

Forward Plan reference number: Not applicable

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| Report title: Beauchamps High School, Wickford, Basildon | |
| Report to: Ben Finlayson, Director of Property, Investment and Delivery | |
| Report author: Rhona Long, Emma Oni | |
| Date: 23 rd November 2023 | For: Decision |
| Enquiries to: Rhona Long – School Organisation Officer, email: rhona.long@essex.gov.uk Emma Oni – Project Sponsor, email: emma.oni@essex.gov.uk | |
| County Divisions affected: Wickford Crouch | |

Confidential Appendix

This report has a confidential appendix which is not for publication as it includes exempt information falling within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

1. Everyone's Essex

- 1.1 Investing in the expansion of Beauchamps High School (the 'School') will deliver on a range of key commitments set out in Everyone's Essex – Our plan for levelling up the county: 2021-2025. These will include:
 - 1.1.1 Delivering **infrastructure** to support new homes and communities. The school is in an area of growth and expanding education infrastructure will have the outcome of ensuring that high quality local educational facilities are provided to match the local growth.
 - 1.1.2 Achieving **net-zero**. The new buildings will have a net-zero design, and so will have the outcome of generating renewable energy and using energy efficient construction methods to mitigate their carbon impact. Enabling active travel will also facilitate a reduced reliance on motor travel and its associated carbon impact.
 - 1.1.3 Enabling **healthy lifestyles**. Providing local school places, along with the measures included to enable and promote active travel, will have the outcome of enabling the inclusion of activity and exercise as part of the journey to and from school.
 - 1.1.4 Supporting high quality **education outcomes**. With the expansion, the new high-quality facilities will have the outcomes of ensuring children are able to learn, and teachers able to teach, in the most conducive environment for success. Currently teaching and learning is taking place in a more constrained

environment.

- 1.2 Expansion of the School will mean Essex residents in the Wickford area will benefit from additional, high quality secondary provision in an area of growing demand, increasing access to local places for their children.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree the increased capital budget for construction and associated project fees as per the profile stated in the Confidential Appendix.

3. Background and Proposal

- 3.1. A decision was endorsed at IDB (November 2023) to enter into a construction contract with Barnes Construction to deliver the expansion of Beauchamps High School by increasing capacity by one form of entry (150 places) from September 2024 in order to meet the need for secondary school places in the locality.
- 3.2. The total capital cost of the project has increased since the OBC was endorsed and is included in the 2024/25 budget setting process.
- 3.3. Cost movement can be attributed to confirmation of the substructure and groundworks design following completion of surveys, additional utility connection requirements and inflationary increases across all packages, in particular the M&E package following detailed design. This is detailed in the attached FBC.
- 3.4. It is proposed to approve the increased capital cost since OBC was endorsed in October 2022. This cost has been included in the 2024/25 budget setting process.
- 3.5. The Project Delivery Timescales are as follows:

| Milestone Description | Target Date |
|--|--------------------|
| Contract Award (subject to conditions being met) | December 2023 |
| Start on site (subject to conditions being met) | January 2024 |
| Works complete | August 2024 |

4. Links to our Strategic Ambitions

- 4.1. This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision:
 - Provide an equal foundation for every child
 - Develop our County sustainably
 - Share prosperity with everyone

- 4.2. Approving the recommendations in this report will have a positive impact on the Council's ambition to be net carbon neutral by 2030 via the design of the new building which will aim to be net-zero carbon in operation. Carbon reduction benefits to be included are items such as enhancements to the fabric of the building, Photovoltaic Panels and Air Source Heat Pumps which will help reduce the carbon impact of this scheme.
- 4.3. This report links to the following strategic priorities in the emerging Organisational Strategy 'Everyone's Essex':
- A strong, inclusive and sustainable economy
 - A high-quality environment
 - Health wellbeing and independence for all ages
 - A good place for children and families to grow

5. Options

Option 1 – Agree to approve the proposal to approve the increased capital budget for construction (recommended option)

- a. This proposal will allow the expansion of Beauchamps High School to be completed as part of the overall strategic response to meet the need for additional school places.
- b. ECC's proposal to expand Beauchamps High School is intended to ensure that local children have the opportunity to access a local school.
- c. Additional Year 7 places will contribute to providing sufficient places in an area of growth. The School is popular and oversubscribed and is rated "Outstanding" by Ofsted. Expanding the School will enable more parents to gain a place for their child at a popular, high performing school.
- d. The outcome of the strategic analysis indicated that expanding the School continues to represent good value for money to the Essex taxpayer.
- e. Option 1 is therefore the preferred option.

Option 2 – Do nothing

- f. The option to do nothing is not reasonable and prevents the expansion of Beauchamps High School. There is a need to increase pupil places and the proposed expansion of the School is a solution to meet the continued increase in demand for school places and for ECC to meet its statutory duty to provide a school place for every child.
- g. Should additional places not be delivered for September 2024 there is a significant risk that children will be without school places in their local area, that longer journeys will need to be made between home and school in order to find

alternative schools with spaces and that in an increased number of cases parental preference will not be satisfied.

6. Issues for consideration

6.1. Financial implications

Capital

- 6.1.1 Please see the Confidential Appendix for capital financial information.

Revenue

- 6.1.2. School revenue budgets are funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and are based on pupil numbers in the October prior to the start of the financial year. The DfE allows basic need growth to be funded by the Essex Formula for Funding Schools and the difference between estimated pupils and the October Census is added to the number on roll which will generate additional funding in an academic year to ensure the school has sufficient resources to provide the required number of classes. At the end of the approved growth period the School will be funded on actual pupil numbers.
- 6.1.3. As the School will be expanding year on year there will be the need for additional teaching and support staff. The recruitment process will be managed by the School's leadership team.
- 6.1.4. The estimated Furniture and Equipment costs of £79,000 will be funded from within the existing furniture and equipment revenue budget funded via the DSG.

6.2. Legal implications

- 6.2.1 Beauchamps High School is a Foundation school maintained by ECC.
- 6.2.2. The recommended option will support ECC meeting its duty to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of school places under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 as the recommended option will provide additional space so that the school can accept its published admission number..

7. Equality and Diversity Considerations

- 7.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

7.2. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

7.3. The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

8. List of Appendices

8.1. Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

8.2. Appendix 2 – Confidential Appendix

9. List of Background Papers

9.1. None

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| I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report. | Date |
| Tom Walker, Executive Director, Economy, Investment and Public Health | 20/12/2023 |

In consultation with:

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| Role | Date |
| Executive Director, Corporate Services (S151 Officer) | 12.12.2023 |
| Daniel Tooke on behalf of Nicole Wood | |