

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

15 October 2008

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 HOLMESDALE/MALLING FEDERATION TRUST PROPOSAL

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Holmesdale Technology College and The Malling School Federation has approached the Borough Council to become one of four partners in a school Trust arrangement.
- 1.1.2 Trusts are similar to Foundation Schools in their governance arrangements. The Trust sits alongside the School Governors which retains the same level of representation from parents, staff etc and is still responsible for the running and organisation of the school. One advantage of Trust arrangements is the sustained relationships the school can build with Trust partners – rather than external organisations working with the schools for a short project and then moving on. The schools believe this will enable them to get a longer term input to help them improve the quality of education their children receive. The other key difference from Foundation School status is that the Trust school has charitable status, which can provide additional benefits and funding opportunities for the school.
- 1.1.3 The Malling School is currently a Foundation School and Holmesdale Technology College is a Community School. Now the two schools are federated, it is necessary for Holmesdale to become a Foundation School to create unified governance arrangements for both schools. Moving to Trust status will achieve this as well as providing the additional benefits set out in the paragraph above.
- 1.1.4 Ian Hobson, Head Teacher at Holmesdale Technology College, will be attending the meeting of the Board and will be able to answer any questions Members may have about the proposed Trust arrangements.

1.2 The role of Trust partner

- 1.2.1 A partner in the Trust would be required to attend two meetings per year. No financial contribution is required. In terms of the level of representation, I would suggest that a Council officer would be more appropriate than a Member-level

representative given that the kind of issues to be dealt with are more day to day operational issues and co-ordination rather than matters of policy and principle.

1.2.2 Beyond these meetings, the level of involvement would depend upon the developing relationship, but could include, for example:

- § Providing an input into curriculum development, for example, the development of vocational courses
- § Developing partnership arrangements to deliver courses within the school and for the wider community related to the schools' specialisms (similar to our existing partnership with Aylesford School)
- § Providing opportunities for young people and teachers at the school to learn more about the work of the authority, via input into lessons or through mentoring, work experience and other community links

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 The responsibility and accountability for all major decisions and all aspects of the conduct of the school, including performance, remains with the Governing body and not the Trust.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 There could be costs in Officer time and a measured approach would be required in some areas to ensure what is offered is in line with available resources. However, there could also be potential savings in efficiency through improved communication with the schools.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 There is a risk that other borough schools could wish to follow similar arrangements, however, KCC have indicated that they will only support the development of Trusts from groups of schools, not individually.

1.6 Policy Considerations

1.6.1 Becoming a Trust partner could make a contribution to two of the Borough Council's Key Priorities; give priority to involving and meeting the needs of young people and promote, encourage and provide opportunities for healthy living. It could also assist in the achievement of actions in the Sustainable Community Strategy related to vocational training development.

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 Members **ARE INVITED** to agree an appropriate response to this request.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Emma Leatherbarrow

Nil

David Hughes
Chief Executive