

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 28 NOVEMBER 2017



**REPORT OF: MRS MARY LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION
MR TIM OLIVER, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND
BUSINESS SERVICES**

**LEAD OFFICER: JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER
LIZ MILLS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS AND
LEARNING**

SUBJECT: CHERTSEY HIGH SCHOOL, RUNNYMEDE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Chertsey High School is a new 4 form of entry (120 places per year 600 places in total) Secondary School opened as part of the Free School Programme. The Council has provided the site of the former Runnymede Centre for the new school, with the Department of Education (DfE) providing the capital build costs. The school has the potential to rise to 900 places over time in line with demographic need. The School opened in September 2017 for 120 year 7 pupils and is supporting the basic need school places programme in Runnymede Borough.

In order to establish the school with appropriate sports facilities the Council has undertaken detailed negotiations with the current exclusive occupier of the sports ground at the site. To enable joint use of the sports ground for the new school and the existing community sports club the Council has proposed to joint fund with the DfE, the community sports club and a contribution from the London Marathon the installation of an all weather sports pitch. This paper provides the Business Case for the relevant contribution towards that facility for Community and School use.

The provision and potential future expansion of the School is enabling Surrey County Council to meet the existing and forecast demand for secondary school places in Runnymede borough.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that:

Subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information of the scheme as set out in Part 2 of this agenda, the Cabinet approves the business case for the contribution of relevant sums towards the construction of an all weather sports pitch at Chertsey High School.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of the population in Runnymede Borough enabling the provision of Year 7 places when and where they are needed.

DETAILS:

1. The county council has a statutory responsibility to provide a sufficient number of school places to meet the needs of its residents. The council monitors future demand and decides on appropriate changes to school organisation, where necessary, in order to meet this statutory responsibility. The council plans secondary places on a borough wide basis to ensure that additional capacity is spread across the borough's schools to facilitate local availability.
2. Births in Runnymede peaked in 2011, whilst they have fallen marginally from this they have remained stable up to our most recent figure in 2016 and have consistently been over 13% higher than 2005 figures. This pattern has been reflected in the demand for primary school places in the borough. There have been a number of temporary primary 'bulge' classes and permanent expansions provided since 2011 to meet these demand patterns.
3. The larger primary cohorts are now entering the secondary sector. Although there has formerly been surplus capacity in the six Secondary Schools in the Borough, this is gradually being utilised year on year. By 2017 the forecast numbers for Year 7 admissions exceeded the combined area Planned Admission Number. In order for the Council to meet its statutory requirements it is necessary to identify and facilitate additional school provision.
4. As a result these increases in demand patterns Council supported an application by the Bourne Education Trust for the establishment of a 4 form of entry (600 place), rising over in time to 6 forms of entry (900 place), Secondary School. The Bourne Education Trust is a high performing and established Multi-Academy Trust based in Surrey. It currently comprises of 4 Secondary Schools in Surrey a further 5 primary age providers based within the County and another Secondary School in Hampshire.
5. This application was approved by the Department for Education, additionally the Bourne Education Trust was approved by the Regional Schools Commissioner and the regional Headteacher Board. As part of the application the Council agreed to provide a site to meet the requirements of Secondary School of this size.
6. The Capital build cost of the new Free School is being met by the Education Funding and Skills Agency (EFSA). Our estimates of the cost of building a 600 place school would be in the region of £18m. Failure to have secured a free school would have obligated the council to provide these additional places via either the provision of a discreet school or expansions at existing schools with the capital cost being borne by the Council.
7. After an analysis of the site options the Council agreed to provide the site of the former Runnymede Centre. To comply with the requirements of new school site the Council further agreed to provide the adjacent school playing fields currently leased by the Council to Runnymede Borough Council for the exclusive possession of Abbey Rangers Football Club.

8. Chertsey High School was established by the EFSA from September 2017 admitting 120 pupils into temporary accommodation within the former Runnymede Centre. All the costs associated with refurbishing the accommodation has been met by the EFSA.
9. In order to facilitate a new lease, whereby Abbey Rangers Football Club relinquished exclusive possession of the playing field allowing appropriate access for Chertsey High School, it was necessary to provide the All Weather Sports Pitch. This has effect of both meeting the requirements of a modern sports curriculum and allowing the provision of a new lease between Surrey Council, Bourne Education Trust and Abbey Rangers Football. This action secures both the long term future of Chertsey High School as well as a highly respected Community Sports Club.
10. The funding of the construction of an All Weather Sports Pitch is proposed to be met by the three represented bodies, the EFSA, Surrey County Council and Abbey Rangers Football Club along with a contribution from the London Marathon. A formal management committee including representatives from each body will also be established to provide governance of the maintenance fund. A maintenance fund will be generated from income through the community use lettings of the all weather pitch. A business case has been developed that demonstrates that this is achievable.
11. The building of the sports pitch will be managed by Surrey County Council, enabling cost efficiencies to be achieved, through its Property Team.

CONSULTATION:

12. The establishment of a New School under the Free School Programme is the responsibility of the Department for Education through the Education Funding and Skills Agency.
13. Consultation relating to the approval and establishment of the Free School is undertaken by the relevant Multi-Academy Trust and the Department of Education through the Office of the Regional School Commissioner. Chertsey High School has been established in accordance with consultation requirements for the Department of Education. This has included a formal section 9 consultation that the Council responded to. The consultation and decision to establish the school has been ratified by the Regional Schools Commissioner.
14. The development of the All Weather Sports Pitch will be subject to a planning application and the statutory consultation associated with that.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

15. 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 risks.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

16. 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

17. The County Council is facing a very serious financial situation, whereby there are still substantial savings to be identified and delivered to achieve a balanced budget in the current year and a sustainable budget plan for future years.
18. The Section 151 Officer can confirm that an estimated cost for this capital scheme has been included in the current School Basic Need capital programme as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan. A significant part, but not all of the school basic need capital programme, is funded from DfE capital grant.
19. In spite of these factors, it is important to recognise that agreeing to this recommendation will reduce the council's options to achieve a sustainable budget in future years. However, it should be noted that this agreement is part of a much larger project for a new free secondary school, which is funded by the DfE.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

20. 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

21. The provision of an all weather sports pitch and relevant maintenance contribution will not create any issues which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
22. The new school will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
23. 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 with an Education Health and Care Plan, 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.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

24. This proposal would provide increased provision for secondary 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 may attend the school.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

25. The council has a duty to promote and improve educational outcomes for all children, particularly those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged. Chertsey High School is an inclusive school and has robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

26. There are no significant carbon emissions or climate change implications resulting from this report.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

27. If approved, to proceed to detailed design to allow procurement of tenders and subsequent contract award through delegated decision.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

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Julie Fisher, Acting Chief Executive
Rose Durban, Acting Strategic Director for Children, Schools and Families
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

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