



CABINET

15 October 2014

Subject Heading:

HAROLD HILL AMBITIONS - LEARNING VILLAGE

Cabinet Member:

Councillor Robert Benham – Lead Member for the Environment
Councillor Meg Davis – Lead Member for Children and Learning

CMT Lead:

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Policy context:

Harold Hill Ambitions Strategy
Harold Hill Ambitions Cabinet Reports; April 2007, February 2008, November 2008, and March 2010

Financial summary:

The reporting of outcomes against plan, and approval of a vision have no specific financial implication. However delivery of that vision has significant financial implications. There are various high level plans to fund the infrastructure required. Moving forward, once infrastructure plans are complete, Programme spend will largely be revenue spend, within existing resources of the various bodies involved.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

When should this matter be reviewed?

Reviewing OSC:

Towns and Communities
Children and Learning

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Ensuring a clean, safe and green borough	x
Championing education and learning for all	x
Providing economic, social and cultural activity in thriving towns and villages	x
Valuing and enhancing the lives of our residents	x
Delivering high customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	x

SUMMARY

The Harold Hill Learning Village was conceived as part of the Harold Hill Ambitions Programme, which was agreed by Cabinet in November 2008.

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on delivery and to confirm the Councils commitment to delivering this Learning Village Vision. The report also covers the proposed use of Council owned land by the Drapers Multi-Academy Trust for the provision of a primary Free School on the remaining part (now vacant) of the old Kingswood School site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet

1. **Note** the progress made to date on the Harold Hill Learning Village.
2. As part of Cabinet's continuing commitment to the overall Learning Village vision, it approves in principle the letting of land in Settle Road to the Drapers Multi-Academy Trust for the creation and operation a new primary Free School on the basis of a 125 year lease at a peppercorn rent, (subject to them securing detailed planning consent for a Free School) and to delegate authority to the Property Strategy Manager to agree the detailed terms of that lease and to complete the leasing arrangements.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background to the Learning Village

- 1.1 In November 2008, the Learning Village concept was approved by Cabinet as part of the Harold Hill Ambitions Programme.
- 1.2 The November 2008 Cabinet Report noted the creation of a Learning Village would provide Harold Hill with state-of-the-art learning facilities to help improve the skill

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levels and job prospects of the whole community. Facilities would provide all levels of education and would offer the best learning environment to help everyone reach their full potential.

1.3 Cabinet agreed that the site should include:

- Replacement of Kingswood School with an Academy, sponsored by Drapers.
- Nursery and Children's Centre
- New Primary and Special Schools to replace Pyrgo and Dycorts
- New Havering College of Further and Higher Education Campus, replacing the Quarles site

1.4 The Harold Hill Ambitions Programme was based on the views of local residents and it was reported that 86% of residents who were consulted, supported these proposals.

1.5 The commitment to the Learning Village concept was again noted in a January 2014 Cabinet Report where it was reported that 'options should be considered in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver this vision'.

1.6 In addition to receiving approval from Cabinet in November 2008, the concept of the Learning Village obtained outline planning permission in October 2009.

2. Progress to date

2.1 A variety of improvements since this date have been delivered. The new Drapers Academy building was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in September 2012. Drapers Academy, a school with a maths and science speciality, is now located in a new multi million pounds state of the art building complex. This landmark building has enabled the range of education to increase beyond the age of 16, and now provides education for 11-19 years old.

2.2 The Academy has an established link with Queen Mary College (a college of the University of London). This coincided with the opening of the Academy's sixth form college. The partnership will provide an important link to Higher Education for the pupils of the Academy and children within Harold Hill. The Academy has also provided a key link to the Harold Hill Community, offering £3,000 of funding to the Summer Festival in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

2.3 To complement the area and provide improvements to the public realm, £125k has been invested by the Council from TfL's Local Implementation Plan for improved pedestrian safety, which also provides an improved link between Settle Road and the Academy's central plaza.

2.4 In late 2013, Drapers Multi-Academy Trust submitted a primary Free School bid to the Department for Education. Free schools are brand new, state-funded schools, but independent of local authority control, where they have the freedom to innovate and respond directly to parents' and local community needs. Although being independent of local authority control, Havering Local Authority fully supported the submission of the Free School bid due to the increasing pressure on primary school places in the Harold Hill area. The new school build will be funded by the Education Funding Agency.

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- 2.5 The site that was identified in the bid is located in Settle Road and lies immediately to the south of the Drapers Academy. It previously formed part of Kingswood School and, in fact, was used on a temporary basis by Drapers before the existing academy opened in 2012. All buildings on the site have been demolished and it is vacant. The freehold interest in the site is owned by the Council.
- 2.6 In the original Learning Village proposals this site was to be used to create a new primary school. At the time it was envisaged that this would replace Pyrgo Priory Primary School allowing the existing Pyrgo site to be used by Havering College. The proposals now have altered and this site can be made available for the new primary Free School.
- 2.7 In June 2014, following the Ofsted inspection of Brookside Junior School which resulted in an 'Inadequate' judgement, Drapers Multi-Academy Trust became the sponsor of Brookside Junior School, creating the new Drapers' Brookside Junior Academy.

3. Next phases of the Learning Village

- 3.1 Original plans included in the November 2008 Cabinet Report for the Learning Village were based on previous Department for Education funding streams and programmes. However due to Central Government funding changes, refreshed plans and options are currently being considered in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver a Learning Village in Harold Hill.
- 3.2 In addition to reviewing options, a planning application is under development and is due to be submitted in October 2014. This will seek to renew the timescales for the submission of reserved matters pursuant to the Harold Hill Learning Village outline consent, ensuring the overall Vision is maintained.
- 3.3 In June 2014, the Prime Minister announced that the bid referred to in paragraph 3.4 above had been successful and that Drapers Maylands Primary School would be opening in Havering from September 2015. As stated above, the Free School is proposed to be built on the old Kingswood site, adjacent to the Drapers Academy.
- 3.4 The costs of creating the new school will be met by the sponsors and the Department of Education but there is an expectation that the Council will make the land available on a long leasehold basis at no cost.
- 3.5 The Council fully support the proposal in order to bring forward further primary provision in this area and to expand the options open to parents and pupils and it is recommended that the land be transferred at no cost. However, it should be noted that by allocating it for this use the Council will forego any opportunity to use the land for any other purpose or to generate a capital receipt from it. However, this must be balanced by the Councils need to provide sufficient school places for children in the area. Should this scheme not progress, any alternative plans to provide primary school places is extremely likely to require significant levels of Council funding, as the funding regime has changed since this scheme was approved.
- 3.6 The funding requirements of the Department are that the land is let to the academy sponsor under the terms of a standard 125 year academy lease at a peppercorn rent. It is proposed that the Council, the Department for Education and Drapers Multi-Academy Trust initially enter into an Agreement for Lease (AFL). The

conditions to be met under that AFL are that Drapers Multi-Academy Trust secure detailed planning consent for a Free School (details of which are to be agreed with the Council) and build the school using Education Funding Agency funding.

- 3.7 When these conditions are met, the Council would grant Drapers a 125 year lease at a peppercorn rent on the Department for Education model lease for Free Schools. These arrangements are being discussed currently with the other stakeholders and the fine detail of the lease need to be agreed. In the circumstances it is proposed that authority be delegated to the Property Strategy Manager to negotiate the final terms of the lease and to complete the mater when appropriate.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

The decision to confirm the Councils commitment to delivering this Learning Village Vision, including the granting of a lease to Drapers Multi-Academy Trust for the provision of a primary Free School on the old Kingswood School site is necessary to ensure that the original vision of the Harold Hill Learning Village is maintained.

Other options considered:

No other options were considered.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

This report is primarily reporting outcomes against plan, and has no specific financial implication. Moving forward, once infrastructure plans are complete, programme spend will largely be revenue spend, within existing resources. Clearly delivery of the infrastructure plans will have significant financial implications for the parties involved. These will need to be fully assessed by the relevant parties prior to the progression of any plans. The high level position is envisaged as follows:

Element of Learning Village	High level financial implications re delivery of infrastructure
Replacement of Kingswood School with an Academy	None – already delivered
Nursery & Children’s Centre	Expectation will operate from existing accommodation within the Learning Village
New Primary School	Free School to be funded by EFA
New Special School	Expectation that this will be funded by LEA predominantly from Basic Need Grant and S106 developer contributions, however this is subject to the overall pupil place pressures. Bids have also been submitted to the EFA to re-provide the existing special schools as part of the Priority Schools Build Programme
New Havering College of Further and Higher Education Campus	It is envisaged that HCFHE will deliver project, assess financial imps and provide/bid for funding.

The use of the land in Settle Road to create a new Free School would mean that the land was not available for any other use and could not be used to generate a capital receipt. However, this must be balanced by the Councils need to provide sufficient school places for children in the area. Should this scheme not progress, any alternative plans to provide primary school places is extremely likely to require significant levels of Council funding.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no apparent legal implications in making the in principle decision set out in the Recommendations. Legal advice will be available for further stages in the process.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no direct HR implications or risks affecting the Council, or its workforce, that can be identified at this time from the recommendations made in this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

There are none identified. An Equalities Analysis has been completed as part of the Harold Hill Ambitions Programme.

BACKGROUND PAPERS