

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**DATE: 21 OCTOBER 2014**

**REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING**

**MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES**

**LEAD OFFICER:**

**JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER**

**PETER- JOHN WILKINSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING**

**SUBJECT:**

**SUNNYDOWN SCHOOL, CATERHAM – SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**



**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To approve the Business Case for the improvement of teaching and dining facilities at Sunnydown School. General teaching currently takes place in 3 double demountable classroom blocks that are now beyond economic repair. In addition, the dining facilities are too small for the number of pupils attending the school and need to expand.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion as set out in agenda item 19 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of improved teaching and dining facilities at Sunnydown School in Caterham be approved.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide appropriate facilities for all vulnerable children who attend the school and who have failed to thrive in a mainstream setting and will benefit from this specialist facility.

**DETAILS:**

**Background**

1. The school provides places for 88 boys aged 11-16 with specific learning difficulties. Approximately half the boys are residential from Monday to Friday. All the pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The needs of the pupils include dyslexia, specific learning difficulties, semantic pragmatic language needs and high functioning autistic spectrum disorders such as Aspergers Syndrome. They are in the main vulnerable youngsters who have failed to thrive in a mainstream setting.

2. General teaching classrooms are currently located in 3 double demountable classrooms arranged around the perimeter of the playground. The 6 classrooms provided in these demountables do not provide enough general teaching space for the school. In order to meet its educational aims and maintain the high quality teaching and learning (currently rated as outstanding by Ofsted) the school requires an increase in general teaching space of 2 additional classrooms.
3. The demountable classrooms were installed are over 20 years old and have been well maintained to provide high quality teaching space, but they are now beyond economic repair. It is proposed to replaces these demountable classrooms with a permanent purpose built 2 storey teaching block. The new building will replace the 6 classrooms and will also provide the opportunity not just to replace 'like with like' but to provide the additional general teaching space required to maintain the high quality of education provided by the school. The Pupil Admission Number (PAN) was increased from 76 – 80 in 2012 and there were 83 pupils on roll in May 2014. The Local Authority (LA) plans to consult formally on a change of designation of the school to 'Communication and Interaction Needs'. This is part of the LAs strategy to reduce the number of pupils with autism placed in Non-maintained Independent Special Schools (NMIs).
4. The size of the dining room is too small for the number of pupils attending the school, meaning that other rooms are utilised during mealtimes impacting on the day to day running of the school, and the quality of experience especially for residential pupils. It is proposed to increase the size of the current dining room with a small extension.
5. The Cabinet is asked to approve the business case for the provision of improved facilities at the school. Financial details have been circulated as agenda item 19 in Part 2 of the agenda. Subject to approval, the works will be tendered and a contract awarded. The project will be delivered by autumn 2015 to provide the new facilities.

#### **CONSULTATION:**

6. The scope of the works include the provision of a two storey 8 classroom block with administration and amenities, a dining hall extension and the demolition and removal of the current demountable classroom blocks.
7. The SCC Local Member has been consulted on the proposal.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

8. The planning application was considered and approved under delegated powers by Planning on 14 August 2014.
9. There are risks associated with the project and project risk register has been compiled and is regularly updated. A contingency allowance appropriate to the scheme has been included within the project budget to mitigate for potential identified risks.

**Financial and Value for Money Implications**

- 10. The project will be tendered and subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as it progresses. Further financial details are set out in the report circulated in Part 2 of the agenda. These details have been circulated separately to ensure commercial sensitivity in the interests of securing best value.

**Section 151 Officer Commentary**

- 11. Section 151 Officer confirms that this scheme is included in the 2014/19 Medium Term Financial Plan.

**Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer**

- 12. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on a Local Authority (with responsibility for education) to ensure sufficient primary and secondary education provision is available to meet the needs of the population in its area.

**Equalities and Diversity**

- 13. The proposed works will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
- 14. The new school building will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations.
- 15. The school will support the County’s strategy to develop specialist centres and special schools for students with additional learning needs and difficulties and those with autism within Surrey.

**Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications**

- 16. This proposal would support the school and its commitment to furthering its expertise in realising the best possible outcomes for young people with high functioning autism and will provide increased provision in the area, which would be of benefit to all in the community served by the school.

**Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults**

- 17. The design and specification for the new facilities will be appropriate and compliant with the requirements for a building of this nature and its users, staff and visitors.

**Climate change/carbon emissions implications**

- 18. The design philosophy is to create buildings that will support low energy consumption, reduce solar gain and promote natural ventilation. The school will be built to the local planning authorities adopted core planning strategy.

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

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If approved, to proceed to complete tenders and subsequent contract award through

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delegated decision.

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**Contact Officer:**

Keith Brown, Schools and Programme Manager – tel: 020 8541 8651  
Julie Stockdale, Strategic Lead for School commissioning – tel: 020 8541 8084

**Consulted:**

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate Member for Assets and Regeneration  
Programmes  
John Orrick, SCC Local Member, Caterham Hill  
Julie Fisher, Strategic Director for Business Services  
Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager – Business Services

**Annexes:**

None but Part 2 report with financial details attached to agenda as item 19

**Sources/background papers:**

- The Education Act 1996
- The School Standards Framework Act 1998
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Report to Cabinet: Schools Capital Budget Allocations Service update based on latest or most appropriate report year and version