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| **STAGE** | **DATE** | **ACTION** |
| **Initial decision** | 14 December 2016 | Executive to decide that a new secondary school should be pursued in the central Manchester area and that the Director of Education and Skills to begin the process. |
| **Initial Consultation** | 12 January - 13 February 2017  (4 weeks) | The Local Authority (LA) to carry out a consultation exercise. This is not prescribed and up to the LA to decide how to consult on the proposed new school and with whom.  The consultation to feed into the school specification that the LA develops.  The consultation should take place on proposed new school (ie type, age range, gender, capacity, expected costs). |
| **Preparation of Tender Documents**  **Publication of Specification and invitation of sponsor**  **Final Submission date to LA** | 13 February - 17 February 2017  20 February 2017  20 March 2017 | The LA to develop and publish a clear specification as potential proposers will be submitting bids on the basis of the specification set out.  Once specification is published, the DfE requests the LA takes all the necessary steps to ensure the widest range of groups or organisations that might be interested in establishing the new school are aware of the opportunity to do so.  The DfE will also play a role in generating interest from high quality proposers.  Once the specified date for submitting the free school proposals to the LA has passed, the LA must provide details of all proposers that have submitted formal proposals to Regional Schools Commissioner for initial consideration. |
| **Assessment /evaluation of sponsors**  **Submission to Regional Schools Commissioner** | 27 March – 7 April 2017    12 April 2017 | The LA to complete a rigorous assessment and evaluation of each proposal and forward these to Regional Schools Commissioner. The LA may state its preferred proposer or ranking of proposers which the Regional Schools Commissioner will take into consideration. The sponsor has to be an approved DfE sponsor.  Submission to Regional Schools Commissioner |
| **Decision by RSC** | From 12 April 2017 onwards | Regional Schools Commissioner confirms the sponsor and funding allocation.  As soon as suitable proposer agreed “in principle” the Commissioner will notify the LA, the successful proposer and local MP. It will then be for the successful proposer to work towards establishing the new free school. |