

Select Committee on Children's Services – 15 September 2008

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Building Schools for the Future and Academies

Purpose of Report

1. This report informs the Select Committee of progress with proposals for Building Schools for the Future and Academies.

Background

2. The Council made a bid for BSF Wave 6a and in parallel has expressed an interest in developing two academies; one to replace Castle High School, and one to replace Pensnett and Crestwood schools. The Wave 6a bid was turned down.
3. The DCSF have consulted on the management of BSF for Waves 7-15. There is a clear shift in emphasis on National Challenge schools and establishment of strong schools based on strong governance with an external element. Dudley is unlikely to be included in the BSF programme unless robust action is taken to improve the four schools below the floor target of 30% of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C GCSE grades including English and mathematics. Castle High School will be replaced by a new academy on its existing site. Pensnett will be replaced (along with Crestwood) with a new academy on the Crestwood site.
4. Work is now underway to ensure that Dudley will be included in BSF Wave 7, that is, from April 2009. A project manager has been appointed and a secondary headteacher has been seconded to support the development process.
5. A full report will be made to the Cabinet on 29 October 2008. Full consultation on the various proposals will take place during the autumn term, following Cabinet approval.

Finance

6. The development of academies will result in grant being reallocated from the Council to the academy directly.

Law


7. The procedure for establishing schools is contained in Part 1 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The provisions as to the requirements of Foundations is contained in section 33 of the Act.

Equality Impact

8. The development of Building Schools for the Future and Academies is aimed to ensure that all schools are housed in state-of-the-art facilities and provide the highest standards of education to all young people.
9. Young people will be fully involved in school design.

Recommendation

10. It is recommended that the Select Committee notes the report and keeps the progress under review through the BSF Working Group.



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