

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
DECISION DATE:	On or after 23 September 2023	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3445
TITLE:	Bath College SEND Residential Provision	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> None		

### 1 THE ISSUE

To meet the priorities outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020 to 2024 the Local Authority has worked in conjunction with Bath College on the proposal to build a specially designed residential provision at the Somer Valley Campus. The new build unit and provision would meet the needs of young people with SEND needing to prepare for independent living, who would otherwise attend provision out of B&NES. Once built, the offer will be to provide a registered care provision, both Ofsted and CQC registered to deliver personal care and education activity, for 12 high needs young people that would be linked to courses at the existing Bath College SEND Centre. The proposal has included social care teams who jointly fund high cost out-of-county educational placements. To progress this, the requirement is for a council project of £4m to build the SEND residential unit at the Somer Valley Campus.

### 2 RECOMMENDATION

**The Cabinet Member is asked to:**

- 2.1 Give full approval to the capital project of £4m as a grant allocation to Bath College to build a 12-bed residential unit on the College land at the Somer Valley campus. This is within the spend set by the Council.
- 2.2 Delegate to the Director of Education & Safeguarding, in consultation with the 151 Officer, to enter into capital grant and operating agreements with Bath College for the provision of SEND residential placements - through a new build unit.

### 3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The vision for the residential unit attached to the SEND Centre at Bath College is a long-standing joint SEN/College vision that would meet the needs of young people with SEND preparing for independent living, who would otherwise attend provision out of B&NES. Once built, the offer will be to provide a registered care provision, both Ofsted and CQC registered to deliver personal care and education activity, for 12 high needs young people that would be linked to courses at the existing Bath College SEND Centre. The proposal has included social care teams who jointly fund high cost out-of-county educational placements.
- 3.2 A full feasibility study has been completed and a preferred and deliverable option agreed by both the Council and the College. The feasibility study full budget cost estimate is £4m, all funded by service supported borrowing, and has been built into our provisional capital programme.
- 3.3 The proposal is for a grant arrangement to the college to build the unit on their land, for college use and which they will own and fully maintain and run. The use of this provision will be in partnership with Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care and SEND.
- 3.4 There are demonstrable revenue savings annually for the Council, from Adult Social Care and Joint Agency Panel budgets, approximating an estimated £840K per annum available towards capital borrowing costs of £312K, with further education and health savings of £886K and £225K ringfenced to service provision, making total savings are £1,951K. The projected per annum revenue savings are modelled on savings that would be made on current cohort out-of-county independent placements, who could clearly benefit from local provision if this were available.

To accompany the main Grant Funding Agreement contractual paperwork, there will be a Service Level Specification which will clarify the residential fee methodology and the commissioning model for caring support in a residential college, with a detailed commissioning model and per student costs agreed with the college.

- 3.5 The residential unit will be run and maintained by the college and will have a contract and a service specification that will set the care and support commissioning model, fee methodology, outcomes to be delivered, KPI's and performance monitoring arrangements.
- 3.6 The residential unit of the college will support young people to develop daily living skills to prepare them for independence and adulthood. The unit has been proposed in the context of increasing SEND numbers at the College over recent years and supports the increase in High Needs place numbers recently awarded to the College for the SEND Centre. The college has identified that the unit will be built as a new special educational residential building that comprises individual self-contained living units, each with bedrooms, ensuite bathrooms, with a kitchen area and living room, which will attract zero-rated VAT, as it will be built for special educational needs purposes.
- 3.7 This unit will address the climate crisis by reducing the need for out-of-county travel. The college envisages enhancing the existing curriculum at the linked

SEND Wellow Centre, which makes the most of the rural area and can translate into local action and enterprise - for example, a future community hub scenario may be considered in the long-term to sell products from horticulture. There is a strong emphasis on building on local strengths and resources.

## **Rationale**

- 3.8 To reduce the large overspend in Children's Services on high cost out-of-county special independent colleges for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). These placements are funded by Joint Agency Panel and SEN/Adult Social Care. This unit will enable young people with complex needs aged 16 to 25 to remain in their local community to receive their education and build independence and life skills in support of Education, Health and Social Care outcomes.
- 3.9 The 12-bed residential unit will meet the priorities outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020 to 2024 as follows: The unit will improve the lives of young people with SEND, by providing a much-needed local residential educational facility in the Radstock area, as well as increasing economic benefits by enabling the young people to build contacts and gain employment in their local area

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 Under the Children and Families Act 2014 there is a requirement that young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are given the opportunity to "Prepare for Adulthood".
- 4.2 The SEND Code of Practice states:

*9.185 As the young person is nearing the end of their time in formal education and the plan is likely to be ceased within the next 12 months, the annual review should consider good exit planning. Support, provision and outcomes should be agreed that will ensure the young person is supported to make a smooth transition to whatever they will be doing next – for example, moving on to higher education, employment, independent living or adult care.*

The young people in Bath College will be well prepared for their next steps by attending the courses on offer at the Wellow Centre and living in the residential provision.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 There is an estimated £1.951 million combined high needs education/social care savings per annum, based on current cohort in out-of-county independent sector provision. This is sufficient to provide the annual cost of borrowing for the build of £342,000 per annum. In addition, interest costs incurred of £399,000 during construction will be funded from the Capital Financing Reserves and will be repaid from the balance of savings in the first full year of operation. Of the balance of savings, £1.11m will contribute to the Dedicated Schools Grant/High Needs Budget, and the remainder to Social Care budgets.
- 5.2 Once the unit is built, the ongoing maintenance and running costs including staffing will be the responsibility of the college so no revenue implications ongoing for the Local Authority.

5.3 The unit will meet the priorities outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020 to 2024 in that it will:

- improve the lives of young people with SEND
- increase economic benefits by enabling the young people to build contacts and gain employment in their local area.
- address the climate crisis by reducing the need for out-of-county travel.

## 6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

## 7 EQUALITIES

7.1 The Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and updated in February 2023. No issues were identified.

## 8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 The proposed new building will be designed and built working with the Council to develop a scheme that is sustainable and in line with the Council's Climate Emergency Policy, the District-Wide Strategy and Policies and the Sustainability Checklist. This has been included as part of the feasibility study.

8.2 Use of surrounding land to enhance horticultural education.

8.3 Reduction in travel to out-of-county placements will save transport pollution and Council transport costs.

## 9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

## 10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The Local Authority has worked in full consultation with Bath College and Adult Social Care.

10.2 The Director of Education and Safeguarding is supportive of the proposal and has reviewed this report.

10.3 The proposal has been presented to and approved by CSG.

<b>Contact person</b>	Rosemary Collard, Head of Education Inclusion Service Tel: 01225 394224
<b>Background papers</b>	None
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	