

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET****DATE: 16 DECEMBER 2014****REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES****LEAD OFFICER: PETER- JOHN WILKINSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER****SUBJECT: ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST MOLESEY****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To approve the Business Case for the expansion of St Alban's Catholic Primary School from a 1 form of entry primary (210 places) to a 2 form of entry Primary (420 places) creating 210 additional places in East Molesey to help meet the basic need requirements in the Elmbridge area from September 2015.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion as set out in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of an additional 1 form of entry (210 places) places in East Molesey be approved.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of the population in the Elmbridge area.

**DETAILS:****Background**

1. Primary school places are in high demand in the Moleseys as a result of the birth rate increasing across Elmbridge Borough by 21.6% in the last decade. Other demographics, such as new housing and inward migration, are also adding to the demand and there is an increasing need for more denominational places in catholic primary schools across the borough and the wider deanery. Working in partnership with the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, Surrey County Council is proposing to expand St Alban's Catholic Primary School by one form of entry with effect from 1 September 2015.
2. There is a clear need for additional primary school places in Elmbridge Borough and specifically in the Moleseys Planning Area. This is demonstrated by the Pupil Forecast data which is derived using methodology that takes into account births

in the borough, housing trajectories and recent trends in admissions and parental preferences. When analysing this forecast data the Local Authority is also mindful of the mix of schools and in this particular planning area, the number of catholic places available. The council works with the appropriate diocese to enhance its analysis using data obtained from baptismal records in the relevant parishes and the deanery as a whole.

3. As a result of this increasing demand for school places in the area additional places are required in the Moleseys and there is an associated project to expand Hurst Park Primary School in the same timeframe. This expansion, together with St Alban's, would add another two forms of entry, equivalent to 420 primary school places into the planning area. Our analysis of the forecast data indicates that this is the right amount of expansion required to meet the demand for places for the foreseeable future.
4. There is also a wider need for Catholic school places in Elmbridge, which is served currently by St Alban's (Molesey), St Paul's (Thames Ditton), Cardinal Newman (Hersham) and St Charles Borromeo (Weybridge). All these schools are oversubscribed, and all but St Alban's have 'space-restricted' sites. The current combined published admission number of the three schools in the eastern side of the Weybridge Deanery (St Alban's, St Paul's, Cardinal Newman) is 150 – a shortfall against the number of baptisms, which has averaged 185 annually.
5. There are five primary schools serving the Moleseys: Chandlers Field Primary, Hurst Park Primary, St Lawrence Junior, The Orchard Infants and St Alban's Primary. Not all of the schools are suitable for expansion; some are on very small sites, others have already been expanded. Only St Alban's can provide the catholic places required to satisfy parental preferences for a denominational primary education.
6. St Alban's Roman Catholic Primary is a popular and successful school which serves this area and delivers a high quality education. It was rated Good by OFSTED, at its last full inspection (December 2012). The provision of additional places at St Alban's therefore meets the Government's policy to expand successful schools in order to meet parental preferences.
7. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places and to work with the dioceses to ensure that sufficient faith places are provided across a deanery and wider planning area. Local authorities are encouraged by the Government to be mindful of the mix of schools on offer to parents so that there is a genuine diversity and choice of education wherever possible.
8. The school is a vital part of the Council's education offer in the local area. Increasing the number of school spaces within the Moleseys area is essential for ensuring that the Local Authority performs its statutory duty of educating all resident pupils who request a school place.
9. The proposals include a two storey building comprising of eight new junior teaching classrooms, with relevant ancillary spaces such as amenity areas and stores; one classroom in the existing building will be converted to a small hall along with some additional staff and pupil resource spaces. On the ground floor a junior resource and ICT space is provided and on the first floor there is a staff planning, preparation and assessment area. Two protected internal stairways are provided to allow circulation and sufficient means of emergency escape. Internal works are proposed to existing buildings include amenity alterations, conversion of one class to a small hall and expansion of the existing kitchen. Limited external

works are also proposed with a new reception play canopy, increased cycle and scooter parking provision, revised low level fencing, new areas of surfacing and a new path with pedestrian access gate leading to Molesey Park Road. This also includes the removal of the existing double demountable unit.

10. The expansion would be managed incrementally, starting with an additional Reception class in 2015 and building up a year at a time until the school is 2FE in every year group by 2020

#### **CONSULTATION:**

11. Public consultation was carried out between 25 November and 23 December 2013. A consultation document was produced and circulated to all parents, other stakeholders and interested parties. In addition two meetings were held at the school on 26 and 28 November 2013; these were attended by approximately 36 parents and residents. The consultation document was also published on the school's website and the local Borough and County Councillors received copies of this.
12. The main concerns raised by respondents were parking and traffic considerations. In summary, these are that the speed and volume of traffic on Beauchamp Road already presents a hazard to pedestrians and therefore increasing the size of St Alban's will only exacerbate this situation. One person noted that as more Catholics will be travelling to the school from other areas this would increase car journeys to school. It was noted by a resident that there is no convenient marked crossing point on the road and respondents state that some parents of pupils currently on roll at St Alban's drive or park in a discourteous manner.
13. Permission was given by the Governing Body in January 2014 for Statutory Notices to be published and these appeared on the school's main gate and website on 26 January 2014; on the Surrey County Council website and in the local press the week beginning 27 January 2014. The Notice outlined the details of the proposal to expand the school and responses were invited from the public via the county council's website. The Council received no responses to the Statutory Notice.
14. The local authority has worked closely with the school and Diocese in developing this proposal. The Head Teacher and Governing Body are in full support of the proposal and are confident that teaching and learning standards and the ethos of the school will be maintained with a larger school community.
15. The proposed building design and position has been considered carefully by architects who are experienced at designing schools and this has been carried out in consultation with the school and early discussions with the Local Authorities planners, to ensure that the position of the building will have the least visual impact on neighbouring properties.
16. In support of the planning application a transport assessment was undertaken and determined there is sufficient parking within the school to accommodate the additional staff for the expanded school. A revised school travel plan has been produced to assist in minimising the traffic journeys to and from the school.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

17. The planning application was considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 24 September 2014 and approved.
18. There are risks associated with the project and a 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**

19. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as they progress. 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**

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

## **Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer**

21. 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**

22. The expansion of the school will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
23. The new school building will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
24. The school will be for children in the community served by the school. The Admissions arrangements will give the highest priority to Looked After Children and pupils on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register and/or those who would benefit from a statement of educational need, thus supporting provision for our most vulnerable children. Children with siblings will receive the next priority, followed by those children living closest to the school. There is no proposal to amend the admissions criteria which is fully compliant with the Schools Admissions Code.
25. The school will be expected to contribute towards community cohesion and will be expected to provide the normal range of before and after schools clubs as are provided in a typical Surrey County Council school.

### **Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications**

26. This proposal would provide increased provision for places in the area, which would be of benefit to the community served by the school. This means it would therefore also be of benefit to any looked after children who will attend the school.

### **Climate change/carbon emissions implications**

27. 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:**

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

#### **Contact Officer:**

Keith Brown, Schools and Programme Manager – tel: 020 8541 8651  
Melanie Harris, School Commissioning Officer – tel: 020 8541 9556

#### **Consulted:**

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate Member for Assets and Regeneration Programmes

Ernest Mallett, SCC Local Member, West Molesey

Julie Fisher, Strategic Director for Business Services  
Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager – Business Services

#### **Annexes:**

None - Part 2 report with financial details attached to agenda

#### **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

This page is intentionally left blank