

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

**EXECUTIVE MEETING
14 June 2004**

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS & LIBRARIES

NAME OF WARD(S)
Stonebridge

REPORT TITLE: Negotiations with the Stonebridge HAT in relation to Proposed Development Plans for Stonebridge Primary School and Our Lady of Lourdes RC School.

FP Ref: EAL-04/05- 0020

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report requests the Executive to note that discussions between officers of the Council and Stonebridge HAT have taken place for the re-provision of new build schools for Stonebridge School and Our Lady of Lourdes RC School and seeks the Executive's agreement that negotiations with the Stonebridge HAT proceed in consultation with the Schools, the Diocesan of Westminster, relevant stakeholders and, through the schools with their community.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Executive agree that officers continue negotiations with Stonebridge HAT to consider proposals for the development of two new 1 Form Entry school buildings at Stonebridge (to replace the existing buildings currently located at Shakespeare Aveune and Wesley Road), subject to such proposals being cost neutral to the Council and being in the LEA's and the schools' longer term best interest.

2.2 That officers ensure that the best possible deal is procured with the HAT to meet the needs of both the schools and the local community.

2.3 That Members note a further report will be submitted to a later meeting of the Executive updating on progress in the negotiations with the Stonebridge HAT.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Following the reduction of Stonebridge School to a 1FE school, the LEA commissioned an architect to explore options and cost implications for the rationalisation (reduction of physical capacity and modernising existing remaining accommodation) of Stonebridge School accommodation. The report by David Kann Associates points to £2.2 million required to achieve the rationalisation.

3.2 Options within the report, with indicative costs, have been considered and the overall conclusion arrived at by officers is that the overriding and ongoing maintenance

issues and the poor condition of the buildings will continue to pervade. In that context, proposals by the HAT to provide a new building for Stonebridge School, in exchange for the old building and a parcel of land associated with the existing school, appear attractive subject to any other value appraisal (e.g. for the land) the Council may carry out.

3.3 There are no maintenance or capital works programmed in for the immediate future which would not be required if the development scheme proposal was to move forward. However, pending negotiations with the HAT, any future capital expenditure will be kept under review.

3.3 The Recommendation to this report does not commit the Council to involvement in this scheme. It has been emphasised to Stonebridge HAT that the Council's involvement will be dependant on the proposals being cost neutral and subject to the land valuations by Corporate Property and the assertion that Best Value is being obtained for the land. Responsibilities for the schools will not change and as such there should be no additional revenue funding implications for the Council. At this stage detailed proposals and cost estimates are not available for analysis and fuller consideration of the Financial Implications will be included in a later report to Executive.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are none for the immediate purpose of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The School Organisation Committee unanimously agreed at its meeting of 13 November 2000 to the reduction to the Standard Number at Stonebridge Primary School from 65 to 30 with effect from September 2001. Our Lady of Lourdes has also reduced to a 1 Form Entry and it is understood that both schools are in principle agreeable to the provision of two new single form entry primary schools within the current site location.

5.2 LEA officers, in their negotiations with Stonebridge HAT shall work in close partnership with relevant stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the schools and its communities are fully endorsed wherever feasible.

5.3 Members will be notified and kept informed during the process of consultation and any legal implications will be sought and addressed as progress is achieved.

6.0 DETAIL

6.1 The decision to enter into negotiations with Stonebridge HAT was arrived at following a consensus that the provision of two new schools, within the framework of the extensive regeneration programme of Stonebridge estate currently underway by Stonebridge HAT, is an option that, subject to further advice from Corporate Services on land valuations, is considered financially and strategically viable in which to accommodate the schools' reduction to 1 Form Entry schools.

- 6.2 Both Stonebridge and Our Lady of Lourdes RC schools are affected by issues of inadequate suitability. It is also apparent that much of the constructional elements of the Victorian buildings of Stonebridge and of the relatively modern Our Lady of Lourdes and some of the external facilities appear to be in poor condition and that a large amount of maintenance and improvement expenditure is required to bring the schools' levels of suitability to an acceptable standard.
- 6.3 LEA officers are keen to achieve new school buildings that are fit for the current age, that would provide a strong and extended resource base for local communities and offer a flexible basis for services that may need to reflect the changing profile of that community over a period of time.
- 6.4 Officers met with Stonebridge HAT in July 2003, to discuss the potential for looking at public assets and combining master-planning activities between the HAT and the Education Authority in the area around and upon which the two primary schools are currently located. Stonebridge HAT was requested to produce a paper for consideration by Brent LEA that explores the proposal to deliver to the local communities, high quality primary school buildings, which would also provide a central point for good resources at nil cost to the Council. The emphasis from Brent LEA is also to ensure that the HAT's original proposal to dispose of strips of land around Stonebridge School was not promoted but instead it wished to consider a more holistic approach for the site.
- 6.5 The proposals received to date from Stonebridge HAT are for the relocation of the existing schools and rebuilding of two single form entry primary schools each with nursery and play areas, each on reduced overall site areas and using the remaining and 'surplus' sites for housing. The existing Stonebridge School building would be retained and converted into flats with car parking; on the site a development of mixed housing and mixed tenure would also be built. It is envisaged at this stage by the HAT that the development could provide approximately 180 new homes which would in the HAT's view, be sufficient to cross fund the rebuilding of the two new schools, make a contribution to the recreation ground sports facility, provide some affordable housing and give a capital receipt to Brent Council. There shall also be discussion around the provision of flexibility to accommodate possible needs of expansion in the new primary schools.
- 6.6 Other outline proposals currently offered by the HAT are to provide an obligatory amount of Public Open Space. It also currently proposes to incorporate building a modern sports facility on the recreation ground and a provision of landscaping. The proposal considers a number of planning issues which shall be pursued in detail by Council officers.
- 6.7 Council officers wish to engage fully in a period of consultation with Stonebridge HAT and to ensure that stakeholders are equally consulted in the decision making process of the development proposals for the Stonebridge and Our Lady of Lourdes Schools. Management of a decanting programme will be taken on board and as a matter of course during the process of negotiation.

- 6.8 Consultation with Stonebridge HAT is being nurtured and, with the participation and full consultation of the main stakeholders the aim is to procure a development scheme at nil cost to the Council that meets with necessary and relevant approval.
- 6.9 It is currently anticipated, subject to comprehensive negotiations and a sufficient period of consultation and a planning phase, that the timescale for the provision of the new schools would be between January to September 2006.

7.0 DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no diversity implications.

8.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 8.1 The following papers were used in the compilation of this report:-
- i) David Kann Associates: Feasibility report on rationalisation of use of accommodation and site at Stonebridge School.
 - ii) Stonebridge HAT: Stonebridge Schools - Report for Stonebridge Housing Action Trust

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact:

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