

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 26 NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT ON: DUNDEE SCHOOLS PPP PROJECT

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 591 - 2007

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee as to progress on the construction of the schools in Phase 1 of the PPP Project and to notify the Committee that detailed programmes have been developed covering Fitting-Out and Decant of Schools, Curriculum Matching and School Staffing Arrangements.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note:

- (i) the anticipated construction completion dates for the schools in Phase 1 of the PPP Project;
- (ii) that detailed programmes have been developed for the schools in Phase 1 of the PPP Project covering Fitting-Out and Decant of Schools, Curriculum Matching and School Staffing Arrangements; and
- (iii) that the programmes may require to be modified to reflect any movement in Discovery Education PLC's anticipated construction completion dates.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The cost of procuring loose furniture and equipment for the PPP schools can be met from the provision of £1.96m in the approved Capital Plan. The cost of the school decants will be met from the Council's Repairs and Renewal Fund.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

Introduction

4.1 The PPP Contract with Discovery Education PLC was signed in February 2007 with the key financial and commercial terms agreed, including the target construction completion dates, being reported to the Education and Policy and Resources Committees on 19 March 2007.

Construction Progress

4.2 Construction works on the four Phase 1 primary schools and on Grove Academy Phase 1 and St Paul's RC Academy have been monitored on an ongoing basis by the Council's PPP Team. Works have generally progressed well and Discovery are now indicating that construction works on at least two primary schools and on Grove Academy Phase 1 are currently running ahead of the target construction programme (see Appendix 1).

Fitting-out and Decant of Schools

4.3 Although construction works may be complete and a school accepted by the Council, there is a considerable range of tasks that require to be carried out before the school is physically ready to accept pupils. This includes:

- Installing loose furniture;
- Disconnecting specialist equipment in existing school(s);
- Packing specialist equipment and curriculum materials in existing school(s);
- Removal of specialist equipment and curriculum materials to new school, including unpacking and installation;
- Transferring computer servers and data to new schools; and
- Installing telephone systems in new schools.

A wide range of individuals are involved in carrying out the above tasks including school teaching and support staff, Council IT/Support Services, Specialist Contractors, Robertson facilities staff, Council facilities staff and removal contractors.

4.4 Overall, it is estimated that physically equipping a new school to accept pupils can take up to 4 - 6 weeks for a primary school and up to 8 - 10 weeks for a secondary school. However, a detailed fit-out & decant programme has been developed for each school taking into account the availability of staff (school and other) and contractors and also optimum use being made of school holidays, in-service days and exceptional closure days.

4.5 Appendix 1 shows the anticipated operational dates for each school based on Discovery's latest anticipated construction completion dates. The anticipated construction completion dates will continue to be monitored by the PPP Team and the fit-out and decant programmes for each school adjusted as required.

Curriculum Matching

4.6 Over the last two school sessions, staff in Lawside RC Academy and St Saviour's RC High School have met to plan the curriculum for St Paul's RC Academy. Course choice forms have been merged, information about teaching programmes has been shared and there have been joint meetings of Principal Teachers to review resources and teaching approaches. Issues relating to primary-secondary transition have also been considered. The Secondary Education Manager has met senior managers of both schools to begin the process of preparing a timetable for the new school.

4.7 Meetings have been held since January 2006 with staff from Brackens/Macalpine Primary Schools and St Columba's/St Margaret's RC Primary Schools. This has resulted in:

- School Development Plans being written and implemented from August 2007;
- Joint Working Time Agreement for session 2007-2008 agreed to forward curricular matching matters;
- Parent Councils established for Craigowl and St Andrew's RC Primary Schools;
- Pupil Councils from the four schools meeting regularly; and
- Pupils working together on joint initiatives.

Work will continue in line with the identified priorities and a meeting has been held in order to re-align work to meet the revised completion timescales.

School Staffing Arrangements

- 4.8 Education Committee Report No. 270-2005 of 18th April 2005, '*Dundee Schools Capital Project - Staffing Implications*', set out procedures and processes for the appointment of teaching and support staff, promoted and unpromoted, to all schools in the PPP Project. This report was based on previous experience of mergers and closures, and was the subject of discussion and agreement with trade unions. Since then, a detailed timescale for the appointment of teaching and support staff to St Paul's RC Academy has been agreed. A similar timescale is being prepared for the primary schools. An invitation has also been given to all staff, if they wish, to have individual interviews with officers to discuss the staffing implications of the merger programme.

Conclusion

- 4.9 The Council have developed detailed programmes for the schools in Phase 1 of the PPP Project covering Fitting-Out and Decant of Schools, Curriculum Matching and School Staffing Arrangements.
- 4.10 The above programmes may require to be modified to reflect any movement in Discovery's anticipated construction completion dates.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.
- 5.2 There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Head of Finance were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

School	Target Construction Completion Date under Contract	Anticipated Construction Completion Date	Anticipated Operational Date
Phase 1			
Craigowl PS (Brackens/Macalpine)	April 2008	March 2008	April 2008
Claypotts Castle PS (Douglas/Powrie)	April 2008	March 2008	April 2008
St Andrew's RC PS (St Columba's/St Margaret's)	April 2008	April 2008	May 2008
Downfield	April 2008	April 2008	May 2008
Grove Academy Phase 1	August 2008	July 2008	August 2008
St Paul's RC Academy (Lawside/St Saviour's)	November 2008	November 2008	January 2009
Phase 2			
Fintry PS	March 2009	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Rowantree PS (Mid Craigie/Mossgiel)	April 2009	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Grove Academy Phase 2	October 2009	To be confirmed	To be confirmed