

**CABINET**  
**20 OCTOBER 2009**

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**THE SALISBURY ACADEMIES**

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress with submitting the Expressions of Interest (Eol) to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for the two Salisbury academies. Information was also requested on the Schools within Schools project and a federated schools' approach. Cabinet is asked to note the content of the update.

On 15 July 2009 Cabinet approved the submitting of the two Salisbury academy Eols to the DCSF. Since that time the Salisbury Diocese as lead sponsor has been leading the work on ensuring that the vision is transformational in line with the changes requested by the DCSF. Meetings between the two Dioceses, the Church of England, Salisbury and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Clifton are on-going to reach agreement before submitting the EOI for Laverstock.

**Proposal**

That Cabinet notes the report and that at this stage it is still the intention to open both academies in their existing buildings in September 2010.

**Reason for Proposal**

To rebuild Salisbury High School as an academy and to build one academy to replace the three schools at Laverstock, Wyvern College (Voluntary Aided Boys), St Edmund's (Voluntary Controlled Girls) Church of England School and St Joseph's Roman Catholic School.

**Carolyn Godfrey Corporate Director Children and Education**

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## **THE SALISBURY ACADEMIES**

### **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress with submitting the Expressions of Interest (EOI) to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for the two Salisbury academies. Cabinet is asked to note the content of the update.

### **Background**

2. On 15 July 2009 Cabinet approved the EOI for exploring Salisbury High School (SHS) becoming an academy to be submitted to the DCSF and approved the Local Authority (LA) becoming a co-sponsor. At that same meeting Cabinet approved the EOI for exploring the three secondary schools at Laverstock becoming one academy and the LA becoming a co-sponsor. Cabinet also acknowledged the concerns of St Edmund's Girls School as a high performing school and also the concerns of St Joseph's School and asked officers to look at further creative ways of working with the schools to develop the proposals to include consideration of working on the basis of schools within schools and a federated approach.

### **Main Considerations for the Council**

3. With the new academic year in its infancy there has been little time for a huge amount of progress with these academies although there have been a number of meetings to progress the issues over the summer break. The Local Authority continues to meet with the three headteachers at Laverstock every two weeks to discuss progress. The Local Authority has appointed one of its team to work with the three Laverstock schools as the Lead Consultant on a federated/collaborative approach. The Local Authority also continues to meet with Salisbury High School.
4. **Salisbury High School.** Some good progress is being made with revising, strengthening and submitting the Salisbury High School EOI. Sponsors have been working together on the vision statement to ensure it captures the transformational changes and the data for the EOI is now complete. Senior staff at SHS have met with the independent sponsor, the LA and Salisbury Diocese to progress this work. It is hoped that the EOI will be submitted to the DCSF during October 2009 as delays beyond this will put at risk the ability to open the new academy in existing buildings in September 2010.
5. **Laverstock.** On 2 September 2009 Jane Scott wrote to both the Bishop of Salisbury and the Bishop of Clifton Diocese to arrange a meeting to

discuss the signing of the Expressions of Interest for both Salisbury academies. That meeting is scheduled for October 2009. Both bishops are also meeting with the three Laverstock schools in October to try to move closer to submitting the EOI.

### **Schools within Schools**

6. The Human Scale Schools Project (launched in 2006) and it is a partnership between Human Scale Education and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. It has been exploring the importance of small learning communities and it is tracking 40 schools in the country and will report in 2010. One of Wiltshire's former secondary school head teachers, James Wetz works with Human Scale Education to provide research on the 'schools within schools' concept and he will be exploring this model for the Salisbury academies.
7. Schools within schools is a way of creating smaller learning communities within larger schools to foster positive outcomes of academic achievement and good student well-being. The model however does not necessarily imply separate schools or a federated approach. It is about teachers in larger secondary schools getting to know a smaller group of students really well rather than teaching in subject departments in excess of 300 plus students weekly and by knowing pupils better being able to value them as individuals and personalise the learning experiences for them. It is about planning to teach cross curricular work and not just work in separate department silos.
8. Human Scale learning communities enable the individual to strive for dignity and self-worth and to grow in a framework of caring for each other, their community and environment. The purpose of education for Human Scale Education is the development and growth of the whole person, creatively, emotionally, socially, morally, spiritually as well as intellectually. Human Scale Education has a vision of education that is grounded in a framework of values which informs how children and young people grow and develop as responsible human beings. These values are interconnected and make up the experience of educating on a human scale.
9. Human Scale Education has produced four occasional papers related to this work:
  - History, values and practice of Human Scale Education
  - Human Scale by Design
  - Human Scale Thinking at the Heart of a Large School
  - Size Matters – Transforming large urban schools into small learning communities

10. There are 7 Key practices within a Practical Manifesto for Education on a Human Scale:

- i) Smaller learning communities
- ii) Small teams of teachers of between 4 and 6, learning mentors, learning support assistants who will see no more than 80-90 learners each week
- iii) A curriculum that is co-constructed and holistic
- iv) A timetable that is flexible with blocks of time which make provision for whole class teaching, small group teaching and individual learning. Teacher planning and evaluation timetabled.
- v) Pedagogy that is inquiry-based, experiential and supported by ICT. Assessment that involves the Assessment for Learning (AfL) approaches of dialogue, negotiation and peer review and develops forms of Authentic Assessment such as portfolio, exhibition and performance.
- vi) Student voice involving students in the learning arrangements and organisation of the school.
- vii) Genuine partnership with parents and the community.

11. A day was arranged in June 2009 for the staff from all four Salisbury schools exploring becoming an academy to work with James Wetz to explore the concept of schools within schools. The Laverstock schools would like to work further with James on these developments.

## **Federation**

12. The term federation has a wide educational currency and is often used loosely to describe many different types of collaborative groups, partnerships and clusters from mergers to new schools. Many schools work closely together and develop joint working arrangements but there are only two forms of statutory arrangements, hard federation and soft federation (or collaboration). The main rationale for a federated school is to raise standards. **(See Appendix 1 for The Federations Continuum)**

## **Hard Federation**

13. A hard federation is an arrangement under sections 24/25 of the Education Act 2002 where between two and five schools share a single governing body. Federations can involve a mix of primary and secondary schools. Within the federation each school retains its separate legal identity in respect of its budget, admissions and performance tables, and each is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.

## **Soft Federation or Collaboration**

14. A soft federation, or collaboration, is a formal arrangement under section 26 of the Education Act 2002 where two or more governing bodies share elements of governance or establish a joint strategic committee with delegated powers. Under these arrangements each school retains its individual governing body. Soft federation can also involve a mix of primary and secondary schools and is based on the principle of allowing governing bodies and joint committees' freedom to determine their own arrangements within an agreed framework. It can cover a range of operational models from an over-arching committee delegated to take strategic decisions on behalf of two or more governing bodies, to setting up single-issue committees such as premises or curriculum committees.

## **Reasons for federating**

15. A school may want to become part of a new or existing federation, for instance:

- if a foundation or trust runs other schools, another school may wish to federate with them;
- if a school wishes to federate with an established and high performing school nearby whose experience they would benefit from;
- if a school is to be a specialist school it may want to federate with another school with the same or a complementary specialism to share facilities/resources.

16. Working together through formal shared governance structures enables schools to raise standards, enhance provision by sharing resources, staff, expertise, and facilities and in the case of small rural schools ensures they remain at the heart of their communities. The variety of models offered by federation make it adaptable to suit individual contexts, and local needs and objectives.

## **Informal Arrangements Between Schools**

17. There are many less formal ways than federation in which schools can work together for the general good of their students. These might involve, for example:

- committees/groups of governors from one or more schools but without formal decision-making authority;
- schools with joint management groups of head teachers;
- the joint employment of finance and other support staff or specialist teachers such as for music or sport or Advanced Skills Teachers;

- the sharing of facilities such as ICT suites or sports facilities;
- joint working on curriculum issues or cooperation between primary and secondary schools.

18. A school's governing body may consider these arrangements rather than formal federation, providing it does not involve governing bodies carrying out their functions jointly or setting up formal joint committees. Discussions with the group of Laverstock schools are focusing on these federated approaches. The three schools have already agreed to students working together from across their schools each Friday. Further explorations will continue to be pursued.

### **Environmental Impact of the Proposal**

19. No change to that reported to Cabinet on 15 July 2009.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

20. No change to that reported to Cabinet on 15 July 2009.

### **Risk Assessment**

21. In addition to the key risks outlined to Cabinet on 15 July 2009 the delay to the signatures of the Eols is condensing the amount of time to complete all the feasibility work during the next Feasibility Stage. This could delay the opening of the academies in existing buildings beyond September 2010.

### **Financial Implications**

22. No change to that reported to Cabinet on 15 July 2009.

### **Legal Implications**

23. No change to that reported to cabinet on 15 July 2009.

### **Options Considered**

24. No further options are being considered at this stage. Should the academy route not prove possible for these four schools then federations as outlined above will be explored.

### **Conclusions**

25. The two month delay to the signing of the Eols was not predicted. Meetings have been hampered by various leave arrangements over the summer break amongst the sponsors. It is hoped that signatures will be obtained from all sponsors during October 2009.

**Name and title of Director**

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**Date of report 20 October 2009.**

**Background Papers**


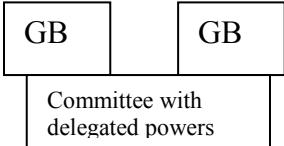
- Human Scale Education's four occasional papers:
  - History, values and practice of Human Scale Education
  - Human Scale by Design
  - Human Scale Thinking at the Heart of a Large School
  - Size Matters – Transforming large urban schools into small learning communities
- DCSF Guidance on Federations

**Appendix 1 The Federations Continuum**

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## Appendix 1

### The Federations Continuum

	<u>Federation</u> (sometimes referred to as <u>hard federation</u> )	<u>Collaborative Governance</u> (sometimes referred to as <u>soft federation</u> )
	<b>All schools retain their separate identity and continue to receive individual schools budgets</b>	
<b>Diagram</b>		
<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>Single governing body</b> shared by all schools.	<b>Each school has its own governing body, but the federation has joint governance / strategic committee <u>with</u> delegated powers</b>
<b>Statutory</b>	Yes. Hard governance federations are established using <b>Federations Regulations</b> made under Section 24 Education Act 2002	Yes. Soft governance federations established using <b>Collaboration Regulations</b> made under Section 26 Education Act 2002
<b>Common goals</b>	All schools share common goals through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and protocol; having single governing body allows for efficient, streamlined decision making in all areas.	All schools share common goals through SLA and protocol; joint committee can make joint decisions in some areas, but not all.
<b>Common Budget</b>	No, but having a single governing body allows for prompt budgetary decisions on behalf of the group of schools.	No, but if the joint strategic committee has budgetary powers delegated to it, they can make prompt budgetary decisions for the group of schools.
<b>Shared staff</b>	Potential for common management and appointments which would be agreed in a simple, effective manner. Could choose to have single head teacher across group of schools.	Potential for common management positions and appointments, but need to have protocol / contract to underpin commitment to shared posts.