

HUMPHREY/THOMAS

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

30 July 2013

Report of the Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults

**DEVELOPMENT OF PROVISION FOR POST-16 STUDENTS WITH
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES AT HOPE VALLEY
COLLEGE – (Children & Young People)**

1. **Purpose of Report** To seek Cabinet approval to additional capital and revenue funding for the project at Hope Valley College to secure high quality provision for Post-16 students with severe and complex learning difficulties and disabilities at the Academy. The project will also provide a purpose-designed base for the area's Multi-Agency Team (MAT).
2. **Information and Analysis**
 - 2.1 In March 2012, Cabinet agreed to grant a capital allocation of £350,000 to provide a modular building to create a base for a Post-16 learning hub for disabled young people aged 16 to 18 at Hope Valley College. A detailed assessment of emerging needs, which included discussion with young people and their families, had highlighted the lack of suitable Post-16 provision in the High Peak area of the county if young people sought to continue their education and preparation for adulthood and employment in a mainstream setting. As Hope Valley College was already meeting the needs of younger secondary aged students with learning difficulties and disabilities effectively, including some with severe and complex difficulties, the College was identified as the most suitable base for the new development.
 - 2.2 In addition to this capital allocation of £350,000, a sum of £130,000 has been held in reserve and earmarked to fund a Multi-Agency Team base at Hope Valley College; this to be funded from an allocation of £2.513m approved by Cabinet in December 2009 to support the co-location of services on school sites across the Authority. The MAT base on the school site would provide services not only to Hope Valley College, but also to its primary school feeders and the local community, helping families who need targeted support. The co-located team would provide an easily accessible point of contact with services for school staff, children, young people and parents. This would meet the need, identified in consultation, for services to be more accessible within local communities. However, service delivery would be developed to allow for discretion and

confidentiality, and avoid any stigmatisation children might feel entering premises identified for welfare issues.

- 2.3 Hence, the combined budget available for a new building to serve both purposes was £480,000. At that stage, the approved budget was based on a modular building of a similar size to that required to house the Post-16 base and the MAT Team, but information was not available with regard to local planning requirements or ground conditions on the site.
- 2.4 A planning application was submitted to the Peak Park Planning Authority in July 2012 and Sport England, as a statutory consultee, raised an objection. It proved impossible to overcome that objection; however, the design of the building was enhanced to satisfy the planning authority and the application was finally considered in December 2012. The Peak Park Planning Authority supported the application; but it was required to refer it to the Secretary of State for the Environment to consider the Sport England objection. Planning permission was subsequently granted in March 2013.
- 2.5 Once the final design was agreed with the planning authority, a detailed costing took place. The planning demands had changed the roof structure and enhanced the external appearance to ensure that it was sympathetic to the local environment. Those changes, together with the need to provide new utility supplies to the site, have resulted in an increase in the budget required to a total of £656,000 including £10,000 for loose furniture and equipment.
- 2.6 The Academy has also been in protracted discussions with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to amend its designation from 11-16 to 11-18. Staff have now been employed by the school and a very small number of young people are currently on roll. Given that the designated age range of Hope Valley College as 11-18 was still to be resolved, the young people have been admitted by New Mills School, an active 'Peak 11 Schools' partner. The EFA has now agreed to amend the school's designation from 11-16 to 11-18 with effect from 1st September 2014.

3. Financial Considerations

Capital

- 3.1 The previously approved £350,000 was to be funded from the 2008/10 CAYA Capital Programme (Modernisation Fund). In addition, in a Cabinet report of 22 December 2009, a sum of £2.513m was confirmed to support the co-location of services on school sites, from which £130,000 was subsequently held in reserve and earmarked to fund a Multi-Agency Team base at Hope Valley College. That team is to be accommodated in the new building and therefore those funds are available to support the project. The shortfall would therefore be £176,000 which can be met from savings in the 2012/13 CAYA Capital Programme which currently total approximately £375,000.

Revenue

- 3.2 The first academic year's (2012/13) revenue costs of the facility (£289,000) were met from previous years' underspends against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The original intention for 2013/14, had the College been granted post-16 status earlier, was that the first £10,000 of each placement's costs would have been funded via the Education Funding Agency (EFA) with the Authority picking up any additional costs out of the High Needs Block element of the DSG.
- 3.3 As post-16 status will not be in place by 1st September 2013, in order to maintain provision for the students already on roll the Authority would have to subsidise the provision for a further year in full. Assuming that 9 students attend, the gross revenue cost for 2013/14 would be around £272,000. As the College is not registered for post-16 provision, the students would instead be registered on the roll of New Mills School for administrative purposes. This should bring funding in from the EFA of between £20,000 and £30,000.
- 3.4 The net cost, excluding the above income, is therefore expected to be no more than £252,000. It is proposed that a sum of £252,000 be set aside from DSG underspends to meet the costs of Hope Valley College post-16 provision for the academic year 2013/14.
- 3.5 The gross cost per pupil is currently relatively high at £30,000 per student as the current accommodation within the School has limited the initial cohort to 9 students. With the proposed modular building the capacity would rise to 24 students. At maximum capacity the annual cost of the provision would then be around £360,000 per year, which equates to £15,000 per student. This rate is comparable with that payable in respect of the Authority's special school provision, e.g. Peak and Ashgate Croft Schools. The comparison would be even more favourable if the costs of transport and/or residential provision were included in the analysis, or if the potential alternative placements were to be an independent or non-maintained special school with post-16 provision or an independent specialist provider college; i.e. an 'out county placement'.
4. **Human Resources Considerations** The staff working in the Centre are employed by the Academy, as confirmed in a Cabinet report of 13th March 2012. Currently the staffing at the Centre comprises a Head of Centre, a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA), two Teaching Assistants (TAs) and an Administration Assistant. The Academy will appoint additional staff as pupil numbers increase.
5. **Legal and Human Rights Considerations** The County Council granted a lease for a term of 125 years to Hope Valley College, when it converted to an Academy in September 2011. There was an agreement with the College that they would grant to the Council a sub-lease to provide land for a building for the provision of post 16 education.

6. **Property Considerations** The Peak Park Planning Authority has granted planning permission for the project. The property will be owned by Derbyshire County Council and the project will be managed and procured by the Authority.
7. **Equality of Opportunity Considerations** The development of such provision would considerably enhance the opportunities available for young people with significant and complex learning difficulties and disabilities to access local learning opportunities and be active participants within the community.
8. **Other Considerations** In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered:- Prevention of Crime & Disorder, Equality of Opportunity; and Environmental, Health, Human Rights Considerations.
9. **Key Decision?** No.
10. **Is it required that the call-in period be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed within the report?** No.
11. **Strategic Director's Recommendations** That Cabinet:
 - 11.1 agrees to proceed with the proposed capital project at Hope Valley College to create a Post-16 learning hub for disabled young people aged 16 to 18 together with a Multi-Agency Team base;
 - 11.2 approves an additional capital allocation of £176,000 from savings in the 2012/13 CAYA Capital Programme, thus increasing the approved capital budget for this project to £656,000;
 - 11.3 agrees to set aside £252,000 from the DSG underspend to meet the net revenue costs of the provision for 2013/14;
 - 11.4 notes that the pupils will be registered at Hope Valley College from September 2014 following the re-designation of the College's age range from 11-16 to 11-18.

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults