

Item No.	Classification:	Date:	MEETING NAME
	Open	20/05/03	Executive
Report title:		Sixth Form Provision – The Charter School	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All - with most impact on South Camberwell, East Dulwich and Village wards	
From:		Strategic Director of Education & Culture	

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 That the Executive supports the proposal to open The Charter School sixth form in September 2004, thereby enabling local consultation to commence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2 On 27th November 1998 the Council issued a statutory notice indicating its intention to open a new school on the site of the former Dulwich High School for Boys subject to closure of the latter being implemented.
- 3 The new school, now known as The Charter School, was intended to provide for pupils between 11 and 18 years of age and was to open one year group at a time. Consequently, the original statutory notice indicated an intention to open the sixth form provision in September 2005.
- 4 Approval to open the new 11-18 mixed secondary school in September 2000 was received from the Secretary of State for Education and Employment on 14th May 1999. The letter made no reference to when students of various ages might be admitted, this being a matter for consideration at a local level.
- 5 The report of the area-wide inspection in the borough of Southwark was published in July 2001. The report gave a picture of a deprived area where sixth forms, the FE College, training providers and the Careers Service are doing their best against the odds to bring better chances to young people, but where there is an urgent need to develop real coherence and consistency of high quality education and training provision.
- 6 The Council and its partners are determined to change this situation and to improve the range and standards of learning opportunities for young people in the area. Southwark is a diverse part of London which is undergoing profound changes in its infrastructure which will impact on the lives of its residents. Major social and economic opportunities are opening up, from the South Bank with its major international arts and cultural sector to the reconstruction of the Peckham housing estates. This extensive urban regeneration is intended to provide increased employment chances, improved housing and transport and a better environment for residents of the borough. The wide range of cultural and linguistic diversity within Southwark offers providers the opportunity to create a vibrant and exciting learning environment for all learners. The recognition of this is of paramount importance for future curriculum development.
- 7 The strategic objectives of the Council and its partners are:
 - To achieve a step change improvement in prospects for all young people through a coordinated strategy for Post 16 education and training, based on collaborative partnership working. This will be backed up by a coherent and effective infrastructure which maximises the use of all available resources.

- To make significant improvements in Post 16 staying on rates and achievements, at least in line with the National Learning Targets
- To provide a wider and more appropriate range of high quality and cost-effective education and training opportunities linked to local labour market needs.
- To enable all young people to make informed education and career choices based on impartial information and guidance.
- To develop cross-borough quality and evaluation systems to improve the effectiveness of provision, and the value added to learners' achievements.

Current Post 16 provision is delivered by Southwark College, Archbishop Michael Ramsey College, St Saviour's and St Olave's and Bacon's City Technology College. The development plan envisaged growth in provision through the two new city academies at Warwick Park (sixth form opening in 2004) and Paterson Park (sixth form opening in 2008) and through the opening of The Charter School sixth form in 2005.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 8 The headteacher of The Charter School has always been clear of the advantages of opening the sixth form alongside development of courses at Key Stage 4. The main advantage is that the school will be well placed to offer accelerated learning opportunities for its existing students. In addition, recruitment of staff to teach classes in years 10 and 11 can be combined with recruitment of staff to teach post 16 courses.
- 9 It is intended that those pupils to join the Sixth Form in September 2004 would be amongst those not likely to be retained in the Borough's existing Sixth Form provision. This provision will help meet the strategy of increasing the number of Southwark residents studying in Southwark establishments.
- 10 The school has published its intended admissions criteria. The ultimate intention is clearly that the majority of Sixth Form students will transfer from the school's own Key Stage 4 provision. In the interim, however, admissions criteria needs to reflect a different pattern, and consultation with the DfES has raised no difficulty in that respect.
- 11 To progress the proposals, given that they differ from the Statutory Notice, the LEA needs to carry out a further consultation exercise with those most likely to be affected by the opening of the sixth form. These include neighbouring LEAs, local residents' groups, neighbouring schools and other post 16 providers serving the area.
- 12 If the Executive agrees with the proposals in this report, it is intended to move immediately to a six week consultation exercise with all interested parties in the locality. This process should be completed by mid-July allowing for a formal proposal to be put to the School Organisation Committee at the earliest opportunity, probably its first meeting in the Autumn Term. Assuming the outcome of the consultation and the SOC deliberations agree to a start date of September 2004, the school can commence recruitment to the sixth form during the latter half of the Autumn Term and through the Spring Term.

Policy implications

- 13 As indicated, statutory approval for sixth form provision at the Charter has already been granted. This proposal will further the aims and objectives of the 16-19 strategy of the Council which is aimed at raising educational standards across the borough.

Effect of proposed changes on those affected

- 14 This proposal will allow broad consultation amongst those likely to be affected to ensure that adequate post-16 provision within a school setting is available for young people in the south of the borough.
- 15 If agreed, the early opening will facilitate better learning opportunities for pupils already studying at The Charter School and will offer learning opportunities for pupils that currently have to seek a place at fee paying institutions. The provision of additional places within a community school for students wishing to continue in education will make a significant contribution to widening access to further and higher education for young people in the borough.

Resource implications

- 16 Funding of post 16 provision is now handled by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). They have indicated that funding for the new sixth form will be provided in September 2004 provided the School Organisation Committee has approved the opening date and the requisite information is made available to the LSC funding unit.
- 17 The LSC makes no provision for start up costs in respect of sixth forms save that their funding year runs from 1st August so revenue will be available one month ahead of students commencing their studies. The school estimate the revenue costs of setting up the sixth form provision at £17,000.
- 18 Given where responsibility for sixth form funding lies, there is no requirement on the Council to provide any additional revenue funding for this proposal.
- 19 The school has estimated that they will need to spend an additional £33,000 on furniture and equipment and are assuming that some capital funding will be forthcoming to cover this over the next three years. No provision is made in the capital programme for additional expenditure of this nature. The school is in receipt of devolved capital from April 2003 of some £43,000.

Consultation

- 20 The intended outcome of this report is to initiate a further consultation exercise in the locality. This consultation should be no less than four weeks and should, if practical, avoid any period when schools and other educational establishments might be closed. This consultation needs to be carried out after gaining the support of the LEA for the proposal.

Concurrent Report of Borough Solicitor & Secretary

To follow.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
<i>Statutory Notices</i>	<i>JSH</i>	<i>Martin Wilcox</i>
<i>Secretary of State Approval</i>	<i>JSH</i>	<i>Martin Wilcox</i>

APPENDIX A

Audit Trail

Lead Officer	Roger Smith, Strategic Director of Education & Culture	
Report Author	Mike Smith (Head of Strategy & Resources, Atkins Education)	
Version	Final	
Dated	12 May 2003	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
<i>Officer Title</i>	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor & Secretary	Yes	No
Chief Finance Officer	No	No
Executive Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services		12 May 2003