

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 24 MARCH 2015



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 FRANCIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, CATERHAM

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To approve the Business Case for the expansion of St Francis Catholic Primary School from a 1.5 Form of Entry primary (315 places) to a 2 Form of Entry primary (420 places) creating 105 additional places in Caterham to help meet the basic need requirements in the Caterham area from September 2016.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion as set out in agenda item 16 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of an additional 0.5 Form of Entry (105 places) primary places in Caterham 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 Caterham area.

DETAILS:

Background

1. The provision of additional school places within the Caterham area is vital in order to ensure that the Local Authority fulfils its statutory duty of providing sufficient school places and meet the demands of a rising population. The provision of additional places at St Francis Catholic School is also essential in providing specific faith based school places to retain and enhance a diversity of provision in the School estate and to meet the specific demands of a rising catholic population as evidenced by increased baptisms.
2. As with other areas of the County, there is increasing pressure for primary school places in Tandridge. In addition to the demand generated by an increasing birth

rate, there is a need to provide more school places in the District of Tandridge as a result of additional housing and net inward migration.

3. Within the Redhill Deanery there are two Catholic primary schools providing places for Catholic children, St Francis Catholic Primary School, Caterham, Parish of the Sacred Heart (Caterham, Whyteleafe and Godstone) and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Redhill, Parish of the Nativity of the Lord (Redhill, Merstham and Reigate).
4. There is a demonstrable need for an increase in school places for families with a Catholic background. Across the deanery the average number of baptisms over the 10 year period is 166 per year. This is approximately 38% above the combined published admission numbers of the Catholic primary schools in the deanery which is 120 inclusive of the increase at St Francis Catholic Primary School.
5. The School is currently judged by Ofsted as 'Requiring Improvement'. This is a recent judgment from June 2014. A monitoring visit has been undertaken by Her Majesty Inspectorate in September 2014. It indicated that, "Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection".
6. The proposal is to provide extensions to the existing building to create 2 new classrooms and a small studio space with internal remodeling to provide a further classroom, group room and larger library.
7. The access loop road from Whyteleafe Road serves St Francis Catholic Primary School, Audley Primary School and Sunnydown SEN School. The loop road becomes very congested at school peak times and can impact on the access from Whyteleafe Road. In order to mitigate this congestion, the proposal includes significant highways improvements works, which will benefit all three schools and local residents. These works include: alterations to the entrance to the loop road from Whyteleafe Road, changes to the loop road to provide 12 additional waiting spaces for parents and 9 additional parking spaces on the St Francis Catholic Primary School site.

CONSULTATION:

8. The Head teacher and School Governors have been fully consulted on the expansion proposals.
9. As part of the pre-planning application process two consultations were undertaken, one with staff and governors and one with the public, these were well attended.
10. The planning application received 1 formal objection and 22 representations. These centered on the traffic and highway implications of the proposed scheme. Planning and Highways Officers considered, as part of the report to the Planning and Regulatory Committee, "that the measures proposed in the application to mitigate potential traffic and parking impacts will have a positive effect on the capacity of the loop access road such that there will not be a severe residual impact". The scheme was granted planning permission on 12 December 2014.
11. As a Voluntary Aided School the increase in admission number has been confirmed by the School through their School Admissions arrangements consultation. The consultation was conducted by the school from November 2013

to January 2014 and was distributed to local admissions authorities and the Surrey Schools Admissions forum. The admission number of 60 was confirmed by the School Governors in February 2014 and the full co-ordinated admissions arrangements for Surrey County Council were determined by full Council on 18 March 2014.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

12. 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

13. The project will be 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

14. Section 151 Officer confirms that this scheme is included in the 2015/20 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

15. 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

16. The expansion of the school will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
17. The new school building will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
18. 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.
19. The school will be expected to contribute towards community cohesion and will be expected to provide the normal range of before and after school clubs as are provided in a typical Surrey County Council school.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

20. This proposal would provide increased provision for primary Catholic 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

21. 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
Oliver Gill, School Commissioning Officer – tel: 020 854 17383

Consulted:

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate for Assets and Regeneration Programmes
John Orrick, Local Member, Caterham Hill - Tandridge
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 as item 16

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