

Monthly Bulletin 25 on BSF Programme: September and early October 2007

Main developments since the last monthly bulletin are as follows:

Development of proposals for wave 5 of BSF

On 5th/6th October a major conference was held to discuss and agree the framework within which the Council will develop further its plans for Wave 5 of Building Schools for the Future. The conference was attended by representatives of mainstream secondary schools in Chingford, Leyton and Leytonstone, the three colleges, and the Learning and Skills Council. It was agreed that plans would be developed based on the broad proposals set out below, subject to further consultation with schools and governing bodies:

1. Widening the range of choices open to pupils aged 14+ and 16+ through providing an increased range of opportunities for study at colleges for pupils aged 14+ and at schools for pupils aged 16+. It was emphasised that whilst this meant that most 11-16 schools in the areas covered would have some post-16 provision, this would not take the form of conventional 6th forms.
2. Creating an all-through 5-18 aged school by bringing together the current Tom Hood school with Cann Hall primary school. The governing bodies of these two schools have agreed to explore this possibility.
3. Creating a Trust including the current George Mitchell and Norlington Boys schools. The Trust would oversee feasibility studies and the development of proposals for rebuilding George Mitchell school on part of the current Leyton Cricket Ground, protecting and enhancing existing sports provision and community access to the ground. Alongside this, Norlington would be rebuilt on the George Mitchell site with substantial sharing of facilities with George Mitchell. Further work is required to test the feasibility of this set of proposals as well as further consultation with the involved governing bodies.
4. Seeking expansion of a number of schools in the next 5-7 years, so as to provide adequate school places when rolls will be rising.
5. Creating new partnerships of schools/colleges in Chingford and Leyton/Leytonstone. These partnerships would, amongst other things, lead detailed planning concerning the type and scale of 14-19 provision in their areas.

Willowfield School

Willowfield School Governing Body and the Council met on 14th October to discuss the effects of recent further changes in the nature of restrictions round building on the Douglas Eyre Playing Field. These changes have opened up again the possibility of using the DEPF as a new site for Willowfield School, with all the advantages that offers both to school, pupils and the local community.

The Governing Body unanimously expressed its wish to see the school located on the DEPF, and has joined with the Council in a new attempt to develop and carry through plans for a new school on the site. Further work will be carried out over the next few months to test out the feasibility of the approach, most particularly round the need to secure planning permission.