

24 June 2015		ITEM: 12
Council		
School Capital Programme Update		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor John Kent, Portfolio Holder for Education		
Accountable Head of Service: N/A		
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

The council's school capital programme is developed following extensive pupil place planning to assess likely demand. The current programme aims to deliver sufficient pupil places for the 2015 and 2016 academic years.

This report seeks Council approval to procure a Specialist Project Team for the re-commissioning of the former Knightsmead School complete with new link to the Somers Heath building to allow for the expansion of Somers Heath School from a 1FE to a form 2 FE Primary school which would provide an additional 210 school places. Design feasibility studies are currently underway at the time of writing this report, initial indications are that this project will have an estimated provisional total value of £2.5M.

This report provides an update highlighting projects managed by Thurrock Council and schemes managed externally which all form part of the school capital programme along with schemes managed highlighting the considerable and continued progress that has been achieved since the last report to Cabinet in December 2014.

This report also provides an update of the provision of temporary accommodation to ensure sufficient pupil places for September 2015.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 For Council to amend Cabinets decision made on the 9th April 2014 to return the Knightsmead site transferred to Housing by giving this site back to Education so that additional school places in the Aveley/South Ockendon area can be provided.**

- 1.2 To approve a £2.5M budget for the re-commissioning of Knightsmead School and the provision of a link building to Somers Heath School to be funded from the School' Basic Need capital funding 2015/16 & 2016/17.**
- 1.3 Approve the commencement of the procurement process in accordance with Council & EU procurement procedures to appoint Specialist Project Teams, for the School Improvement Programme and appoint the Principal Contractors to take forward the proposed schemes.**
- 1.4 That authority be delegated to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to enter into any form of agreement following the award of the agreements arising from 1.3 above in compliance with the Council's procurement regulations.**
- 1.5 Council notes updates on Capital Programme Schemes for 2014/15 & 2015/16.**
- 1.6 Council notes temporary accommodation and the re-modelling of school accommodation to build in capacity to meet increase in demand for pupil places from September 2015.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The local authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one.

The 2014/15 school capital programme progressed well and incorporated innovative partnership working to deliver the identified additional pupil places required.

- 2.2 The provision of additional accommodation to meet the predicted increase in pupil numbers has generated positive feedback from schools, particularly in relation to the impact on learning through improvements to the built environment.
- 2.3 The demand for pupil places has increased significantly, over the last few months we have seen a large increase in 'in term' admissions from families moving into the Authority. In 2013/14, 209 children moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and 590 from elsewhere within the UK. For the first five months of this year, 199 more children have moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and there have been 493 new arrivals from within the UK. The demand does not appear to be slowing, and this level of demand has not been seen before. To be in a position to accommodate this demand, we are building in an additional 7% of surplus places on top of the forecasts contained within the Pupil Place Planning document to allow us to be

proactive rather than reactive to growing additional pressures mid academic year.

2.4 Knightsmead Site and Somers Heath School

At its meeting on the 9th April 2014, as an element of the decision to relocate the Pupil Support Service to a new building on the former Jack Lobley School site in Tilbury, Cabinet resolved that the former Knightsmead School site be declared surplus and be disposed of. However following the annual review of forecasts for pupil places and the large increase being experienced with regards in-year admissions there is educational need for additional places in the Aveley/Ockendon area. Council is requested to amend this decision and retain the land for educational purposes. This change, if agreed, will be reported to Cabinet in a future asset management update report.

2.5 The proposal is to re-commission the old Knightsmead site which was a previous special school and provide a link building to expand the current Somers Heath school from a 1FE to a 2FE school. This will provide much needed accommodation and cater for an additional 210 pupils in this area.

2.6 A multi- disciplinary team providing specialist services needs to be engaged to oversee the re-commissioning of the Knightsmead site and accompanying link building joining both sites.

2.7 Initial scoping and feasibility studies are being carried out to look at possible design options and affordability.

2.8 A new JCT framework agreement competitively procured and evaluated on both quality and price will provide opportunities for improving quality and value for money. It will give the Council the flexibility to award individual elements of construction projects on an individual basis without any guarantee of future work. This approach will result in a greater level of control being retained within the authority, and will not tie the council into any single provider.

3. Update on School Capital Programme Schemes

3.1 The 2014/15 school capital programme consisted of eight projects in Thurrock primary schools. This extensive programme is now reaching its conclusion, with only works at Purfleet Primary, Tilbury Pioneer Academy, Arthur Bugler Primary and New Harris Primary Academy Mayflower in progress at the time of writing this report.

3.2 The 2014/15 school capital programme is progressing well and incorporated innovative partnership working to deliver the identified additional pupil places required.

4. Update on Revisions to Schemes in the 2014/15 & 2015/16 School Capital Programme

4.1 Purfleet Expansion Scheme

4.1.1 Following extensive pupil place planning work, Purfleet Primary Academy was highlighted as a school to be expanded from a 2FE to a 3FE, allowing for 630 pupils and staff.

4.1.2 At the request of Purfleet Primary Academy, it was agreed that REAch2 Academy Trust will project manage the expansion project in conjunction with the local authority.

4.1.3 The contractors, Ashe, commenced work onsite on 30 March 2015. The project is due to hand over to the academy on 8 February 2016 in line with the current construction programme. The approved budget is £3.5M. The project is currently on programme and within budget.

4.2 Tilbury Pioneer Academy

4.2.1 Successful negotiations have now completed and a legal contract drawn up and sealed, agreeing for The Gateway Learning Community to manage the overall building remodelling of the school.

4.2.2 Design works are currently taking place and a new planning application will be submitted in due course. The LA will make a contribution of £970k to the Gateway Learning Community to complete the scheme. The total cost of the project will remain within the allocated budget of £2.060M.

4.3 Arthur Bugler Primary School Amalgamation Works

4.3.1 The budget of £500K for the Arthur Bugler Amalgamation was approved at Cabinet. An additional council contribution of £150k funded from the schools capital allocations was given as well as a £100k contribution from the school, bringing the total budget for this project to £750k.

The Contract for the Design and Management of the amalgamation was awarded to Mace on 15th June 2014. A tender process was undertaken to source a principle contractor. The contract for the building work was awarded to Beardwell, who started on site on 16th February 2015 with an original handover date of 22nd June 2015. Following unforeseen ground works in relation to services, the programme is in delay and is scheduled to handover on 7th August 2015.

4.4 Mayflower Academy – Harris Federation

4.4.1 Planning consent has now been granted for this new 5 FE school to serve the children of Chafford Hundred and West Thurrock. Legal documents have been agreed and the contract sealed. Planning permission for the

scheme has been granted and the contract for works awarded to Farrens, who were appointed by EFA using its free schools procurement framework.

- 4.4.2 The school opened in temporary accommodation admitting 90 reception pupils in September 2014 and another 90 this September. It is expected the school will be completed in September 2016 when it will increase reception intake to 150.

The construction of the new 5FE school is partially funded by EFA which is providing a capital sum of £16.5M. To complete the scheme the EFA will require a financial contribution from the local authority in the sum of £4.9M (plus £250k for nursery places) - total £5.15M. These amounts are within the agreed financial envelope and have been previously agreed by Cabinet.

4.4.3 **2015/16 Woodside & Thameside Academies**

The procurement of the Multi Discipline Design teams for both Woodside Academy & Thameside Primary has now been completed, with awards and appointments for each being made during the week commencing 18th May. Initial meetings and scoping exercises to include academy and governors input are to be held during the 1st two weeks of June. In terms of Thameside Primary, the programme is currently at RIBA stage 1 (inception). At Woodside the programme is at stage 2 (Detailed Design). The cost of the team will be charged to the Capital Scheme.

- 4.4.4 As requested by members at the council meeting on 24th June 2015, Cabinet Group Leaders will be required to authorise or approve the procurement of a Principal Contractor at the next milestone which will occur following agreement of the designs by all stakeholders and the implementation of the design freeze.
- 4.4.5 In addition to the above, additional temporary accommodation for September 2015 is in the process of being procured and will remain on site until completion of the new build expansion. (As listed under temporary accommodation)

5. Temporary Accommodation

- 5.1 In order to provide additional capacity from September 2015 to meet in year-demand for places, the following schools will have a single demountable placed on their site:
- Thameside
 - Somers Heath (see section 1.1, under recommendation for approval of re-commission of the Knightsmead site)

This is in addition to temporary accommodation already been placed at Woodside and Stifford Clays.

5.2 Minor re-modelling works will be undertaken at the following schools to provide additional capacity in reception in the South Ockendon and Corringham/Stanford areas:

- Kenningtons Primary Academy
- Giffards Primary

The above will be funded through the schools Basic Need funding.

6. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

6.1 If the local authority does not undertake the school expansions and builds, the local authority will not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure there are sufficient places available in Thurrock for every child of school age.

6.2 The contract, due to its potential value over the threshold, is subject to Thurrock Council & EU procurement legislation.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 To ensure the local authority discharges its statutory duty, under the Education Act 2006, to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one.

7.2 To ensure that the agreed schemes within the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school capital programme are delivered to completion dates as outlined in this report.

7.3 Increasing the accommodation on certain sites can be very challenging to undertake due to the nature of the individual sites and various technical constraints. Amongst the constraints are general building challenges such as access arrangements, ground conditions and planning restrictions.

7.4 In addition careful consideration has needed to be given with educational concerns over making the school sites congested, resulting in a negative effect on pupil behaviour and subsequent pupil performance.

7.5 Any school accommodation increase particularly resulting from a form of entry increase has needed to consider teaching accommodation as well as ancillary spaces such as kitchen, staff room, assembly hall and administration spaces. Often these can be overlooked however they are an important part of ensuring a school continues to operate successfully.

8. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

8.1 The school capital programmes and other identified works have been subject to extensive consultation with key stakeholders. The principle has been agreed with schools and the detailed build content is being agreed with the

relevant schools. Consultation will continue with each school and key stakeholders, as each scheme and works develop within the programme.

8.2 This report has not been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

8.3 The principle has been agreed with schools and any detailed build content will be agreed with the relevant schools. Consultation will continue with each school and key stakeholder, as each scheme and schedule of works evolves within the programme.

9. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

9.1 The improvement in the educational facilities in Thurrock schools is part of the council's delivery of its Education Capital Strategy and supports the council's prioritisation of educational standards and pupil progress by helping to create great places for learning in the borough.

10. Implications

10.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**
Interim Finance Manager

Additional accommodation required for increased pupil numbers will be funded from a combination of the future capital basic need budget, and underspends from the current capital programme. Once in-depth feasibility studies have been undertaken, funding requirements will be quantified and confirmed. This will include any funds applied for and successfully obtained from the Education Funding Agency, under the Targeted Basic Need Programme.

10.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Assaf Chaudry**
Contract and Procurement Lawyer

The Council has a duty under the Education Act 2006 to ensure the provision of "sufficient schools" for the provision of primary and secondary education in their area.

The report proposes to commence a procurement exercise for a Specialist Project Team for the schools capital improvement programme, and Building contractors to take forward the proposed schemes within the current affordability envelope of £2.5 million. Given its value it has to comply with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 the EU regulations and the Council's

constitution. Other than that there are no other legal implications arising from this report.

10.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

The next Thurrock Schools' Capital Programme will continue to commit to improving learning environments for young people, supporting improvements in standards and raising aspirations to give all children the best possible life chances. The provision of these projects will help to tackle inequality and social exclusion.

Equality legislation places a duty on public bodies to prevent discrimination in all aspects of service provision, including procurement. It provides a clear and positive legal duty to eliminate discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity.

The Council should note that where an external supplier carries out a function, the Council remains responsible for meeting the statutory duty set out in these Acts. The tender process will give true regard to the full range of equality considerations with a focus also on the wider community benefits that will be realised through the application of the council's social value framework.

11. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Cabinet Report 17 December 2014 – Schools Capital Update
- Cabinet Report 25 March 2015 – Approval of the Schools Capital Budget

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Children's Services