

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET



DATE: 23 JULY 2024

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, WASTE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

LEAD OFFICER: KATIE STEWART, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ENVIRONMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH

SUBJECT: THE WINSTON CHURCHILL SCHOOL- REPLACEMENT CURTAIN WALLING & FIRE STOPPING WORKS

ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA: GROWING A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY SO EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT/ TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITY/ ENABLING A GREENER FUTURE/ EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Purpose of the Report:

Cabinet is asked to approve capital expenditure to undertake the replacement of the existing non-fire rated infill panels with a fire rated curtain walling system and provide fire stopping to the 4-storey block and 2-storey main building to provide a safe building environment at The Winston Churchill School, Hermitage Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 8TL.

The existing cladding and curtain walling system does not prevent horizontal and vertical fire spread through the main building and science block posing a serious risk to life and property should a fire start undetected.

The proposed scheme would ensure the building has the required compartmentation to contain any fire risk. The proposed scheme will then align with Surrey County Council's (the Council) guiding mission that **Communities are empowered** through the provision of safe buildings and **everyone benefits from education, skills and employment that help them to succeed in life**.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves capital funding allocated within the School Capital Maintenance Budget for the Capital Maintenance Programme 2024/25 to provide a safe building which currently has no fire breaks between the floors and which the Fire Officer has requested to ensure no enforcement notice is issued deeming the buildings to be unsafe for occupation at The Winston Churchill School. The capital funding required to develop the new facilities is commercially sensitive at this time and is set out in the Part 2 report.
2. Approves procurement of appropriate supply chain partners to deliver the design, build and installation of the new structures in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Standing Orders.

3. Agrees to delegate to the Executive Director for Environment, Infrastructure and Growth in consultation with the Director of Land and Property to award such contracts, up to +/-10% of the budgetary tolerance level and any other legal documentation required to facilitate the approvals within this report.
4. Authorises Legal Services to seal any awarded contracts where required.

Reason for Recommendations:

The recommendations in this report:

- Provide a safe learning and working environment in keeping with the existing school design, ensuring the building has the required compartmentation to contain any fire risk.
- Reduce the risk to life of pupils, staff, and other stakeholders.
- Reduce the risk of extensive collateral damage in the event of a fire.
- Ensure that the Fire Officer does not issue an enforcement notice and the insurance broker is willing to provide cover for the building.
- Make an essential contribution towards the Council's strategic objective to empower communities, in line with the 2030 Community Vision to ensure everyone benefits from education, skills and employment that help them to succeed in life.

Executive Summary:

1. Winton Churchill is a foundation secondary school for pupils aged 11 to 16 with a net capacity of 1,500 places (2023 Net Capacity Assessment) and 1,523 pupils on roll (School Census October 2023). There is a long-term need for this capacity.
2. The Council is responsible for the capital maintenance, and the school are responsible for revenue maintenance.
3. The existing cladding and curtain walling system do not prevent horizontal and vertical fire spread through the main building and science block posing a serious risk to life and property should a fire start undetected.
4. The works are essential in providing the required fire stopping, both horizontally and vertically to provide a safe learning environment, especially in the higher risk areas of the 4-storey block where the science laboratories are located.
5. If these works are not undertaken and the Fire Officer issues an enforcement notice, the school would have to vacate the affected buildings and erect temporary units on the school site thereby impacting the school's ability to provide quality education to the students.

Options overview:

	Option A	Option B
Options.	Undertake curtain walling replacement & fire stopping works. Replace the existing infill panels with an A1 system non-combustible external wall system with fire stopping internally both horizontally and vertically to provide the required compartmentation.	Do nothing.
Delivery Approach	Waiver for specialist works.	N/A
Planning Permission	N/A	N/A
Site Area	The site area identified is already developed.	N/A
Advantages	Provides a safe learning environment and once completed negates the risk of an enforcement notice being issued. Replacement panels will provide a more energy efficient building with improved U-values. Will contain any fire to within the created compartments.	No capital cost outlay required.
Disadvantages	Some disruption to the school, but will be phased to limit the overall disruption.	Capital cost outlay.
Procurement	Waiver using NEC4 Contract with design element.	N/A
Estimate Costs	See Part 2.	N/A

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Preferred option

Preferred option and key reason(s) why this option is recommended
<p>The preferred option is Option A to provide a safe learning environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the risk to life and property. • Supports the school in providing education to local children within a safe environment. • Negates the possible issue of an enforcement notice by the Fire Officer, as well as insurance cover concerns. • Removes the risk of legal action against the Council's Officers and the subsequent reputational damage to the Council.

Waiver

6. The works are to be delivered by a specialist contractor who will design and deliver the works to the agreement of the Fire Officer and Insurance Brokers.
7. Due to the seriousness of the issue and urgency for remedial works to be undertaken, works are required to start as soon as possible. This will ensure no enforcement notices are issued to the school and the consequential reputational impact to the Council.

Consultation:

8. Relevant teams within the Council, namely Environment, Infrastructure and Growth (EIG), Education and specifically, Land and Property (L&P), have been consulted and had input into the proposal.
9. This proposal was tabled and endorsed at both Property Panel and Capital Programme Panel in alignment with the agreed internal Council governance procedures.
10. Wider consultation has been undertaken with key stakeholders including the following:
 - a. Ms Zoe Johnson-Walker, Head Teacher, Winston Churchill School
 - b. Mr Stuart Phillips, School Business Manager, Winston Churchill School
 - c. Mr Keith Nicholas, Borough Fire Safety Inspector
 - d. Mr Matthew Kiernan, Risk Engineer UK, Protector Insurance

Risk Management and Implications:

11. Key risks associated with the recommendations have been identified and are being actively managed, as outlined below:

	Risk description	Mitigation action/strategy
a.	Insufficient funding to deliver project. Material shortages and price increases. Cost escalation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feasibility study reflects risks and contingencies.• The Council will monitor delivery.• All stages will be monitored by Macro, the Councils Workplace and Facilities strategic partner.
b.	Disruption to school operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School operational plans in place.• The Council to support school through the project.
c.	Disruption to pupils and curriculum until the building works are completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council opted for the least disruptive delivery route to address the issues.• The Education team are working closely with the school to minimise disruption and review options.

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

12. The budget for this scheme has been allocated within the School Capital Maintenance Budget for the Minor Capital Works (MCW) Programme of 2024/25. The funding allocation for the 2024/25 programme of works is sufficient to accommodate the above and other prioritised works for the programme year. The proposal was endorsed at Capital Programme Panel on 11 June.

Section 151 Officer Commentary:

13. The Council continues to operate in a very challenging financial environment. Local authorities across the country are experiencing significant budgetary pressures. Surrey County Council has made significant progress in recent years to improve the Council's financial resilience and whilst this has built a stronger financial base from which to deliver our services, the cost-of-service delivery, increasing demand, financial uncertainty and government policy changes mean we continue to face challenges to our financial position. This requires an increased focus on financial management to protect service delivery, a continuation of the need to deliver financial efficiencies and reduce spending in order to achieve a balanced budget position each year.
14. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2024/25 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority, in order to ensure the stable provision of services in the medium term.
15. The capital costs and revenue cost of borrowing are included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, as such, the Section 151 Officer supports the recommendation.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:

16. This paper seeks Cabinet approval for the replacement of the existing curtain walling and provide fire stopping, to ensure the required compartmentation of the building is provided to provide a safe learning environment and limit any possible collateral damage in the event of a fire.
17. With regard to the capital expenditure, Cabinet is under fiduciary duties to local residents in utilising public monies and in considering this business case Cabinet Members will want to satisfy themselves that it represents an appropriate use of the Council's resources.
18. Legal advice should be sought at all relevant stages to ensure the Council meets its legal obligations and obtains any necessary consents which may be required to carry out these works.
19. With regard to the procurement of supply chain partners, officers must ensure that they are procured in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Procurement and Contract Standing Orders and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (or superseding legislation) where appropriate.
20. In addition, officers should ensure that the school's interest in any works and/or services contracts procured by the Council is duly noted and where appropriate collateral warranties for the benefit of the school obtained in respect of these works or services.

Equalities and Diversity:

21. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not applicable and has therefore not been completed.

Other Implications:

22. The potential implications for the following the Councils priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/ Looked After Children	No implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No implications arising from this report.
Environmental sustainability	Recycling of building materials is a requirement under the construction contract and supports protecting the environment.
Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience	The use of insulated panels supports the Councils net-zero targets by improving thermal efficiency of the building.
Public Health Education	No implications arising from this report

What Happens Next:

23. Next steps and anticipated timescales:

Key milestones	Date
Cabinet approval	July 2024
Procurement	August 2024
Contract award	August 2024
Mobilisation & commencement of contractor	August 2024
Planned completion	March 2025

24. The school is responsible for communicating timescales, implications for school operations and mitigating management actions to staff, parents, and pupils. The Council's project team will provide information to inform and support such communications.

Report Author: Ade Durojaiye. Head of Programme Management (Workplace & Facilities Lead), Land and Property. 07792 185 999

Consulted:

- **Cllr Natalie Bramhall**, Cabinet Member for Property, Waster & Infrastructure SCC
- **Cllr Clare Curran**, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning, SCC
- **Julia Katherine**, Director, Education and Lifelong Learning, SCC

- **Rachael Wardell**, Executive Director, Children, Families and Lifelong Learning, SCC
- **Katie Stewart**, Executive Director, Environment, Infrastructure and Growth, SCC
- **Simon Crowther**, Director, Land and Property, SCC
- **Glenn Woodhead**, Assistant Director, Workplace and Facilities, SCC
- **Carrie Traill**, Service Manager, Educational Effectiveness, SCC
- **Clive Prichard**, Principal Insurance Officer, Fund and Policy, SCC
- **Ade Durojaiye**, Head of Programme Management, Workplace & Facilities, SCC
- **Property Panel and Capital Programme Panel members**, SCC
- **Finance and Legal Teams**, CC
- **Macro** (The Councils Managing Agent and Delivery Partner)

Appendices:

Appendix A: Map view, photographs, location, and floor plan

Part 2 report

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