

## **PROPOSED PATHFINDER TRUST FOR SCHOOLS IN ROCHFORD DISTRICT**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report advises that the formal consultation process in connection with the above has now commenced and seeks Members' views thereon.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its September meeting, the Executive Board were advised of an initiative being promoted by King Edmunds School and Fitzwimarc School to establish a Schools Pathfinder Trust in the district. Members resolved that the Council's support should be offered for the principle of establishing such an arrangement and at the same time, Members indicated a willingness to become a partner should such an arrangement be formalised (Minute 324/2007).

### **3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Following meetings of the Governing bodies of both King Edmunds School and Fitzwimarc, the schools have decided to progress the proposal to establish a Trust arrangement in Rochford District and to this end, have now commenced a period of formal consultation, which runs until 14 December 2007. Details of the consultation, explaining the reasoning behind pursuing the proposal, are contained in the attached leaflet which is included as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 As a potential partner in any Trust proposal, the formal views of the Council are now sought.
- 3.3 Given the Executive Board's initial response in September, it is recommended that the Council now formally support the proposal as outlined and indicate its willingness to become a Trust member, if and when such an arrangement is established.

### **4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 It is understood that the Council's main resource commitment to any Trust arrangement would be in terms of Member and officer time.

### **5 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In reputational risk terms, a successful Trust arrangement with input from the District Council offers the opportunity to enhance the reputation of the Authority. Similarly, if the Trust arrangement is unsuccessful, the Council's reputation might be damaged through association.

**6 RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 That the Executive Board support the proposal as outlined in Appendix 1 and confirm its willingness for the Council to become a member of the Trust, if and when it is established.

Paul Warren

Chief Executive

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**Background Papers:-**

None

For further information please contact Paul Warren on:-

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If you would like this report in large print, braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.

# THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODIES WILL NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED ...

- The Trust arrangements will not make any adverse changes to the current governance arrangements for the individual schools: the governing bodies for each school will retain the roles and responsibilities as they have now regarding the ethos, conduct, and standards of their schools.
- The key differences relate to more collaboration between the governing bodies in matters of governance.
- There will be no irreversible commitment, and the whole arrangement will rely on *trust* in the relationships between partners.

# ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS WILL NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED ...

- The Trust will not make any changes to the current admission arrangements for children coming to the schools; these remain the responsibilities of the governing bodies of the schools working within the agreed admissions code.

# STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS WILL NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED ...

- The Trust will not make any adverse changes to the current staffing arrangements at the schools involved, and employment matters remain the responsibility of the respective school governing bodies.

# OUR PARTNERS ...

Initially, our Trust partners will involve:

- Representatives from the Rochford District Local Delivery Group (which involves all schools in the area)
- Rochford District Council
- The Learning and Skills Council (LSC—responsible for post-14 funding)
- The Anglia Ruskin University
- Representatives of local business and commerce through the Rotary Clubs in the Rochford District.

To underpin our work we will maintain a close strategic working relationship with Essex County Council (and its specific services, such as Adult Community Education, Adolescent Services, and the local Teams around Schools, Children and Communities, and with local partnerships such as the Local Strategic Partnership for Rochford and the local Children and Young People Strategic Partnership.

# TIMING ...

Nov/Dec 2007:	Initial consultations
January 2008:	Governors' next stage decisions
Jan/Feb 2008:	Statutory consultation period
Feb/Mar 2008:	Formal decisions by Governing Bodies Legal formulation of Trust arrangements
Mar/April 2008:	Setting up the Trust
April/May 2008:	Trust in place

# YOUR VIEWS ...

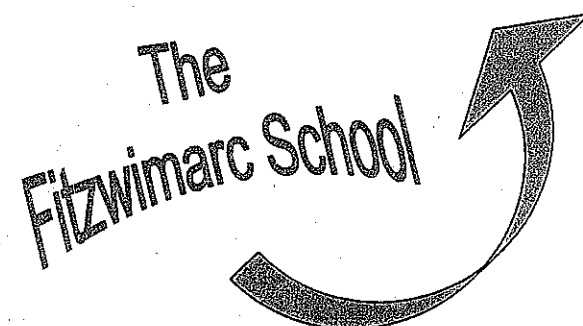
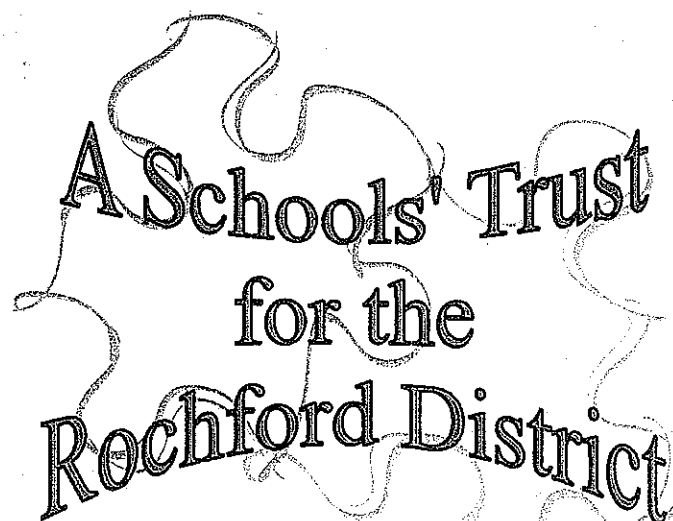
Your views are very important to us to ensure we are going in the right direction. We will welcome your responses and if you have further points or queries, we want to receive those also. Please send your views to the Chair of Governors at either school, by letter or email, to arrive by 14 December 2007 at the latest.

Further detailed information is available on each of the schools' websites and paper copies of detailed information are also available from each of the school offices.

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# The Rochford Trust

## BACKGROUND

The secondary schools in the Rochford District (covering Rayleigh, Rochford, Hockley, and the surrounding areas) have been working together and with Essex County Council, Rochford District Council, local primary schools and the Government, to explore how the formation of a charitable trust should benefit the children and young people and the wider community across the district. The governing bodies of The King Edmund School, Rochford and the FitzWimarc School, Rayleigh have now formally agreed to explore the benefits of becoming Trust schools, in collaboration with all the other schools in the Rochford District.

This summary is about seeking the views of all interested parties across Rochford – and beyond – about the merits of such a development and to seek views as to how we should proceed.

## WHAT IS A TRUST SCHOOL?

A Trust school is an existing foundation school which is able to take on new and innovative approaches to the way it works. It is backed by a charitable Trust that shares and supports its aspirations for the pupils and the wider community it serves and which can support its continuing development. A Trust school works within a sustainable partnership, with clear aims and outcomes agreed from the outset.



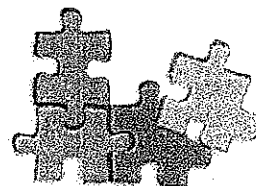
## THE TRUST SCHOOLS

### The Trust Schools:

- The King Edmund School
- The FitzWimarc School

### The Associate Schools:

- Greensward College
- The Swayne Park School



### Linked Schools:

- All primary schools in the Rochford District

Only foundation schools are eligible to be Trust Schools. The Greensward College is seeking Academy status and The Swayne Park School is a Community school, but both want to play a key role in supporting the Rochford Trust developments.

## WHAT WE AIM TO DO

All of the secondary schools across the Rochford District are very successful. Our challenge is to maintain our success and to continually improve on it for the benefit of all children and young people across the area today and in the future. Our over-riding aim is to improve and raise the standards of learning and achievement for **all children** in our schools.

### We aim to:

- *Ensure and sustain more effective collaboration and improvement across participating schools.*

We will achieve this by enabling more flexible arrangements for staff training across schools, thereby sharing and developing skills and abilities of all staff for the benefit of all pupils.

- *Enable a sharing of the opportunities and challenges of leadership throughout the Trust, where the best leadership and management skills are shared.*

We will achieve this through management arrangements that will benefit all participants through accessing the range of skills from the wider Trust partnership, where successes will be shared, where each will learn from the other, and problems addressed together.

- *Provide the most efficient coordination of education and children's services to ensure all children can maximise their education and are supported in their personal lives and progress to adulthood.*

We will achieve this by the integration of the work of schools, the range of children's services, and out of school services.

- *Bring in new opportunities that will enable a better focus on individual pupil needs.*

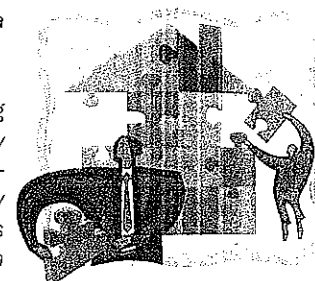
We will achieve this by drawing on the additional experience of partners and the combined expertise across the Trust and, through this, by developing new approaches to maximise funding that would not otherwise be feasible for individual schools.

### Through these innovations, we therefore aim to:

- *sustain and improve children's learning and their wellbeing, initially in the secondary schools involved and progressively across all schools in the area in a joint venture;*

- *build on the pioneering work of schools locally through the well-established local delivery group arrangements involving all schools in the area;*

- *develop a flexible response that is inclusive, builds on and sustains success and adds value to the Every Child Matters agenda.*



### We will see success through:

- *benefiting pupils in schools by raising standards and improving learning outcomes for children and young people – and adult learners – across the area;*
- *involving Trust partners, such as the District Council, local and national employers' organisations and local Rotary Clubs and potentially Anglia Ruskin University, thereby adding value to existing partnerships for greater impact.*