

Single Member Cabinet Decision

Executive Forward Plan Reference	E3562
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New Special Residential and Day School

Decision maker/s	Cllr Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services
The Issue	The future use of Charlton House, Keynsham as a new special school with residential and day placements for pupils with highly complex needs in the area of autism with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
Decision Date	11th September 2024
The decision	The Cabinet Member agrees that Charlton House, Keynsham can be re-purposed into a small residential and day school for young people aged 11-17 with complex special education needs and fully approves £6.1m High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) Grant funding to carry out the remodelling to accommodate the young people at the new special school.
Rationale for decision	<p>The rationale for opening this new provision is to provide for one of B&NES most vulnerable cohorts of young people. The provision will cater for the needs of young people aged 11-17 whose needs cannot be met within any existing local provision. All will have an Education, Health and Care Plan and a high level of need that has meant they have been placed in specialist provision around the country. These young people have been supported mainly in residential schools or children’s homes with education attached, all of which are out of county provisions as there are currently no residential provisions in B&NES. This means that the young people are not given the chance to be part of their local community, accessing education, social interactions, employment opportunities etc. Life outcomes for these young people will be much improved with an offer of local education with a residential element for those in care.</p> <p>By opening our own provision and commissioning a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) to run it there will be the opportunity to keep placement costs at a much lower rate than currently being charged by the independent sector and therefore bringing in savings for the DfE Safety Valve Programme.</p> <p>In the complex pathway review family feedback was that families report feeling anxious about their child’s future (particularly around residential college/supported living options).</p> <p>There will be a reduction in transport costs as journeys will be much shorter and shared within minibuses.</p> <p>Charlton House is attached to Hawthorn Court in Keynsham. Hawthorn Court is an adult care home providing extra care housing for older</p>

	<p>people. Charlton House is no longer used as a care home and is currently empty. Hawthorn Court will continue to provide housing for older people.</p> <p>The required remodelling, adaptations and refurbishment of Charlton House to enable the building to be repurposed and used as a residential and day special school has been investigated and a feasibility study carried out. The feasibility study indicates that the building could be converted with costs estimated at £6.1m. The project would use BB104 Government Area Guidelines for SEND and Alternative Provision, ensuring the creation of appropriate categories of space for both indoor and outdoor areas.</p> <p>The capital project will include works to ensure that Charlton House and Hawthorn Court have separate access, security and landscaping to outside areas.</p>
<p>Financial and budget implications</p>	<p>Capital</p> <p>The £6.1m cost of delivering the adaptations needed to Charlton House to convert the building into suitable accommodation for a special school with residential will be covered by the HNPCA grant.</p> <p>Revenue</p> <p>The running costs of the building will be handed over to the MAT commissioned to run the school.</p> <p>The costs for the residential element will be charged to social care to be determined with the MAT, SEND, CSC and the care providers appointed.</p> <p>The project will reduce the overspend in the DSG and increase the local offer, preventing expensive out-of-county placements. The average cost of an out-of-county day placement at an Independent Special school currently stands at £96k. The cost of residential SEND placements currently stands at £318k (average placement costs with a mix of 38 & 52wks). This project will result in estimated savings to the Council of £2,171,075 (education and transport) and £2,043,859 (residential) per annum. The transport saving applied to education savings is based on a journey of around 30 miles each way at an approximate cost of £15k for day placements and £3,000 for 38-week residential placements.</p>

<p>Issues considered</p>	<p>The gaps in provision for this cohort was identified through a review of the Joint Agency pool which was carried out by an external consultant who contacted families directly. One of the recommendations from this review was for B&NES to have SEND residential provision within area. <i>“More Autism and SEMH service provision is urgently needed to meet demand and to curb the escalation of need of CYP and their families, and referrals to specialist services.”</i></p> <p>By providing educational placements for vulnerable learners within their local community and reducing lengthy journeys to out of county placements the project would enhance social inclusion and meet sustainability requirements.</p> <p>Young people within the specified age range will be accommodated in the provision with no barriers to disability – physical, sensory and mental health difficulties.</p>
<p>Consultation undertaken</p>	<p>Cabinet colleagues; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer.</p>
<p>How consultation was carried out</p>	<p>A full public consultation was held on the closure of the care home with the remit of opening the school. Adult Social Care lead the consultation process.</p> <p>Prior to a planning application being submitted an open event will be held at Charlton House where plans and proposals will be shared with neighbours, stakeholders, councillors, etc. The feedback from this open event will be included in the full planning application. There will be a full consultation at the planning stage of the development as per the usual planning process.</p> <p>A market event is planned for 1st October for any Academy Trusts that are interested in submitting bids to run the new school.</p> <p>Once detailed plans are available we will run a further consultation event with the community local to Charlton House to allow them to comment on the proposed new Special Residential and Day School.</p>
<p>Other options considered</p>	<p>Other options would be to look for an alternative site, this would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay the opening of the school – implications for the Safety Valve savings. • May have project cost implications. • Would mean that Charlton House will stand empty.
<p>Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision:</p>	<p>None.</p>

Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision:	

Name and Signature of Decision Maker/s	Cllr Paul May Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Date of Signature	11/09/2024
Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision	