

Somerset County Council

Cabinet - 17th October 2018

Proposed 14 Class Primary School at Northfields, Somerton

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Faye Purbrick – Cabinet Member for Children and Families

Division and Local Member(s): Cllr Dean Ruddle

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	Seen by:	Name	Date
	County Solicitor	Thomas Woodhams	24/09/2018
	Monitoring Officer	Scott Wooldridge	25/09/2018
	Corporate Finance	Peter Lewis	21/09/2018
	Human Resources	Chris Squire	24/09/2018
	Property	Paula Hewitt	08/10/2018
	Procurement	Simon Clifford	21/09/2018
	Senior Manager	Claire Lovett	01/10/2018
	Local Member(s)	Cllr Dean Ruddle	25/09/2018
	Cabinet Member	Cllr Faye Purbrick	08/10/2018
	Opposition Spokesperson	Cllr Jane Lock	
	Relevant Scrutiny Chairman	Cllr Leigh Redman	
Forward Plan Reference:	FP/ 18/07/06		
Summary:	<p>The existing Primary School provision in Somerton is split across King Ina Infants and Junior School sites. Together the two schools form the King Ina Multi Academy Trust. Neither of these sites can be expanded to meet the additional demand from the construction of over 400 homes in the area. As a result, a project has been commissioned to construct and open a replacement (and expanded) 14 class primary school (including 52 place Nursery) at Northfields, Somerton, with fit for purpose facilities for September 2020 to meet LA Statutory Duty to supply sufficient school places in Somerton. The site is sufficient in size to allow for further expansion if required in the future.</p> <p>This paper seeks approval for the Authority to appoint a contractor at a gross maximum expenditure to deliver the 14-class primary school at Northfields, Somerton, for September 2020. This paper will also give approval to cover the purchase of furniture and IT as required for the new school.</p>		
Recommendations:	<p>That the Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approves the appointment of the preferred contractor set out in Appendix B through the Southern Construction Framework and to proceed with the delivery of a 14-class primary school (including 52 place Nursery) at Northfields, Somerton for September 		

	<p>2020 at a gross maximum project cost.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Approves the gross maximum project cost as set out in Appendix B. These costs include allowances for IT and furniture as required. 3. Agrees the case for applying the exempt information provision and therefore to treat Appendix B in confidence, as it contains commercially sensitive information, and as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing that information. 4. Subject to the approval of recommendation (3) above, agrees to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the consideration of Appendix B where there is any discussion at the meeting regarding exempt or confidential information. 5. Delegates the authority to the Head of Corporate Property and the County Solicitor to complete any necessary documentation to enter into a contract with the preferred contractor.
<p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p>	<p>To meet the Local Authority's statutory duty to provide sufficient school places by allowing the County Council to proceed with the appointment of a contractor to deliver a new 14 class primary school in Somerton to meet pupil place demand arising from demographic growth in the area.</p>
<p>Links to Priorities and Impact on Service Plans:</p>	<p>The recommendations link to this Headline Vision in the County Plan:</p> <p>“Our vision for Somerset is simple: More jobs; more homes; more powers from government; more local co-operation; better health; better education and prospects; better roads, rail, broadband and mobile signal.”</p> <p>The recommendations link to the following Target in the County Plan:</p> <p>“We will aim to have better school results for all children across all key stages and in particular at GCSE and A-Level with a particular focus on disadvantaged children.”</p>
<p>Consultations and co-production undertaken:</p>	<p>In early 2016 the King Ina Trust submitted a bid for a replacement Free School under wave 11 of the academies free school programme The Academy Trust embarked on an extensive engagement and communication programme in the lead up to submitting the bid in order to engage stakeholders and the local community with changes to combine the Infants and Junior school under a Multi Academy Church of England Trust and ultimately a single primary school. The Council lent its support to the bid. However, the bid was not successful as the housing developments were not sufficiently advanced and the bid was for an element of replacement and therefore not an entirely new school.</p>

	<p>In terms of this scheme, Commissioners and the Project Manager have been in discussions with the King Ina Trust and school representatives regarding the proposed project. The Local Member is in full support of this proposal.</p> <p>Members have been consulted on the School Place Planning Infrastructure Growth Plan for Somerset which identifies our school place requirements for the next 14 years.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee for Policies, Children and Families Committee endorsed the Early Years and School Place Planning Infrastructure Growth Plan on 13th May 2016.</p> <p>Cabinet endorsed this approach to school place planning on 8th June 2016.</p> <p>District Council housing data (planning portal, SHLAA papers (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) and housing trajectories) provide the basis for housing included in the Infrastructure Growth Plan. Officers hold regular meetings with South Somerset District Council Planning Officers and this project has been discussed with them in full and no objections have been raised.</p> <p>As the project progresses, stakeholder / community consultation events will be held and more regular updates will be provided to members, the King Ina Trust, and to school representatives.</p>
<p>Financial Implications:</p>	<p>The Capital Investment Programme for 2017/18 identified the need for the new school and funding, through local authority borrowing, has been made available in the 2018/19 (start) capital programme to meet the cost of delivering the new school.</p> <p>There is a potential for additional funding streams / sources of income to be obtained. These are outlined in Confidential Appendix B, though caution should be taken as there is no guarantee that these funds will be received in full or in part.</p> <p>The Tenders received demonstrate that the scheme can be carried out within the allocated budget. There is a risk that unforeseen issues arise on site which will increase the project cost; however, a contingency has been allocated to manage this risk and additional funding is not expected to be required.</p>
<p>Legal Implications:</p>	<p>The procurement of this contract is compliant with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.</p> <p>The main contractor contract will be a bilateral contract between the Authority and the contractor. The academy will not feature on the contract but the building will be transferred to the academy upon completion.</p>

HR Implications:	None					
Risk Implications:	The risk of the LA not meeting its statutory duty of providing sufficient school places is very high if this school is not built and ready to open by September 2020 www.somerset.gov.uk/educationIGP					
	Likelihood	5	Impact	5	Risk Score	25
Other Implications (including due regard implications):	<p><u>Equalities Implications</u></p> <p>The proposed new build will be fully accessible for disabled users with the proper facilities and provisions in place to cater for them, pursuant to statutory obligations set out in Equality legislation and that brought together under the umbrella provisions of the Equality Act 2010</p>					
	<p><u>Community Safety Implications</u></p> <p>Improved access to education will have a positive impact on community safety. Improved access to quality educational facilities could serve to reduce the likelihood of low level anti-social behaviour and improve children’s chances to thrive long term.</p>					
<p><u>Sustainability Implications</u></p> <p>This school will serve the local community and therefore there will be no transport arrangements so that walking and cycling to school are the natural, logical and obvious choices. A new primary school will promote a sustainable community as the population in this area grows. The new school building will achieve the equivalent BREEAM Very Good.</p>						
<p><u>Health and Safety Implications</u></p> <p>Risks involved in the proposed building works will be managed by the appointed contractor through their construction Health and Safety Plan required for all such projects. Once opened, Health and Safety of the site will be the responsibility of the Academy.</p>						
<p><u>Privacy Implications</u></p> <p>Deemed not to be relevant because Academies are separate Public Authorities and Data Controllers and consequently will be responsible for their own data protection.</p>						
<p><u>Health and Wellbeing Implications</u></p> <p>The school is being built to meet local demand so that walking and cycling to school are the natural, logical and obvious choices for the school journey.</p>						
Scrutiny comments	The Early Years & School Place Planning Infrastructure Growth					

**/ recommendation
(if any):**

Plan for Somerset (IGP) was endorsed by Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee on the 13th May 2016.

1. Background

- 1.1. Education provision in Somerton is currently made up of an infant and junior schools 0.6 miles apart on foot. Both schools are academies and together form the King Ina Multi Academy Trust. The infant school has a capacity of 150 places (5 classes) and the junior school a capacity of 180 places (6 classes). The additional housing that has been approved in the town will generate a need for additional 90 places. Unfortunately, neither school can be expanded to meet this demand.

A significant challenge for the Local Authority is managing the education requirement from housing developments where there is only one school within statutory walking distance of the new housing. If this school is at capacity and is on a restricted site which cannot be expanded, a development of anything less than that which would yield the need for a new school will be problematic. With 498 dwellings expected to be completed between now a 2028 this is the situation the council finds itself in.

This project is therefore a combination of replacement and expanded provision. 330 places are being replaced and 90 places added. The project also includes a 52-place nursery. The first additional classroom is required in 2020.

The Academy Trust runs the Owlets pre-school which is located on the infant school site. The new school will include a 52-place nursery which will allow Owlets to relocate and expand. Early Year commissioners have identified the need for additional nursery places as a result of the new housing developments

The ownership of the existing sites is shared between the Local Authority and the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The Local Authority owns the detached playing field and this could be sold subject to DfE approval as the site is covered by Section 77 of School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (disposal regulations). Third party funding is detailed in confidential Appendix B.

The infant school site is owned by the Local Authority and could be sold or an alternative use found. There is no playing field attached to this site.

If the sites are not retained, they will likely be sold with Planning Permission for a use yet to be determined. As part of the planning process, members of the public will be given the opportunity to comment on any future proposals before development takes place.

On 15th March 2017 the Cabinet Member for Children and Families approved the Capital Investment Programme: Schools Basic Need, Schools Condition and Schools Access Initiative – 2017/18. In doing so it was agreed:

“That approval is given for the necessary delegation to appropriate officers to deliver the capital projects for schools basic need, schools condition and schools access initiative within the allocation of capital funds for 2017/18 as approved by Full Council on the 30th November 2016”.

Included in the above approval were the additional school places at Somerton.

- 1.2. The risk and implications arising from the LA failing to meet its statutory duty of providing sufficient school places are significant and so a project has been commissioned to address the issue.
- 1.3. In July 2018, the Corporate Property Group were commissioned to procure a replacement (and expanded) 14-class primary school (including 52 place Nursery) in Somerton, with fit for purpose facilities by September 2020.
- 1.4. Corporate Property Group have since invited and received expressions of interest from Contractors under the Southern Construction Framework – this is Mini-competition Part 1 of the framework.

Five (5no.) contractors were issued Tender information under Mini-competition Part 2 of the framework with five (5no.) bids subsequently received.

Tenders were assessed by Somerset County Council Major Projects' representatives, Procurement and the Commissioning representatives, and a representative from King Ina Academy. The procurement process was moderated by Somerset County procurement and the winning contractor identified as the contractor to be appointed to provide the new school.

- 1.5. This paper seeks approval to proceed with appointing the preferred contractor to a maximum gross expenditure as outlined in confidential Appendix B. This paper will also give approval to cover the purchase of furniture and IT as required for the new school.

2. Options considered and reasons for rejecting them

- 2.1. There are insufficient existing school places in the area and neither of the existing schools be expanded sufficiently to meet the demand. Therefore, in order to satisfy the need for additional school places a new school is required.
- 2.2. Doing nothing in response to the projected demographic growth would likely result in the LA failing to meet its statutory duty of providing sufficient school spaces. The risks and implications arising from this failure are too significant to ignore and so this option has been discounted.

3. Background Papers

- 3.1. Capital Investment Programme: Schools Basic Need, Schools Condition and Schools Access Initiative – 2017/18
- 3.2. Appendix A – Tender Evaluation Report
- 3.3. Appendix B – Confidential Appointment Information