

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

<b>Report title:</b> Additional Accommodation at The Beaulieu Park School	
<b>Report to:</b> Cllr Tony Ball, Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability	
<b>Report author:</b> Clare Kershaw – Director for Education	
<b>Date:</b> 9 January 2024	<b>For:</b> Decision
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<b>County Divisions affected:</b> Springfield, Chelmsford	

### 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This report has a confidential appendix which is not for publication as it includes exempt information falling within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.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 Investment in this primary school setting delivers on a range of key commitments set out in *Everyone's Essex – Our plan for levelling up the county: 2021-2025*.
- 1.2 Delivery of key commitments include delivering infrastructure to support new homes and communities; achieving net-zero, through buildings that will have a net-zero carbon operational design; supporting active travel as part of the built environment of a sustainable, healthy neighbourhood; enabling healthy lifestyles by providing facilities that give focus for the community; supporting high quality education outcomes with facilities that ensure children are able to learn and teachers able to teach in the most conducive environment.
- 1.3 The additional accommodation is to achieve net-zero carbon design and this supports the strategic aim of Everyone's Essex to create a high-quality environment by reducing carbon emissions.
- 1.4 Adding additional accommodation at Beaulieu Park School represents a capital investment in its local community. It delivers a modern, high quality learning environment for pupils beginning their formal education, promoting engagement during those vital early years of schooling and thus increasing the likelihood of future prosperity.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to undertake works on at Beaulieu Park School to construct buildings to accommodate additional pupils taken on by the school in the previous three academic years at a cost of £1.365m.
- 2.2 Agree that Mitie undertake the works set out in 2.1 under the terms of Essex County Councils contract with them.
- 2.3 Agree to enter into a licence with The Chelmsford Learning Partnership Academy Trust to permit access to the Beaulieu Park School for the purpose of the works set out in 2.1 above and to delegate to Director of Property and Investment and Delivery to agree the final terms.

### **3 Background and Proposal**

- 3.1 The demand for school places continues to grow within the administrative area of Essex County Council (ECC), and ECC has a duty to ensure that every child wanting one has access to a school place. In executing these responsibilities, the ECC also seeks to add value to the educational offer that can be made to parents and carers within a local area, to ensure that learners receive the best possible outcomes from their time in formal education.
- 3.2 Beaulieu Park School is the first all through state school in Essex. The primary school element (60 places per year) opened in 2018. Due to increased demand from the Greater Beaulieu housing development the Chelmsford Learning Partnership Academy Trust (Academy), following agreement with ECC and necessary arrangement with the Department for Education, offered an additional 30 primary places in the Reception year for September 2021, September 2022, and in September 2023. The schools existing accommodation has been used to accommodate the additional classes as the school had not admitted all primary year groups so spare classbases were available.
- 3.3 From September 2024 the school will be at capacity for pupils and will need additional accommodation to serve the extra classes previously taken. The school will require a total of 3 additional class bases, for a period of 7 years commencing in September 2024 to accommodate the pupils taken in September 2021, September 2022, and in September 2023 as they move through the School
- 3.4 It is proposed that ECC provide additional accommodation at the Beaulieu Park School. ECC will fund this work and be responsible for arranging and completing works. This project provides a permanent solution for the school and is planned to be completed for September 2024. ECC will be responsible for all of the costs even if the exceed the amount in section 6 of this report. ECC will provide the accommodation in order to ensure that it is able to offer access to school places and children in the area.
- 3.5 The additional accommodation will provide three permanent classrooms and will serve the mainstream school need until 2031. The accommodation will then provide much needed SEN capacity within the Chelmsford area.

- 3.6 The required 3 classrooms are proposed to be provided via a single-storey new build block. The benefit of providing these facilities via a permanent block are that they can be adapted and reused for alternative purposes in the future. The proposed block will be designed to be easily converted for Special Educational Needs provision following the use of the accommodation for the three primary school classes in 2031
- 3.7 The building will be designed using an enhanced net zero carbon initiative design including measures in excess of the DFE specification. It is intended to achieve NetZero both by installing PV panels and air source heat pumps but also by designing the building in line with the LETI Operational Carbon principles through improved building fabric and maximising solar gain.
- 3.8 It is proposed that ECC will appoint its Facilities Management Contractor to undertake the works at the School. A tender was run on the Essex Construction Framework to procure the works required but the tender returns received were not value for money and were over budget.
- 3.9 The construction of the classrooms does not need planning permission and can be constructed with permitted development rights.
- 3.10 ECC will need to enter a licence with the Academy Trust to ensure it has access to the School for construction. The terms of this licence are in the process of being agreed. The decision to agree its final terms is delegated to the Director of Property, Investment and Delivery to agree the final terms

## **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 the following impact on the Council's ambition to be net carbon neutral by 2030:

- 4.2.1 Beaulieu Park School will benefit from a building that includes zero carbon enhancements to the specification, which will contribute to ECC's aspiration to reduce its carbon footprint, working towards its net zero targets. Any reductions saved through cost avoidance could be reinvested into resources that improve the delivery of the curriculum, thereby improving education outcomes for young people.

- 4.2.2 The aspiration to achieve zero carbon in the project specification is consistent with ECC's emerging commitment towards commissioning zero carbon buildings as referenced in the climate change commission report presented to

ECC. The proposed Net zero enhancements will comply to the LETI (London Energy Transformation Initiative) design guide.

4.2.3 Building to the 2050 weather file helps mitigate the risks of future overheating, and the use of the weather data files enables designers to test their building models against a variety of weather scenarios and predictions for UK summer temperatures. This means buildings can be designed to be more sustainable and resilient to current and future weather conditions.

4.2.4 Considerations within the modelling process to avoid overheating and also improve energy efficiency, aligned with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance of a fabric first approach, would include, building orientation, building form, thermal mass of the building fabric, high insulation, increased airtightness, optimising solar gain and natural ventilation.

4.3 This report links to the following strategic priorities in '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**

### **5.1 Option 1 – Agree to the proposal to permanently enlarge Beaulieu Park School for September 2024**

5.1.1 This proposal is part of the overall strategic response to meet the need for school places.

5.1.2 This option provides long term value for money as it provides the required accommodation needed, in the short term, for mainstream pupils and also provides long term accommodation for SEND pupils in the local area.

5.1.3 Option 1 is therefore the preferred option.

### **5.2 Option 2 – Do nothing**

5.2.1 The option to do nothing is not practicable. As the school has already taken additional pupils, in agreement with ECC, the school needs additional accommodation from September 2024. Not providing this accommodation would result in ECC not being able to meet its statutory duties.

5.2.2 Accordingly, taking no action is not the recommended option.

### 5.3 Option 3 – Provide the additional accommodation required in temporary buildings.

5.3.1 This option provides the accommodation required for ECC to meet its statutory duties.

5.3.2 Due to the disruptive work and costs involved in removing the temporary accommodation this option is not considered good value for money.

5.3.3 This option does not provide the opportunity to re-purpose the accommodation for SEND use once the primary school bulges has left the school

5.3.4 Accordingly providing temporary accommodation is not the recommended option.

## 6 Issues for consideration

### 6.1.1 Financial implications

6.1.2 The budget allocated to this expansion project is £1.375m.

The profiling of how this will be funded can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 - Funding Profile

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	Total £000
Capital Cost	553	812	1,365
Revenue Cost (F&E)	-	10	10
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>1,375</b>
<b>Funded by</b>			
Basic Need Grant	553	812	1,365
Dedicated Schools Grant	-	10	10
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>1,375</b>

### Capital

6.1.3 The total capital cost of the project is £1.365m and is included in the current education capital programme.

6.1.4 This will be fully funded by Basic Need Grant.

6.1.5 The project incorporates initiatives and technologies to ensure the building achieves ECC commitment to a zero-carbon authority. The over and above cost of the enhancements to the specification is estimated at £50,000 (Photovoltaic Panels, ).

6.1.6 Benchmarking information and an estimated summary of project costs is included in the confidential appendix.

## Revenue

6.1.7 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.

6.1.8 As the school has already admitted the additional pupils there will be no need for additional teaching and support staff..

6.1.9 The estimated furniture and equipment costs of £10,000 will be funded from within the existing furniture and equipment revenue budget funded via the DSG

## **6.2 Legal implications**

6.2.1 ECC has a statutory duty to commission supply of school places. ECC is responsible for funding the 'basic need' provision of additional school places in Essex at all schools, including academies.

6.2.2 Beaulieu Park School is an academy. ECC is responsible for funding the 'basic need' provision of additional school places in Essex at all schools, including academies.

6.2.3 ECC has a contract with Mitie which contains provision for these works to be carried out.

6.2.4 The value of the works is below the Works threshold for the purposes of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. ECC ran a process with the Essex Construction Framework which did not offer a value for Money solution.

## **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 – Confidential Appendix

## 9 List of Background papers

<b>I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.</b>	<b>Date</b>  24.01.2024
<b>Councillor Tony Ball, Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability</b>	

In consultation with:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Executive Director, Children, Families and Education</b>	23.01.2024
<b>Clare Kershaw on behalf of Helen Lincoln</b>	
<b>Executive Director, Corporate Services (S151 Officer)</b>	18.01.2024
<b>Daniel Tooke on behalf of Nicole Wood</b>	
<b>Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)</b>	09.01.2024
<b>Laura Edwards on behalf of Paul Turner</b>	