

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 22 MARCH 2016



**REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS,
SKILLS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT
MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS
SERVICES AND RESIDENT EXPERIENCE**

**LEAD OFFICER: JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER
JULIE STOCKDALE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS
AND LEARNING (INTERIM)**

SUBJECT: DANETREE JUNIOR SCHOOL, EWELL

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To approve the Business Case for the expansion of Danetree Junior School from a 4 Form of Entry junior (480 places) to a 4 Form of Entry primary (840 places) creating an additional 360 primary places together with the provision of a maintained 52 place nursery for children aged 2 to 4 years on the Danetree school site. This forms part of an area re-organisation of primary schools within Ewell that seeks to deliver 630 additional primary places across three schools. This will help meet the basic need requirements in the Ewell and NW Epsom primary planning areas from September 2017 and will assist the Local Authority to meet its statutory responsibility to provide sufficient school places to meet the local demand.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion set out in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of an additional 360 primary places plus 52 nursery places in Ewell be approved.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places relative to demand.

DETAILS:

Background

1. Epsom and Ewell Borough has experienced an increase in the demand for primary school places over the past decade, reflecting a rise in birth rate, increased house building and pupil migration into the area. Births in the Borough in 2014 were 22.8 % higher than births in 2002. This resulted in there being a projected variable shortfall between the demand for primary places and the supply of these from 2009 onwards. This has been addressed across the borough through a number of permanent and temporary expansions of primary

schools and the net capacity is now such that the future projected demand should be able to be met in all areas except Ewell and NW Epsom. In these areas there is still a need to create 630 places to meet the continuing projected demand. This will enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

2. The provision of additional capacity at a re-organised Danetree Primary School is the preferred solution for a number of reasons, as detailed in the subsequent paragraphs.
3. The expansion fits into an overall strategy to create all through primary schools in Ewell, rather than single phase infant and junior schools. This is the preferred option of parents, teachers and school governors who see educational advantages in children not having to change schools at age seven.
4. The quality of education provision at Danetree, and the two other re-organised schools, is the key reason underpinning the proposal to expand. At its last OFSTED inspection (June 2014) Danetree was judged to be 'good'. Therefore by expanding this school, Surrey County Council would be increasing the provision of high-quality school places to the local community in line with government policy.
5. The project will require new nursery and infant accommodation to support the permanent expansion. This will be in the form of a new two storey building that will provide a new nursery and six new infant classrooms and associated spaces. There will also be increased onsite parking and some external works. There will also be some internal refurbishment in the main school building to facilitate Danetree admitting bulge classes into Year 3 in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
6. A planning application was submitted in November 2015. A decision is expected at the Planning and Regulatory Committee in March 2016.

CONSULTATION:

7. The Headteacher and school governors have been fully consulted on the expansion proposals.
8. As an academy, that is its own Admission Authority, the increase in the published admission number has been the subject of a school-led consultation process, which was held for a 4 week period from 15 June to 10 July 2015. This process engaged a range of stakeholders, including parents, the school community, local residents and local admissions authorities. The outcome of this consultation was subject to a statutory approval process. The Governing Body subsequently decided to approve the principle of expansion and this decision has been ratified by the Secretary of State via the Regional Schools' Commissioner.
9. As part of the pre-planning application process, an open public presentation event will be held at the school, the date to be arranged by the school and the project delivery team within SCC. The team consists of design professionals, SCC officers and school staff and governors; all of whom will be present to respond to any questions or concerns.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

10. There are risks associated with the project and a project risk register will be compiled by the Project Manager and regularly updated by the project management team. 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

11. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny by Surrey County Council officers 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 interest of securing best value.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

12. This scheme at Danetree is included in the 2016-21 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

13. 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

14. The expansion of the school will not create any issues that would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
15. The new school building will comply with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations.
16. The Academy sets its own Admissions arrangements. Its published criteria for 2016 give the highest priority to Looked After Children (LAC) and those in exceptional circumstances. The third priority is siblings and the fourth is based on home to school distance. The fifth priority includes any other children making an application. The admissions criteria are fully compliant with the School Admissions Code.
17. The school already contributes positively towards community cohesion and provides the normal range of before- and after-schools clubs typical to Surrey County Council schools. If the expansion is approved it intends to provide the service to the additional pupils in line with its ethos and values.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

18. This proposal would provide increased provision for primary 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 have the opportunity of attending the school.

<u>Climate change/carbon emissions implications</u>
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19. 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 authority's adopted core planning strategy.

<u>WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:</u>

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

Contact Officer:

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Melanie Harris, School Commissioning Officer – tel: 020 8541 9556

Consulted:

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate for the Built Environment
Jan Mason, Local Member: West Ewell - Epsom and Ewell
Julie Fisher, Deputy Chief Executive and 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