

TO EXECUTIVE
DATE: 27 JANUARY 2015

EASTERN ROAD SEN FACILITY
AWARD OF CONTRACT
Director Children, Young People & Learning

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval to award the contract for the construction works to convert the former BROC (Adult Learning Centre) at Eastern Road into a Special Educational Needs (SEN) facility under the Education Capital Programme previously approved by the Executive.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Executive approves the award of contract to Tenderer A, for the construction works to convert the former BROC (Adult Learning Centre) at Eastern Road into a Special Educational Needs (SEN) facility, subject to the final lump sum not exceeding the amount set out in paragraph 20 of the attached Restricted APPENDIX A.**

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The value of this contract requires Executive approval under the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Kennel Lane special school is now full to its designed capacity, and further expansion has been ruled out on the grounds of impact on the surrounding highways from the associated additional vehicle movements. Future expansion of SEN specialist provision must therefore take place on another site.
- 4.2 There are significant costs associated with sending SEN pupils out of Borough. The cost of out of Borough placements secondary and Post 16 Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) pupils has risen significantly over the last five years as set out on Table One below. Creation of a dedicated ASD facility at Eastern Road will reduce these costs.

Table One: Out of Borough Secondary and Post 16 ASD Placement Costs

Year	Annual Cost
2009	£0.6m
2010	£0.7m
2011	£1.0m
2012	£1.1m

- 4.3 In addition the Council sends approximately £0.8m per annum on the transport costs associated with out of Borough placements, and creating the new ASD places at Eastern Road will also reduce these travel costs, as well as reducing the disruption to pupils and

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families from having to travel sometimes long distances outside the Borough for their education.

- 4.4 It was originally proposed to build a new special school at Blue Mountain, however delays in adopting the Site Allocations Local Plan and in acquiring the site mean that the timescales for the new school have slipped to 2017/18. Because Kennel Lane is full there is an immediate need for additional SEN places now, and the Eastern Road project will meet this need now. The SEN strategy has been reviewed resulting in a downsizing of the SEN requirement at Blue Mountain, which has now dropped from 100 places to 40 places, resulting in commensurate savings on land take and construction costs on that project.
- 5.1 A site search was also undertaken to explore other possible sites for a new SEN facility, but the following site options have been discounted:
- The playing field site at Mill Lane would support construction of a new SEN facility, however Bracknell Town Council who own the land have declined to make it available.
 - A site was initially identified on the Crown Estate land at Bog Lane, however the Crown Estate has also declined to make it available due to issues with land ownership.

5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 5.1 This project forms part of the 2014/15 Education Capital Programme which was approved by the Executive in February 2014.

Eastern Road

- 5.2 The Eastern Road site held under a long lease by the Council with a current annual rental of £80,000 p.a. This is the now vacated ASCHH facility which used to be known as BROCC. The building already has wide corridors, accessible doors and toilets, hygiene rooms, a laundry, a hall and kitchen and a number of sensory rooms which means it will be relatively easy to convert to SEN use.
- 5.3 Upon completion, the new Eastern Road SEN facility will provide 7 teaching rooms for Years 7 to 13, 4 living skills fitted out kitchens, Art & DT rooms together with several smaller rooms for therapy and 1 on 1 teaching together with an Assembly Hall/internal gym/restaurant and external play and allotment areas. The site will also be reconfigured to provide additional off road parking and drop-off, and staff car parking spaces.
- 5.4 The construction works comprise historic repairs to the fabric, finishes and services, reconfiguration of the internal space, replacement of the heating system, internal finishes, plus upgraded electrical and ICT installations to bring the premises up to the standards required for a 21st century SEN facility.

Timescales

- 5.5 The works are due to commence in February 2015 for completion in time for the start of the September 2015 academic year. The programme is time critical due to a condition on the £1.34m DfE specific grant funding for this project, requiring the additional 56 ASD pupil school places to be available from September 2015.
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Provider

- 5.6 The new Eastern Road SEN facility will be run by Garth Hill College, who will operate the facility as an expansion of their existing school. The Eastern Road site is only 1.3 miles by road away from the main Garth Hill College site on Bull Lane, which means that pupils based at the Eastern Road will also have easy access to all of the educational and sports/PE facilities on the main school site.

Costs and Funding

- 5.7 The capital funding envelope for this project includes DfE Basic Need grant and DfE Targeted Basic Need grant and S106 contributions.
- 5.8 Initial funding for this contract has already been approved by the Executive as part of the Education Capital Programme, and is drawn from a number of sources including DfE Basic Need Grant and DFE Targeted Basic Need grant.
- 5.9 Taking account of the total funding allocated to date on schemes developing school places, in order to fully finance this contract and other costs associated with this scheme, there will need to be a commitment to use £0.635m of the 2015-16 DfE Basic Need grant which has already been confirmed at £3.477m and will be released when the Council agrees the 2015-16 capital programme in February 2015. This is in addition to the £0.707m previously committed for the scheme to expand Owlsmoor Primary, meaning £2.135m remains available for all other schemes. Planned expenditure on this scheme in the current year can be managed through the cash flow within the school places programme.

6. ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The procurement has been carried out in accordance with legal advice given and the Council's contract standing orders. It is noted that the requisite statutory consultation is being carried out. The value of the works is below the works threshold and the Public Contracts Regulations requirements are not engaged.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The financial implications arising from this report are set out in the supporting information and attention is drawn to the need to commit further 2015-16 confirmed grant funding to finance this contract award, which reduces funds available for other projects.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The alterations are designed to be in accordance with Building Regulations Part M (Access to and Use of Buildings).

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Are set out in the attached Restricted APPENDIX A

7. CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 The Principal and Governors of Garth Hill College.
- 7.2 A statutory public consultation has also been undertaken, on the creation of new SEN places as part of Garth Hill College.
- 7.3 A pre-planning consultation was undertaken with the Bracknell Forest Council planning team which confirmed that no change of use consent was required.

Methods of Consultation

- 7.4 The Principal, and Governors were consulted by way of meetings and workshops. A dedicated Project Board has also been established, including the Principal, key staff and Governors of Garth Hill College, the Atkins Project Manager and relevant Council officers.
- 7.5 The statutory public consultation included the following:
- Publication of Statutory Notices.
 - A web based public consultation was undertaken from 27th November 2014 until 9th January 2015 on the Council's website.
 - An open afternoon/evening was held at Garth Hill College on 20th November 2014, with plans and drawings on display and the Atkins project manager and designers were available to answer questions.

Representations Received

- 7.6 Feedback from Garth Hill College has been incorporated into the designs for the new facility, including the proposed internal layouts and use of spaces within the building.
- 7.7 Feedback from the statutory consultation is as follows: 97.22% believed that Bracknell Forest council should provide special Educational Needs (SEN) facilities in the Borough; 100% agreed that Bracknell Forest Council should maximise the use of its resources by altering and converting its vacant premises at Eastern Road to provide a 56 pupil SEN facility; & 94.44% supported the proposal for Garth Hill College to operate, integrate and share its facilities with the proposed Eastern Road SEN facility. Thirty six responses were received. A full copy of the results will be published on the web.

Background Information

- 7.1 Restricted APPENDIX A
- 7.2 The Atkins Tender Report – 56 ASD Pupil SEN Facility at Eastern Road, November 2014.

Contacts for further information

David Watkins 01344 354061	Chief Officer: Strategy, Resources & Early intervention david.watkins@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Chris Taylor	Head of Education Capital & Property

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01344 354062

chris.taylor@bracknell-forest.gov.uk