

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	16 February 2006
Subject:	Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate – Statutory Process
Responsible Officer:	Lorraine O'Reilly, Executive Director, People First
Contact Officer:	Geoff Wingrove, Director of Strategy, People First (0208 424 1513)
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Bill Stephenson (Education and Lifelong Learning)
Key Decision:	Yes
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

The Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate Model is being developed for implementation from September 2007, subject to securing capital. A bid to the Learning and Skills Council 16-19 Capital Fund has been prepared by the local authority for post 16 capital development on high school sites. The bid was submitted at the end of January 2006.

The Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate will have post 16 students at all high schools and will require the change in the age range of community schools from 12-16 to 12-18 (11-16 to 11-18 for the voluntary aided schools).

This report outlines the Statutory Process that will be followed.

Decision Required

1. That Cabinet notes the informal consultation taking place with stakeholders in February 2006. The consultation is asking stakeholders to consider the change in age range (12-18 for community schools, 11-18 for voluntary aided schools).
2. Authorise the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning, following consideration of the outcome of the consultation, to issue the statutory notices if appropriate.
3. To note that any such notices need to be published before 28 February 2006.

Reason for report

Harrow is committed to increasing choice and raising attainment and participation levels for post 16 learners. This is in the Harrow 14-19 Strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan. This is also in line with Government Policy as detailed in the 14-19 Implementation Plan and the London West Learning and Skills Council (LWLSC) Strategic Area Review Action Plan.

The Harrow 14-19 Advisory Group established the Post 16 Collegiate Core Group to develop the Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate model and prepare a Capital Bid to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). A successful bid will secure funding for appropriate accommodation across all high schools for some post 16 provision. Cabinet agreed on 12 January 2006 a mechanism to agree the bid before submission, which occurred with cross party support.

Benefits

The Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate will:

- Meet parental preferences, and increase choice for parents and students
- Increase provision and quality, and achieve coherence of provision across 14-19
- Increase attainment and achievement
- Increase participation, particularly level 1
- Will reduce the flow of students out of Harrow at the end of Year 11 and also Year 6

Cost of Proposals

- The cost of the Statutory Process will be contained within the Council's revenue resources.
- Capital cost of post 16 developments in high schools will be met from a successful bid to the 16-19 Capital Fund. This bid is approximately £29million.
- The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for capital and revenue funding of post 16 provision
- Schools will need to be able to contain capital and revenue costs within the funding provided by the Learning & Skills Council

Risks

If the Capital Bid is unsuccessful then the Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate will not be established as there are no other capital resources available to secure Borough wide investment.

If Statutory Notices are not published before 28 February 2006 the Council runs the risk of the proposals not being eligible for the transition period. The competitions process would then apply, and the Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate would be unlikely to proceed. Any such notices can only be published following careful consideration of the informal consultation.

If the LSC were to decide not to make capital funding available, the Council will be able to withdraw the proposals before they are determined and no duty to implement will arise.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate will not be established without funding from the LSC. This will have a negative impact on the 14-19 provision in Harrow.

There will be the potential for fragmentation of the current system built on partnership and collaboration, and potential to lose opportunities for external funding. The Objectives in the 14-19 Strategy will not be achieved and Harrow 14-19 provision will not be in line with Government Policy. There will be implications for the forthcoming Joint Area Review.

Section 2: Report

Brief History

Cabinet on 12 January 2006 gave approval in principle to the Harrow 14-19 Strategy. A key feature of the strategy is to establish the Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate. The Collegiate will involve all high schools and colleges in Harrow to increase choice for learners through an increased curriculum offer and range of institutions providing the curriculum. The Collegiate has the aspiration to achieve 100% of 16-18 year olds participating in training or education by 2010.

A summary of the Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate is in Appendix A.

16-19 Capital Fund

On 15 November 2005 the London West Learning and Skills Council (LWLSC) decided that the work already done in Harrow meant that the specification for applications to the 16-19 Capital Fund should not be opened up to the competition process in the London West region. The LWLSC agreed an Outline Specification for Expanding Post 16 Provision in Harrow, and invited Harrow to make a proposal. This was submitted at the end of January 2006. The proposal had two parts. Part One is a response to the LWLSC Invitation and Outline Specification. Part Two is a completed application form for the 16-19 Capital Fund.

Assessment Process

The Assessment process for the 16-19 Capital Fund is as follows:

Submission of the proposals to LWLSC by 28 February 2006. Part One was submitted on 31 January, and Part Two was submitted a few days later.

Part One of the proposal will be reviewed and assessed by a Stakeholder Panel comprising LSC staff and up to five independent panel members. Part Two will be assessed by the LWLSC's Property Advisor and Finance Director. The recommendations of these assessments will be considered by the Council of LWLSC on 21 March 2006.

The decision, including reasons for the decision, will be communicated in writing to key stakeholders within the week.

The decision will be recommended to the National Learning and Skills Council for a final decision at their meeting on 26 April 2006.

The Statutory Notice Process and Timeline

In recent years there has been extensive debate and consultation among key stakeholders in Harrow about developing post 16 provision in Harrow's high schools. There is broad agreement to the vision and plans that have been developed, and strong support has been forthcoming from the LWLSC and from the government at ministerial level.

Following consultation implementation of the Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate proposals will involve the publication of notices to change the age range of our high schools from 12-16 to 12-18 (11-16 to 11-18 voluntary aided schools). In order to meet the specific requirements of the transition period it is necessary for the notices to be published by 28 February 2006).

The timeline for the consultation and notices process is as follows:

February 2006	Consultation letters have been sent to all stakeholders, including parents. This consultation will conclude during February. Subject to the outcome of the consultation Statutory Notices may be published. In order to qualify for the LSC funding this needs to be done before 28 February 2006.
March 2006	Further formal consultations will occur during the notice period, to comply with the statutory requirements.
April 2006	Report to Cabinet on the outcomes of the statutory consultation.
May/June 2006	Determination of Statutory Notices by Cabinet or School Organisation Committee. (Note Cabinet can determine Notices if there are no objections)

A draft Statutory Notices and Consultation Plan is attached as Appendix B.

Options considered

The options considered have been outlined in previous Cabinet reports, and led to Cabinet in principle approving the establishment of a Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate.

Discussions were held with DfES earlier this year with a view to a possible 16-19 Virtual Academy being developed. However DfES decided not to take this proposal further.

Consultation

The 14-19 Strategy was developed with the full involvement of all the key partners, and included a stakeholder survey.

The Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate consultation will include all stakeholders in Harrow including students, parents, staff, work based providers as well as neighbouring Boroughs and Schools in accordance with DfES Guidance. The Collegiate Core Group will develop the consultation strategy and materials. It is expected that there will be a consultation document and a series of meetings at the schools and colleges. The members of the Collegiate Core Group will assist with the consultation meetings.

Financial Implications

There should be no financial implications to the Council of providing post 16 provision as the funding for post 16 is provided by the Learning and Skills Council. A successful bid to the 16-19 Capital Fund will secure approximately £29million capital investment across high school sites and the Skills Centre. All revenue costs will need to be contained within the funding provided by the Learning and Skills Council.

Legal Implications

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the Council to publish Statutory Notices to make any prescribed alteration to a community school. The closing of a school and the establishment of a school are prescribed alterations. The Act outlines the procedure to be followed. The initial requirement is informal consultation with all interested parties. The next step is the publishing of Statutory Notices if appropriate.

Once Statutory Notices have been published, legislation provides a statutory timescale in which comments can be made. If no objection is made the Council has a discretion as to whether to implement the proposal. If an objection is made the proposal must be referred to the School Organisation Committee (SOC) for a determination. If SOC agrees the proposals they must be implemented.

Equalities Impact

The Harrow 14-19 Strategy, together with the 16-19 Capital Fund bid, will enable comprehensive and inclusive provision in Harrow. This includes provision for levels 1 and 2, and provision for those Not in Education Employment or Training.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

The application of this strategy to achieve inclusive and comprehensive 14-19 provision will ensure that the Council is fulfilling its statutory obligation to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Appendices

Appendix A – Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate - An Overview

Appendix B – Statutory Notices and Consultation Plan

Information on deposit in Group Offices

Cabinet Report 12 January 2006

Consultation Guidance for 16-19 Competitions (published 15 December 2005)

16-19 Capital Fund Guidance: 2006-07 Onwards (published 15 December 2005)

LWLSC Outline Specification for Expanding Post 16 Provision in the London Borough of Harrow dated 15 November 2005, and the cover letter from Peter Pledger, Executive Director LWLSC

Expanding Post 16 Provision in the London Borough of Harrow – Criterion for Assessment of Proposal

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers should telephone 020 8420 9270