

Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets
Cllr Tamara Reay

Assets/Education Service

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REFERENCE: TA-06-24

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS TO INCREASE THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL SCHOOL PLACEMENTS

Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval to the transfer of Royal Wootton Bassett School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) building to Ascend Learning Trust (“Ascend”) in return for the surrender of part of the Wellington Academy School lease from Ascend (subject to Secretary of State consent) to facilitate the provision of 120 - 150 new Special School education placements for ‘Exeter House II’, by Brunel Academy / Education Trust.

Consultation

The decision has been taken in consultation with Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills. Other consultation will be via any statutory applications. Discussions with the respective Academy Trusts and the DfE has taken place, including approval from the Ascent Governing Board, and will be ongoing until the transactions have completed.

Options Considered

There are two options available in this case. These are:

- Not enter into discussions with Ascend, resulting in their building remaining empty and the Council having to find alternate options. The delay associated with this has cost implications (out of county placements) and impacts on young people (lack of access to statutory education).
- Enter into the land transactions to enable delivery of new additional special school placements.

Reason for Decision

To enable Wiltshire Council to deliver additional special school placements within the County, the effective land swap of the sites is being recommended. The provision for special school placements has proven to be more expensive where construction is required and this approach proves value for money for delivery.

DECISION MADE

I approve the freehold transfer of Royal Wootton Bassett School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) building in return for the surrender of part of the Wellington Academy lease to facilitate the provision of 120 - 150 new special school education placements (Exeter House II), as set out in the attached report including authorisation to the Director of Assets to enter into any legal documentation which is required to implement the proposals.

This decision was published on 13 September 2024 and will come into effect on 23 September 2024.

The following report and appendices are attached:

- Appendix 1 – Plan of RWB SCITT building
- Appendix 2 – Surrender plan for Wellington Academy

The following supporting documents are available from the officer named above:

NA

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Cllr Tamara Reay
Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets

Date:.....13 September 2024.....