- Developing a marketing and communication strategy for the Harrow system;
- Analysis, evaluation and proposals for the potential of cluster partnership working between schools and colleges which can enhance education provision and increase access, participation and achievement for 14-19.

7.3 Post-16

7.3.1 The next stage is to carry this work forward to the point where Cabinet can make a decision on its preferred options for further consultation on post-16 provision. It is suggested that a cross-party Steering Group be appointed by Cabinet to meet with the LWLSC and oversee the development of options and the consultation strategy. The work of the 14-19 Advisory Group will advise this Group. It will be necessary at an early stage to establish a working relationship between the Steering Group and the work of the Advisory Group.

7.3.2 In order to assist the Steering Group to evaluate the models being developed to increase choice, inclusion and education achievement at post-16 in Harrow, criteria have been developed. These criteria draw on, the Council's Corporate Strategic Aims, the Education Strategic Plan, the Education Development Plan and information derived from recent Area Inspections of Further Education.

Cabinet is requested to approve the criteria set out in Appendix B as the basis of the evaluation of models to increase choice, inclusion and education achievement at post-16 in Harrow.

8 **Consultation**

A full consultation process will be carried out on School Re-organisation and Post-16 options following the Cabinet Report in the autumn 2003.

9. **Finance Observations**

9.1 Any changes to school re-organisation and post-16 provision are likely to have significant financial implications for the Borough. However these will be developed in detail as further work is undertaken and will need to be considered by the Steering Group following advice received from the 14-19 Advisory Group. Some initial estimates of the costs of implementing changes as part of the School Re-organisation and Post-16 Debate were indicated within the Council's Medium Term Budget Strategy.

10. **Legal Observations**

None currently identified

11. **Conclusion**

11.1 School re-organisation and development of post-16 in Harrow has the potential to achieve a step change in provision and achievement across the borough. It also has the potential to make a significant contribution to the inclusion of students currently not appropriately provided for within Harrow, and the delivery of area based services through the New Harrow Project. There are challenges in maintaining a common timescale for the consultation process and Cabinet may need to recognise this issue should circumstances beyond its control dictate a separation of the issues for school re-organisation and post-16. It is important to maintain momentum and support for the change generated by the debate on school re-organisation undertaken in spring/summer 2002.

12. **Background Papers**

Cabinet Report - July 2002
Education Arts and Leisure Report - January 2002
Governors Consultation Paper - January 2002
Cabinet Information Report - April 2003
Cabinet Information Report - June 2003

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers should telephone 020 8424 1513

13 **Author**

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Annexe A

14-19 ADVISORY GROUP

Aims

- To oversee work to establish a 14-19 strategy for Harrow that increases choice, inclusion and educational achievement for all 14-19 students in Harrow.
- To offer advice on 14-19 issues to the LEA and LWLSC and the governing bodies of the partner organisations.
- To offer advice to the Steering Group on the development of models to increase choice at post-16 and the consultation process.

Terms of Reference

To establish a framework for the development of a 14-19 strategy in Harrow and advise partner bodies including the LEA and LWLSC, as appropriate.

To undertake work that enhances and extends the available evidence base across the 14 – 19 age group.

Using the evidence base, to advise on options to promote realistic and sustainable 14-19 provision.

To advise the Steering Group on the development of options to increase choice at post-16 along with issues relating to consultation and implementation processes.

The Advisory Group will:

- ensure all key partners use their expertise, knowledge and resources to improve choice, access and quality of 14-19 provision in Harrow;
- further develop and promote a collaborative approach and joint arrangements;
- ensure clear communications and the effective flow of information among stakeholders and advise on this development of a marketing and communication strategy for the Harrow system of education;
- form and give leadership to working groups that will be responsible for specific areas of work;
- contribute to the Strategic Area Review and subsequent action plans;

Membership

Phase One

3 College Principals
4 Representative secondary school Headteachers
2 Representative primary school Headteachers
1 Representative Special School Headteacher
LWLSC Senior Officers
LEA Senior Officers and Advisers

Following discussion the Group may be expanded to include some or all of the following organisations, should they be agreeable.

Chief Executive, Lifetime Careers
Chief Executive, London West Connexions
District Manager, Job Centre Plus
Manager, West London Learning Partnership
Representative, Work Based Learning Providers
Manager, Voluntary Sector Network
Manager, Business Link
A representative of Head Teachers from other boroughs as appropriate
A representative of the voluntary sector
Student and parent representation

Key Criteria

1. Must preserve the comprehensive principle and not create a two-tier system.
2. Must grow flexibly to accommodate an increase in capacity of around 300 – 600 students post-16 focusing on areas not currently enabling access to specific groups of pupils.
3. Should offer a collaborative platform for shared forms of management and governance involving schools and colleges.
4. Should enhance the appeal of post –16 provision to young people and their parents including students who are already high achieving– a significant group of Harrow residents.
5. Should improve choice and access and raise participation and achievement of under-achieving groups.
6. Should create and communicate a Harrow provision from 5 to 19, which provides clear continuity and guaranteed quality of education.
7. Should provide delivery sites that are of a size that enable and foster a supportive and individually focused ethos.
8. Should create a significant innovative and inclusive work-related pathway for 14-19, relevant to students across the whole achievement spectrum.
9. Should combine open access to specialisms with a collegiate approach to ensure a maximum range of curriculum delivery.