



Vocational Centre at Sinfin Community School

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The DfES 14-19 Implementation Plan makes a commitment to establishing Specialised Diplomas as new qualifications to be piloted from September 2008. The DfES has made available capital funding to 14-19 partnerships to achieve this.
- 1.2 The proposal is to bid for funding in order to build a new construction facility and refurbish existing accommodation as an engineering facility on the Sinfin Community School site. These new facilities would enhance the overall provision at the school.
- 1.3 The facilities will offer both the engineering and construction specialised diplomas, as well as other related vocational courses to a range of pupils from Sinfin Community School, neighbouring schools and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)..
- 1.4 The scheme build will be funded through a combination of DfES capital funding, 14-19 Area Wide Inspection money and 16-19 capital funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The centre will be managed by Sinfin Community School in partnership with neighbouring secondary schools, the PRU and Derby College.
- 1.5 Cabinet approved a bid to the LSC for £165,000 to upgrade the existing Learn to Work Vocational Centre on Grampian Way in Sinfin on 18 July 2006. Under this latest scheme that funding would contribute instead to the Vocational Centre at Sinfin Community School and the proposed developments at the Learn to Work Centre would not take place.
- 1.6 Subject to any issues raised at the meeting, I support the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To rescind the earlier decision of Council Cabinet to bid for funding to upgrade the Learn to Work Vocational Centre on Grampian Way in Sinfin.
- 2.2 To carry out detailed feasibility and design work on the proposed centre at Sinfin Community School, in lieu of the option previously approved for the Learn to Work Centre.
- 2.3 To approve submission of a bid for external funding for the full cost of the facilities to the DfES and LSC's 16-19 Capital Fund.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The DfES 14-19 Implementation Plan announced new qualifications to increase choice and diversity in 14-19 provision. Capital funding from the DfES to support bids to pilot Specialised diplomas is only available in the financial year 2007-08.
- 3.2 The DfES are looking for flagship projects as forerunners to local authorities' main BSF proposals. The replacement of Sinfin Secondary school is currently being developed as a Pathfinder scheme so this is an opportunity to join up funding and enhance vocational provision on the site.
- 3.3 The proposal supports targets in the Derby Strategic Plan for 14-19 Education and both local and national LSC targets. This will be a more effective and sustainable use of funding than the earlier proposal.



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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 This centre, based at Sinfin Community School, would offer the new Specialised Diplomas in engineering and construction, as well as a range of other qualifications in these occupational areas. They would be accessible to young people in the 14-16 age group across Sinfin, Allenton, Alvaston, Normanton, Littleover and Mickleover. There will also be opportunities for vocational courses for 16-19 year olds, delivered in partnership with Derby College.
- 1.2 The centre would increase the capacity to deliver vocational courses in areas which have been identified as skill shortage areas by the Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The existing facilities in the city to deliver construction and engineering courses are at capacity.
- 1.3 The centre would aim to give young people access to a broader curriculum choice. It would also aim to help reduce the number of young people who, on leaving school at 16, are not in education, employment or training.
- 1.4 The Council, with the LSC, is responsible for the planning and funding of 14-19 learning and we have previously identified these areas in our strategic plan.
- 1.5 A 14-19 partnership has recently been formed to discharge these responsibilities. The partnership includes the local authority, the LSC, secondary schools, Connexions and Derby College.
- 1.6 The DfES have an assessment process known as the "Gateway" for deciding which 14-19 partnerships should be funded to pilot Specialised Diplomas. A bid, to the "Gateway", outlining a partnerships readiness to offer the Specialised Diploma needs to be submitted to the DfES by the 11 December 2006. Any capital bid to the LSC to support developments needs to be submitted at the same time. Feasibility and design work is required to determine the design, location and cost of the facilities for the capital bid.
- 1.7 The result of our bids should be known by February 2007.
- 1.8 The Learn to Work site on Grampian Way was also considered as an option and a bid for funding was approved by Cabinet on 18 July 2006. An initial feasibility study has raised concerns over security, governance and sustainability. This is supported by evidence from other Local Authorities over the building of free standing facilities.

- 1.9 Further research brought forward the possibility of refurbishing and extending a building on the Sinfin School site which had not been damaged by the fire. This building is of a higher specification and would create a better quality learning environment for students and allow for a greater range of vocational learning to be offered to students.
- 1.10 The original proposal included access for PRU students to construction facilities. This will still be possible in the new vocational centre on the school site.
- 1.11 Provision for the Youth Service was also included in the plan approved by Cabinet on 18 July 2006. However, the capital funding to support enhanced Youth Service facilities from the Youth Opportunities Fund is only available for spending up to March 2007 and neither the Learn to Work nor the Sinfin School proposal would meet this spending deadline. The Youth Service has, therefore, located an alternative site for provision within Sinfin.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This funding cannot be used for any other purpose other than that outlined in the “Gateway” guidance conditions issued by the DfES.
- 2.2 The Learn to Work site on Grampian Way was also considered as an option and approved by Cabinet on 18 July 2006 but due to concerns over security, governance, sustainability and the evidence from other Local Authorities over the building of free standing facilities, it is recommended that this option should not be taken forward.

For more information contact:	Graeme Ferguson, 01332 868380, graeme.ferguson@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – DfES Specialised Diploma Capital Bid Guidance - Annex C

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1.1 Four funding streams will contribute to the project:

1. DfES - Specialised Diploma capital funding
2. DfES - Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Pathfinder Wave 2 Vocational Education Demonstration Project
3. Derby City 14-19 Area Wide Inspection funding
4. LSC - 16-19 Capital funding

Plans will be prepared for the full range of facilities to be offered. However, if any of the bids are unsuccessful, the scope of the facilities will be appropriately scaled back.

- 1.2 The DfES capital to support Specialised Diplomas is in place to address college and school capital projects that lead to the piloting of Specialised Diplomas in line with DfES 14-19 Implementation Plan. The fund cannot be used for other schemes. The DfES have £40 million of funding to allocate to approximately 40 projects. The guidance states that 20% of the capital cost needs to be found from other funding sources. These funds have been secured through the 14-19 Area Wide Inspection money.
- 1.3 The DfES, “Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Pathfinder Wave 2 Vocational Education Demonstration Project” funding has not yet been formally announced. A formal bid will need to be submitted.
- 1.4 The detailed costings, based on similar facilities in other Local Authorities areas, are currently being developed to inform the bid.
- 1.5 Funding from the 14-19 Area Wide Inspection money will fund the initial feasibility and design works required for submitting the bid to the DfES and LSC.

Legal

- 2 Planning permission would be required.

Personnel

- 3 None arising directly from this proposal.

Equalities impact

4. The new provision will offer full accessibility and modern facilities capable of meeting a wide range of educational and physical needs.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. Capital investment in schools will contribute to the corporate objective to provide a stimulating and high quality learning environment and the corporate priority of raising educational achievement.

Annex C

Guidance on Applications for Capital Support

Summary

This guidance aims to inform local authorities (LAs), schools, colleges and other providers about the allocation of the Diploma Gateway capital support. Ministers have agreed for £40 million to be made available in 2007-08, for consortia preparing to deliver Diplomas in 2008.

Applications must be made through your LA alongside your December self-assessment submission to the Gateway. All applications will require a statement of support from the LA on the strategic fit of the proposal.

We expect the capital support will be provided to around 40 partnerships to support the delivery of 14-19 Reforms. From the areas that are successful in the Gateway exercise, we will select at a national level which consortia proposals to support. This support would be for:

- Consortia where the projects are at an advanced planning stage or the project has already started and an injection of capital is essential (this will need to be referred to in your self-assessment); and,
- Partnerships where there is a very robust bid for the Gateway and we could be confident the consortia would use the money well and quickly.

In all cases the projects would need to assure us that the capital could be spent during the financial year 2007-08.

Priorities for allocation of capital support

Projects should make clear how the proposal will contribute to raising standards for 14-19 year olds and increasing participation post-16. The DfES is seeking bids which will particularly demonstrate evidence of how a project will:

- Provide greater flexibility and choice in the curriculum at Key Stage 4 and post-16 in order to offer the Diplomas, and to increase engagement with a wide range of pupils;
- Make high quality facilities available to provide a professional experience, enabling high quality applied and practical teaching and learning, within a context that clearly reflects employment; and
- Enhance collaborative working between consortia providers.

The funding will be available as capital grant for investment in buildings, equipment (e.g. engineering equipment) or ICT, which would be used across the partnership and will enhance delivery of the 14-19 Reforms, particularly the Diplomas.

Proposals should be designed to raise standards, and must demonstrate value for money. The intention is to get some exemplar areas for the 2008 diplomas, which others could also visit for ideas.

Coverage of project proposals

Applications should be set out in **no more than two sides of A4**, and will need to cover:

- Details about the overall project including how this capital proposal fits with the 14-19 vision for partnership working to deliver Diplomas from 2008, and how the proposal will link to future BSF planning;
- The involvement of the individual schools, colleges and other providers in the partnership including how the funding would be used, the overall cost of the project, and details of other sources of funding; and,
- The outcome that will be achieved as a result of the additional investment made.

Applications will be assessed against the above criteria. The two sides of A4 should therefore be set out to clearly cover each of these three sections.

Information on the DfES's guidance regarding best practice in design, use and management of school facilities can be found at:
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/schoolbuildings/>

Basis of allocations

Proposals, whether focused on school, FE or joint projects, should include at least a 20% contribution from other sources, details of which should be set out in the application. For example, this could include schools' own formulaic capital funding, college reserves, contributions from the LA or other funding body or employer sponsorship. VA schools usually receive grant at the rate of 90% (the 10% contribution by the Governing Body would form part of the 20% overall contribution).

We expect to fund applications up to £1m for partnerships. Exceptional proposals (e.g. involving new build) will be considered on an individual basis.

The deadline is 11 December, to be submitted alongside your self-assessment submission for the Gateway. All submissions should be sent by the LA in both hard copy and by e-mail to:

Project Officer
Diploma Gateway Unit
Cambridge Education Limited
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS
diploma.gateway@camb-ed.com

Submissions must be received no later than
5:00 p.m. on Monday 11 December 2006.

Allocations will be made through LAs for school based projects. For colleges, applications will be accepted from consortia including a wide range of providers including those in the private school sector or work-based learning sector. The consortia will however need to identify a lead partner which should be either a school or college.

This is a one-off injection of capital support to pump prime exemplar projects. Longer term funding will largely be through our main schools capital programmes, such as BSF and formulaic capital funding and LSC administered capital programmes including the 16-19 Capital Fund and the FE renewal and modernisation fund.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance you can e-mail:
ask.gateway@dfes.gsi.gov.uk