

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee

Date of Committee 7th November 2007

Report Title Etone School: Proposal to establish Post-16 Provision

Summary Etone School is consulting on a proposal to establish post-16 provision at the school with effect from September 2010. This report includes a suggested response to the consultation which Elected Members are asked to consider.

For further information please contact: Mark Gore
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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision] No

Background papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s) Cllr John Burton – Nuneaton St. Nicolas
- Other Elected Members CYP&F O&S Spokespersons for information:
Cllr Heather Timms
Cllr Richard Grant
Cllr John Whitehouse
- Cabinet Member Cllr John Burton

- Other Cabinet Members consulted Cllr Izzi Seccombe
- Chief Executive
- Legal Richard Freeth – comments incorporated in the report
- Finance
- Other Strategic Directors
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION **NO**

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet Cabinet meeting 15.11.07
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

The Cabinet – 15th November 2007

Etone School: Proposal to establish Post-16 Provision

Report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families

Recommendation:

That the Area Committee consider and comment on the draft response to the draft consultation document from Etone School and that the comments of the Area Committee are forwarded to Cabinet.

1. Background

Etone is an 11-16 community school in Nuneaton. Earlier this year the school was given the status of a high performing vocational specialist school. Under the school organisation regime regulated by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the governing body of the school has the right to propose the establishment of post-16 provision. There is a statutory procedure to follow in such circumstances and a requirement that all bodies involved will have regard to the statutory guidance on school organisation proposals. There is a strong presumption within the guidance that the Learning & Skills Council will provide capital funding and the Local Authority will agree the proposal. The governing body is required to submit the proposal within twelve months of being awarded high performing vocational specialist status.

2. Process and timetable

- 2.1 The process for adding post-16 provision has five steps – consultation, publication of statutory notice, representation and objection period, decision by the Local Authority and implementation. There is also a limited right of appeal to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator following the Local Authority decision. The first part of the process of establishing the post-16 provision is consultation with stakeholders including other schools, colleges, neighbouring local authorities, the Learning & Skills Council and the Local Authority. Statutory guidance also requires consultation with staff, pupils and parents of pupils at the school in question as well as parents at other schools who may be affected by the proposals.

- 2.2 Following consultation, if the Governors agree to go forward with the proposal they will make a formal submission to the Learning & Skills Council to receive capital funding and then publish a statutory notice in a local newspaper, at the school and also in a conspicuous place in the school's area. The notice must include certain details including the address to which objections and representations must be made. Detailed information on the proposal must also be sent to the Local Authority. Following expiry of the representation period (six weeks) the Local Authority, who are the decision-making body, must decide whether to approve the proposal taking into account the relevant statutory guidance. The decision, together with the reasons that underpin it, must be communicated to the governing body.
- 2.3 If the Local Authority were not to approve the proposal, the Governors would have the right to appeal to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. If the proposal is approved by the Local Authority, the governing body would be under a duty to implement the proposal.
- 2.4 The timetable for taking these proposals forward is not included in the consultation document but the submission will have to be submitted to the Authority by March 2008, for implementation in September 2010.
- 2.5 A copy of the consultation document is attached as **Appendix A**.

3. Suggested response to the Consultation Document

A draft response to the consultation document is being prepared and will be circulated in advance of the meeting. The Cabinet will discuss the matter on 15 November when the comments of the Area Committee will be reported to them.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 That the Area Committee consider and comment on the draft response to the draft consultation document from Etone School and that the comments of the Area Committee are forwarded to Cabinet.

MARION DAVIS
Strategic Director for Children,
Young People and Families

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Warwick

30th October 2007



A High Performing Specialist
11 to 16 College

Proposal for a Post – 16 Centre
Under DCSF Presumption Rights

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Consultation Period
8th October 2007 to 15th November 2007

(Note: Date of consultation extended to 15th November to take into account postal strike)

**PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW POST
16 PROVISION
AT
ETONE TECHNOLOGY LANGUAGE &
VOCATIONAL COLLEGE**

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

This proposal supports:

The Warwickshire Local Authority vision that; ‘Every child and young person, including those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, has the greatest possible opportunity to be the best they can be’.

The mission of the LSC to: ‘raise participation and achievement through high quality education and training which puts learners first’. This has been developed by the LSC, Coventry & Warwickshire as a mission ‘to improve the range and quality of learning opportunities available to all in Coventry and Warwickshire’.

The proposal is to provide a purpose built Post 16 Centre (Etone Post 16 Centre) for up to 250 students on the Etone site under presumption arrangements for high performing specialist schools with a vocational specialism. Etone is currently the only 11-16 high performing specialist school with a vocational specialism in Warwickshire. The current accommodation, with a student population of 761 students, is fully utilised therefore capital build is required to develop the Post 16 Centre. Etone would be redesignated as an 11-18 college from September 2008 with the new building being complete by September 2010 and the first student entry would take place at that time.

The Etone Post 16 Centre will compliment and enhance both existing and proposed changes to post 16 provision in Nuneaton by providing the only school based post 16 facility in the town and one that is smaller than existing establishments and substantially smaller than the proposed collocation of the current providers. In addition, having another college would help to drive up standards by offering an alternative, as well as local competition but within a collaborative framework.

The Etone Post 16 Centre will offer a wide variety of courses from entry level, some will increase capacity of the current provision in the town and others will improve

diversity and choice. It will be our aim to collaborate fully with existing providers to ensure high quality provision for all learners and a variety of courses.

Etone's position geographically (half a mile between the two current providers & half a mile from plans for the collocation college) makes collaboration practically possible. Etone College is already a partner with North Warwickshire and Hinckley College where over 100 Etone students attend weekly and we have a history of partnership with King Edwards College (Sixth Form). In addition, Etone is collaborating fully on the new 14 to 19 diplomas and arrangements to teach these in a collaborative way. We see the Etone Post 16 Centre as an exciting extension of that collaboration.

Our proposal will provide an innovative curriculum with opportunities to 'mix and match' both traditional courses alongside vocational learning at all levels. The Etone specialisms of Technology, Languages and Vocational will be embedded in the curriculum as well as having discreet courses. Entry criteria for students will link to individual subject requirements thus enabling all students from the Nuneaton area to follow a curriculum of their choice and enhance equality of opportunity. Students would benefit from a smaller establishment, high academic achievement and outstanding pastoral care.

The building proposed will be designed with flexibility and adaptability to allow us to respond to the emerging Specialised Diplomas and adjust to the future curriculum as necessary. It is also our intention to offer family learning in the centre, thus promoting life long learning and the raising of expectations in the local area. We wish to build the centre by 2010 to support our delivery of a wide range of courses which will include the ICT, Construction, and Business & Finance Diplomas.

If the proposal is approved, the Etone Post 16 Centre will admit its first cohort of 125 students from September 2010 followed by further cohorts of students in each subsequent year (total 250). The centre would offer places for students via the local area common prospectus.

FINANCE

The proposal will involve a one off capital grant from the Local Skills Council (LSC). Government monies have been specifically earmarked for the provision of Post 16 Centres under presumption arrangements. Once the building has been established it will be self sustaining via funding for each student provided on an annual basis according to courses chosen.

We will work with the LSC to ensure that courses offer value for money. Linked to the principles underlying the Governments approach to funding, Etone's Post 16 Centre will direct finance in the most effective way that will enable young people to make choices about an education and training route that will improve their opportunities.

As a college we will use maintenance allowances for 16 and 17 year olds to make it possible for them to attend college as appropriate.

INFORMATION ABOUT ETONE

Etone Technology Language & Vocational College is situated roughly half a mile from Nuneaton town centre and has excellent transport links with a bus station within a 15 minute walk and a train station only 5 minutes walk away.

There are currently 761 students aged 11 – 16. The college is oversubscribed (225 first choices in 2006 for 150 places) and it has been oversubscribed for at least 5 years.

Over 40% of students come from high areas of deprivation and the college population is truly comprehensive.

The percentage of students achieving Level 2 qualifications (5 or more A* to C GCSEs) has risen substantially over the past 10 years from 29% to 67%. In 1+ A* to G grades a target of 100% is reached regularly and in 5+ A* to G grades the high nineties are obtained e.g. 98% in 2007.

The current provision at Key Stage 4 provides a variety of courses including several vocational options of which many are run in collaboration with post 16 providers locally. We believe that the college offers the widest choice of options of any school in Warwickshire due to its ability to collaborate fully with other providers.

The College has an excellent reputation for collaboration. Eight years ago it became the major instigator and purchaser of places for students at Key Stage 4 in taking vocational courses at the local FE College. This went on to lead to the majority of schools in the area purchasing places and as a result a Beacon Award was given to the FE College and Partnership in 2005.

In 2004 Etone College collaborated with an 11-18 school in Leamington by sharing human resources and expertise to support the school move out of LEA special measures. In 2006 the College, at the request of the Local Authority, formed a loose federation with a local 11-16 provider that had been in Ofsted Special Measures for 2 years and progress has been described by OFSTED as outstanding. This experience will now be focused on ensuring the provision at Etone's Post 16 Centre will be of the highest quality and delivered within a collaborative framework.

Etone became a specialist Technology College in September 2002. It was successfully redesignated in September 2006 and at the same time became a Specialist Language College due to its high performance. Etone was successful in gaining Vocational Status from April 2007 due to its award by the government as a high performing specialist school. Etone has been in the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust 10% Value Added Club for the past two years.

In 2006 (November) OFSTED visited Etone and judged it to be outstanding in every section of the Ofsted criteria. The Ofsted report said:

'Etone is an outstanding school that is extremely popular with students and parents.'

'Exceptional teaching and high expectations permeate all aspects of the school's work'.

'Through its specialist status Etone has forged very effective links with other local schools and colleges as well as local businesses. This has ensured access to a wide and interesting curriculum that effectively prepares students for the adult world'.

'The curriculum meets the needs of learners extremely well. There is a strong emphasis on academic, vocational and social learning. Specialist status has helped the school to enhance the curriculum considerably by working in partnership with other schools and colleges'.

The full report is available on the college website at: www.etone.org.uk

WHY ADD A POST 16 CENTRE AT ETONE?

1. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) have an underlying policy of choice and diversity and our proposal supports that policy in full. The DCSF states that; 'the pattern of 16 to 19 provision should respect learner choice. Learning provision for 16 to 19 year olds will normally be in one or more of the following settings; school sixth forms, sixth form colleges, sixth form centres in FE colleges, private or voluntary sector training providers and work based learning providers. The balance between these settings in any area will in part reflect the historical development of services. **But, where possible, it should provide students with a choice of provider within reasonable travelling distance.** In particular: 'Learners should have local access to high quality 16 to 19 provision **in a range** of the above settings...'

Providing a Post 16 Centre at Etone in a school setting will add to the provision of the local area thus benefiting students with greater choice.

2. The size of the institution (student numbers), where a student may choose to study, should be a consideration and is a factor that can influence success both in terms of achievement and staying on rates. The provision of a Post 16 Centre at Etone provides an alternative sized institution to the only other choice for students in Nuneaton which, in the next few years will potentially become a large collocated dual college of several thousand students. The Etone Post 16 Centre will provide outstanding pastoral care alongside rigorous academic standards with a focus on student voice and personalisation. This will ensure that students complete their courses to the highest standards possible in an environment of their choice. The Post 16 Centre will ensure that all aspects of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda is reached.

3. The Etone Post 16 Centre will use its specialisms to enhance learning for all students in the area, especially using its vocational specialism to provide career and further education routes to higher level studies or progression into the world of work.

4. The Etone Post 16 Centre will collaborate closely with other secondary specialist schools in the Nuneaton area (all 11-16 schools) and share their good practise resulting from their specialisms and strengths. This will include opportunities for staff from those establishments to lead post 16 learning and develop resources that can be shared with learners across Nuneaton. This will be a benefit for the schools and their staff, as well as helping them meet their objectives as a specialist school in improving post 16 staying on rates and entry into further education. Involvement with local schools and Etone will provide relevant role models and aspirations for younger students from all schools. We believe more opportunities for local schools to participate in post 16 provision will aid staff recruitment and improve staying on rates at post 16 and the opportunities for all learners in Nuneaton.

5. The DCSF states that ‘Popular and successful sixth form provision – whether in schools, sixth form colleges or new discrete sixth form centres in FE colleges – will be an important part of provision and should be encouraged...’ Etone has an established reputation as an outstanding, highly popular, and successful 11-16 school and seeks to utilise its expertise together with other schools in the area and in collaboration with other post 16 providers to enhance learning opportunities for the young people in Nuneaton. Our desire will be to work in collaboration to share good practice amongst all post 16 education and training providers in the area.

6. The Etone Post 16 Centre will offer additional courses and post 16 succession routes to those currently available thus increasing provision for students in the area. We will offer young people; a wide choice of learning opportunities, enable different types of learning in a range of settings, diversity of qualifications and optimise the match between individual student needs and programmes of study.

7. The Post 16 Centre would strengthen the already well established North Warwickshire 14-19 consortium. Future applications to develop the new specialised diplomas will be enhanced by increased capacity, resources and the rise of Etone’s post 16 provision.

8. The Etone Post 16 Centre will increase participation rates post 16 and meet the needs of compulsory education through to age 18 by offering a range of courses and opportunities at all levels (levels 1, 2 and 3). This will increase levels of participation post 16 thus helping meet local, regional and national targets. Increased learning opportunities form a key part of community planning. The new Etone Post 16 Centre would contribute towards community planning and achieving the targets in the Sustainable Community Plan for Nuneaton and Bedworth. In order to create a stronger borough, the Learning aim is to provide and support a culture that gives everyone an equal chance to take part and improve people’s skills – the Post Centre will contribute to this aspiration.

9. Through providing a school based Post 16 Centre we aim to encourage more students to access education in the locality rather than travelling long distances. Examples are students choosing to travel to Stratford or attend a school sixth form in Coventry.

10. A school based Post 16 Centre will allow us to utilise more fully the opportunities of a condensed Key Stage 3 curriculum and provide us with opportunities to fast track students in years 9, 10 & 11. This will allow us to start level 3 courses at an earlier age thus giving further opportunities to young people including education by stage rather than age. We will work with our partner schools in sharing these opportunities.

11. Many students and parents tell us that they would like the opportunity to attend a Post 16 Centre based at a school rather than attend a separate college. They cite the reasons as; continuous structure and intensive pastoral care, transition and synergy between staff and courses at KS4 to 5, increased diversity and choice, a variety of opportunity that a school post 16 centre will offer, security of studying in a school site environment and an opportunity to add to the ethos of the school.

12. A school post 16 provision will help reduce the number of young people who are leaving school at 16 but are not continuing in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) – a key objective for the area as it is higher in Nuneaton and Bedworth than any other area of Warwickshire. The Post 16 Centre would offer subjects at entry and level 1, which are frequently over subscribed in the locality as well as add new courses.

13. As a community school with strong partnership links and a key link in the extended services offered to the area, Etone would be able to provide further educational opportunities to adults through the sixth form centre. 18.4% of the adult population within the area have no qualification which is considerably higher than the Warwickshire average of 13.4%.

RAISING STANDARDS

Our aim in the Post 16 Centre will mirror the vision of Etone College by providing ‘Outstanding Education, Achievement and Development’. It is this vision that we judge ourselves by. Etone College already provides high achievement in the qualifications that its students sit and this is seen in the high value added scores that the college consistently obtains.

We recognise that current standards of attainment locally are good but they are not outstanding. Levels of participation at post 16 are not as high as they should be in the locality and at present the two colleges that students may attend Post 16 do not always offer a wide range of courses that allow a student to ‘mix and match’. We believe the Etone Post 16 Centre will offer a wide range of academic and vocational courses with a ‘mix and match’ philosophy.

This proposal will raise standards by utilising the expertise of Etone Technology Language Vocational College as an outstanding high performing specialist school and working with other specialist schools in the locality using their areas of expertise. We intend to develop the new provision using our expertise from the other key stages to provide outstanding education achievement and development.

Creating a different type of establishment to that already provided will increase opportunities for young people and raise standards of attainment. It is widely recognised that students have a better chance of success where teaching/learning and pastoral care are closely linked together to focus on attainment. Effective and supportive pastoral care has been a strong feature in driving up attainment at Etone and we will ensure this is the case for students in the Post 16 Centre.

Students achieve better when they have the opportunity to undertake courses that match their learning needs. According to the Coventry and Warwickshire Learner Survey (2006-7) produced for the Learning & Skills Council over a quarter of students were not satisfied with current learning and future opportunities. The Etone Post 16 Centre will seek to address some of this dissatisfaction and thus raise standards further.

Standards in the majority of secondary schools in Nuneaton are considerably lower than other areas of the county, with many not reaching the expected examination passes in English and Mathematics. The Etone Post 16 Centre will provide a bridge for such students and allow them to reach the standards required to move onto meaningful further training and education.

GUIDANCE and SUPPORT

There is currently a successful Connexions office based at Etone College which would be expanded to ensure appropriate guidance and support is provided for students at Post 16. All staff would receive training in post 16 teaching techniques and in guiding young people in progression routes, including help completing their UCAS forms (application to University).

PROJECTED NUMBERS

With the advent of post 16 education and training becoming compulsory until 18 we anticipate that numbers of students requiring such education will rise. As more focus is given to NEET students (not in education & training) extra capacity will be needed to support their learning. The recent announcement of 10,800 extra houses in the Nuneaton area will lead to more capacity requirements of which Etone Post 16 Centre will partly be able to provide.

The centre will cater for a maximum of 125 students per year (250 in total).

CURRICULUM

As a Technology, Languages and Vocational Outstanding College, the aim is to build on our strengths, compliment the local area offering, and provide students with progression routes into employment or further education. We wish to remain at the forefront of 14-19 developments and continue to contribute to the current diploma curriculum changes. The curriculum offer will exploit the benefits that our technology specialism has already brought to teaching and learning including the concept of anytime, anywhere learning. This we believe will raise standards in the locality.

In common with other research, Ofsted reports that often year 12 students choose subjects within a narrow band of the curriculum. However, our Post 16 Centre will encourage students to broaden their subjects thus improve their opportunities and raise standards. At the heart of the proposal is a strong belief that all young people have potential, which should be developed into opportunities in the curriculum to learn in different ways thus leading to higher standards.

Our curriculum will include not only the traditional academic subjects but also vocational subjects, skills, knowledge and key skills which will offer students breadth and depth. Students will have a variety of pathways that they can choose from or will be able to 'mix and match'. The pathways will broadly include:

PATHWAY 1.

AS and A' Level subjects – which will challenge and stretch and allow for students to undertake four or five different subject areas. *e.g. English, Maths, Science, Design & Technology along with a choice of many others. We intend to exploit our languages specialism in this pathway and provide vocational routes to a wide variety of chosen careers.*

PATHWAY 2

Applied GCE and Vocational Studies *e.g. ICT, Business Studies, Sport and Tourism. We will exploit our three specialisms fully in this pathway.*

PATHWAY 3

Focussed Vocational Courses with work based learning *e.g. Construction with a focus on plumbing supported by our business partners such as Triton PLC.*

PATHWAY 4

Etone College Specialisms. We will expect all students to participate in enrichment activities/courses linked to our specialisms of Technology, Language and Vocational. This will lead to a validated personalised Etone (or Warwickshire) Diploma. The diploma will include preparation for life, employment and higher education. Other specialist schools will be invited to be part of this pathway. Validation will be provided by a third party.

PATHWAY 5

Etone Step Up Programme. This will include high quality units and qualifications at Entry and Level 1 which will help students who need to progress through a manageable and coherent programme to reach Level 2 and beyond. Students will be able to take a variety of Level 2 qualifications including the opportunity to improve English and Mathematics qualifications.

Entitlement Statement – The Etone Post 16 Centre will:

- focus on learners – their needs will come first
- provide an experience that stimulates, motivates and extends learners, with a curriculum responsive to their individual interests, needs and aspirations
- ensure that the learning environment is safe, secure, healthy and fit for purpose
- give equal opportunities for those with special educational needs of any type, the gifted and talented, and those from ethnic or low-income backgrounds
- provide access to a range of learning styles, including e-learning
- give students access to a range of qualifications
- provide information, advice, guidance and support that is comprehensive, reliable, impartial and ongoing
- seek work-based learning/work experience opportunities so students develop their skills for employability or practical skills for life and work
- give a choice of extra-curricular/enrichment activities and opportunities to improve personal and social skills
- make available planned and structured progression routes, including progression beyond the age of 19 and into lifelong learning.

A hallmark of Etone is its desire to respond to the needs of young people, local area needs and national trends. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is thus modified every year following wide consultation with business, parents and the student voice. It will be our intention to carry forward this hallmark into our post 16 provision.

HOW THE PROPOSAL FITS INTO KEY GOVERNMENT POLICIES

As a High Performing Specialist College, Etone's Post 16 proposal will provide:

- A coherent 14 to 19 programme of study
- Greater flexibility in the 14 to 19 curriculum with greater choice of 'where and what to study'
- A right for learners to access Level 2 qualifications at any age
- Improved collaboration between learning providers in the locality
- Personalised learning that meets the needs, interests and aspirations of young people
- When ready, assessment and progression of learners based on a stage appropriate for them not tied to age
- Improved retention and progression post 16 within the state system.

GOVERNMENT THINKING AND POLICY THAT SUPPORTS OUR PROPOSAL

- ‘..high performing 11-16 specialist schools wishing to establish a sixth form should be allowed to do so. This is backed up by capital resources sufficient to allow the construction of 60 new sixth forms’. (Source DCSF)
- The White Paper ‘14-19 Education and Skills where the Government sets ambitious targets to tackle low post 16 participation, with the aim that participation at age 17 should increase nationally from 75% to 90% over the next 10 years. In addition the new diplomas will provide more opportunities for students to receive education.’

ADMISSION CRITERIA

The admission criteria will be on a previous attainment point system for individual courses that students wish to study. This will allow them to mix and match different courses and levels. There will be a variety of courses to cover all types of learners previous abilities.

TRANSITION

Etone intends to engage a project company to manage the building of the new Post 16 Centre.

The project company will be given clear guidelines to build the Post 16 Centre with minimum disruption to the current students at Etone.

Full risk analysis and Health & Safety legislation will be followed.

Students, parents, staff and the local community will be encouraged to share any concerns over the transition and to take an active part in the design of the buildings.

Buildings will as far as possible be future proof, environmentally friendly and of dual purpose.

A group of the Chairs of each of the governor sub groups, together with the Headteacher, will oversee the development.

USE OF THE POST 16 CENTRE

It is our intention that in line with the current practice of the college the centre will be available for use during the evenings and weekends.

Part of the vision of the centre is to be flexible in the college day provision for students of all ages but particularly for 16 to 19 year old students. This will allow greater use and access and help address learner needs.