



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
All

**FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:**

**C&YP Scrutiny  
Cabinet**

**15<sup>th</sup> March 2011  
21<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

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**CONSULTATION ON THE POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF ELLESMERE COLLEGE  
TO THE RIVERSIDE SITE**

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**Report of the Strategic Director Children**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to secure Cabinet approval to begin consultation upon the possible relocation of Ellesmere College as part of the BSF programme to part of the Riverside School site when it becomes available. The purpose of this consultation will be to establish community views upon this proposal, determine what complementary facilities the local and schools community would like to see on the site and to research the use of the site as a learning village.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS (OR OPTIONS)**

- 2.1 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider this report and make any comments it wishes for consideration by Cabinet.
- 2.2 Cabinet is recommended to:
- I. Approve the start of consultations over the possible relocation of Ellesmere College onto part of the Riverside site.
  - II. Support the development of Ellesmere College as a city-wide and regional sports and vocational centre offering facilities for disabled students as well as mainstream students.
  - III. Endorse the approach to consultation on the possible relocation of Ellesmere College as the first stage in the development of a vibrant learning village on the Riverside College site offering a wide-range of educational, community and business facilities for the benefit of the local community and the whole of the City.

### 3. REPORT

- 3.1 The Council's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Strategy for Change (SfC) was approved by Cabinet in November 2009 and conditionally approved by Partnership for Schools (PfS) in April 2010. The SfC updated the previously approved Leicester BSF Strategic Business Case (SBC) and as one of the significant changes to the original SBC, the SfC included all special schools (except Oaklands) with the SEN/Inclusion Strategy forming a key part of the developing educational strategy for the City. One of the options considered in the SfC was the relocation of Ellesmere onto another school's site to address the significant challenges Ellesmere faces (see section 3.3. below). Following the efficiency savings exercise required by the Government in November 2010, the Government BSF capital funding for Ellesmere has reduced by 19.3%. The available funding is now estimated as £11.95m, including ICT.
- 3.2 Ellesmere College is a 250 cohort Special School with additional students attending on a part-time basis through their "LINKS" programme. The College became a Specialist Sports College in 2006 and is affiliated to the Youth Sport Trust. However, the College has no playing fields. Ellesmere originally met the needs of Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) students but now offers facilities to students with a variety of needs across the SEN spectrum. The College is currently deemed as "Good" by Ofsted but a move to part of the Riverside site would afford the College the opportunity to become Outstanding.
- 3.3 Current challenges for the school include:
- I. A shortfall of accommodation.
  - II. The site is extremely compact with no external space other than within the courtyard formed by buildings and one hard play area located to the side of the school.
  - III. There is a shortage of small spaces to support small groups and individual work, necessary for the wide range of complex students now accommodated at Ellesmere to achieve their potential.
  - IV. The existing Sixth Form facilities do not adequately support the curriculum nor the students in making a successful transition to adulthood and the world of further and higher education, training or work.
  - V. Additional space is required to accommodate an increased roll and facilitate curriculum and sporting links with mainstream schools and multi-agency working.
  - VI. Ellesmere is a specialist sports college with no on-site playing fields.
  - VII. There are insufficient drop off/pick up and parking facilities leading to the hard play area being used as a substitute with the teaching staff acting as a human barrier to ensure safety.
  - VIII. Special Needs transport causes a significant congestion problem in the surrounding residential streets.
  - IX. Visiting staff from other agencies working in the school have to park in Ellesmere Road adding congestion to a residential area.
  - X. The existing site offers limited opportunities for expansion as the site is bounded by rear gardens on three sides and a residential street.
  - XI. If Ellesmere was not relocated an existing CLASP type building would have to be demolished and replaced. This would require a very complex decant strategy which would be difficult to achieve without placing additional stress on vulnerable

students and costing significant amounts which could be used for lasting benefits of students rather than lost as short-term accommodation costs.

- XII. A remodelling/refurbishment of the existing site would cause severe disruption to vulnerable students who require a stable environment and familiar surroundings.
- XIII. Relocation to a larger site with substantial playing fields would allow Ellesmere to meet their aspirations of becoming a centre for sporting excellence and a hub for community activities.
- XIV. A move to the Riverside site would allow the development of on-site Independent Living facilities.
- XV. The Riverside site is only a short distance from the existing Ellesmere College site, so established community links would be preserved.
- XVI. The Ellesmere site would be available for sale and/or development, which could generate capital receipts and or provide opportunities for alternative use.

- 3.4 Preliminary discussions have been held with Ward Councillors, Principals, Chairs of Governors and staff to make sure they are fully informed of the potential for this development and the options being considered.

Once Cabinet approval has been secured for this proposal to consult, a full and extensive consultation with all key stakeholders, including the local community, will be conducted. The purpose of this consultation will be to establish community views upon this proposal, determine what complementary facilities the local and schools community would like to see on the site and to research the use of the site as a learning village.

- 3.5 Riverside is a large site and any future planning with regard to the relocation of Ellesmere onto this site will need to consider the required footprint of the Ellesmere school provision. This will be particularly important if complementary provision and a 'learning village' model is to be developed on the site with multi-agency service delivery.

## **5. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1. Financial Implications**

- 5.1.1 The financial implications of closing Riverside College have previously been considered in the appropriate reports.

The implications of relocating Ellesmere College and developing the wider provision described in this report will need to be determined in detail should the proposals move forward. However, these are expected to include variations in any capital receipts that might otherwise have been received from the disposal of all or part of either site; the affordability of the proposed developments in capital and revenue terms covering both the BSF and school aspect and other aspects falling outside of BSF and the Schools Budget; and any residual costs at the Ellesmere site pending future usage being determined and actioned.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, Investing in Children, ext 29 7750

## 5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 Under the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) 2007 Regulations, statutory consultation on the transfer of the site is not required where the main entrance of the school on the proposed new site would be within 2 miles of the main entrance of the school on its current site unless the school is transferring to a new site within the area of another local education authority.
- 1.2.2 The Disability Discrimination Act will need to be kept in mind at all times during review, consultation and provision of the new facilities at the Riverside site if this proposal proceeds. It is assumed that the provision of transport to the new school will not become a legal issue due to the proximity of the two sites. Any access issues should be dealt with at the planning stage.
- 1.2.3 Some employees may be affected by TUPE, Ellesmere staff will transfer to the new Riverside site on existing terms and conditions, and again it is assumed that this will be facilitated by the close proximity of the sites. There are no known Service Tenancies. The school governing body (or a temporary body for the period of transfer) must be maintained while the transitional procedure takes place.
- 5.2.4 In relation to the communications strategy as a matter of good practice notice outlining the plans should be placed on both sites.

Susan Metson Legal Officer, Legal Services, Ext 29 6349

## 1.3 Climate Change Implications

The relocation of Ellesmere College to part of the Riverside site is likely to result in an increased carbon footprint for the school due to the increase size of the premises. However, it should be possible through any refurbishment or renovation work to reduce the carbon emissions of the school and energy efficiency measures will need to be addressed as and when any plans for the Riverside site are developed.

Helen Lansdown, Senior Environmental Consultant - Sustainable Procurement

## 6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph references within the report
Equal Opportunities	Yes	Throughout
Policy	Yes	Throughout
Sustainable and Environmental	Yes	Paragraph 5.3
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	

Elderly/People on Low Income	No	
Corporate Parenting	No	
Health Inequalities Impact	Yes	Throughout. Enhanced sports facilities and opportunity for a broader curriculum.

**7. RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX**

Risk	Likelihood L/M/H	Severity Impact L/M/H	Control Actions (if necessary/appropriate)
1.Reputational damage caused by developing the Riverside site having recently closed Riverside School	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated Project Manager secured to drive all aspects of the project including communications/consultation work stream</li> <li>Communications/PR specialist allocated to the work stream.</li> </ul>

L – Low  
M – Medium  
H - High

L – Low  
M – Medium  
H - High

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Strategy for Change November 2009  
Cabinet Report on SFC November 2009  
Scrutiny Notes

**9. CONSULTATIONS**

School Principal Ellesmere School  
School Principal Riverside School  
Chair of Governor’s Ellesmere School  
Chair of Governor’s Riverside School  
Staff at Ellesmere School and Riverside School

**10. REPORT AUTHOR**

Helen Ryan  
Divisional Director Property  
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<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Reason</b>	Is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward
<b>Appeared in Forward Plan</b>	Yes
<b>Executive or Council Decision</b>	Executive (Cabinet)