



The academies programme: the proposed academy at Shene

December 2009

A message from the Director of Children's Services and Culture

This leaflet provides a brief update on the exciting and ambitious proposal for an academy at Shene, and how we believe it will enable the school to become the natural first choice for local parents.

As you may know, in the summer we chose Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) as the lead sponsor for the proposal. AET are an impressive organisation, with a track record of bringing about school improvement briskly and efficiently. We have already formed an excellent partnership with them, which will undoubtedly strengthen as the proposal progresses.

I would like to thank the parent-governors of local primary schools who met with me in June, and the many parents, headteachers, governors, teachers and ward-councillors who helpfully sent me their views on what they wanted from their local secondary school.

As the proposal moves forward over the weeks ahead, it is vital that we hear your views, and those of other local parents and residents. I therefore very much look forward to hearing your thoughts at the consultation meetings in the New Year.



Nick Whitfield

Director of Children's Services and Culture

What has happened since September?

The high-level outline of the proposal, the 'Expression of Interest', was approved by the Council's Children's Services and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 November and by its Cabinet on 23 November 2009. Vernon Coaker, the Minister of State for Schools and Learners, then approved the document at the beginning of December. That means that the proposal is now in the 'Feasibility' stage, in which it will be developed in greater detail and widely consulted upon to ensure that it meets local people's criteria and wishes for a local secondary school.

The Expression of Interest explains that the proposal is for a 1,100 capacity academy for children and young people aged 11 to 16. AET will be the main sponsor, bringing their skills and experience of rapidly and sustainably transforming schools, and the Council will be co-sponsor. Co-sponsorship means that we will work closely in partnership with AET, and that the academy, if approved, would stay firmly within the local family of schools and play a full part in all the current successful arrangements for admissions, inclusion, special educational needs and other matters.

What will happen next?

AET representatives and Council officers will meet and consult with local parents, and other people, at Shene and local primary schools. In Feasibility, AET will work closely with staff at the school and with Council officers to develop their overarching vision. That vision will be outlined in a brochure that will clearly explain how the proposal would be implemented if approved. The brochure will be published early in the New Year.

There will then be a statutory consultation process in which parents and other local people will have six weeks to give their views on the proposed closure, on 31 August 2010, of the existing school and its replacement by the proposed academy the following day. That consultation will last from Friday 8 January until Friday 19 February 2010.

The responses of parent and other local people to the consultation will be considered, at its meeting in March, by the Council's Cabinet which will then decide whether or not to approve the proposal to close the existing school and replace it with an AET-sponsored academy. The aim remains that, subject to local views and decisions, the new academy would open at the beginning of the 2010/2011 academic year.

Consultation meetings

Meetings are being arranged at Shene and local primary schools and dates will be circulated in the New Year.

Further information

For more information on the Academies Programme, including development of the proposed academies at Hampton and Whitton, please contact:

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Alternatively, please view information given at www.richmond.gov.uk/academies

The AET website can be accessed at: www.academiesenterprisetrust.org.

The Expression of Interest document can be viewed at: http://www.richmond.gov.uk/shene_expression_of_interest_-_final_24_november_2009-3.pdf



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