

Committees Education Board	Dates 23/05/2019
Subject: City of London Academies Trust, Academies Development Programme Update	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For information
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Summary

This report is to inform the Board of the progress being made on academy capital builds within the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) which falls under the Academies Development Programme. In addition, this report also informs the Board of an approach made by an existing stand-alone primary academy in Islington, to explore joining CoLAT, and the subsequent outcome.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

- The number of sole sponsored City academies has increased from two to eight under the Academies Development Programme since September 2016 with the date of opening listed below:
 - Galleywall Primary, City of London Academy September 2016
 - City of London Primary Academy Islington September 2017
 - City of London Academy Highgate Hill September 2017
 - City of London Academy Shoreditch Park September 2017
 - City of London Academy Highbury Grove November 2017
 - Newham Collegiate Sixth Form, City of London Academy January 2018
- At the Education Board meeting on 17 May 2018, it was resolved that Members:
 - Agree to reiterate their original commitment to a maximum of 12 academies in the Trust;¹
 - Note that any school being considered is expected to meet the criteria of aligning with strategic education priorities, or that it has been requested by the relevant local authority, Regional Schools Commissioner or the Department for Education that the school joins the Trust, but in either event subsequently passes due diligence criteria.

The City as an academy sponsor had approval to open a further 6FE secondary academy in Hackney in September 2019, the City of London Academy Downs Park, but following conversations with the London Borough (LB) of Hackney, a decision has been made not to proceed due to the potential impact on surrounding Hackney secondary schools. The Department for Education (DfE) have been informed accordingly.

¹ Original commitment noted in the non-public Education Board Minutes of the committee in June 2015.

Current Position

2. Attached as **Appendix 1** is a table showing the capital build programme for academies and a summary for each is outlined below.
3. **Galleywall Primary, City of London Academy** refurbishment was scheduled for completion this academic term, but the academy has requested works to the ground and first floors are delayed until the summer break to reduce the impact to the school and the capital programme is now scheduled to complete by September 2019. This has resulting in circa £100k in additional costs. Given the challenges this project has faced, officers have been negotiating with the DfE for further funding and have been successful in securing a further £410k funding and seeking up to an additional £40k provisional funding should this need materialise.
4. **City of London Primary Academy Islington** permanent site is presently scheduled for completion by quarter two 2020 following finding asbestos in the slab of the existing building on the site during demolition. In addition, further asbestos has been found under the slab and some 17th Century brickwork with may result in potential further delays. These findings are significantly increasing costs for the build which the DfE have been informed of, and once the impact in terms of costs and delay are established, negotiations will take place for additional funding. Given the complexities of this capital build of a school and social housing, Officers hold briefing meetings with the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of a number of committees to keep them updated on progress.
5. **City of London Academy Highgate Hill** has a new Sixth Form capital build being delivered by the DfE and it is proposed that this is completed in order to admit students by September 2020. The feasibility process has been completed with four options being presented for consideration. The desired option has been agreed with the DfE who are now progressing their internal process to secure the revised funding needed and progress the design to submit a planning application.
6. **City of London Academy Shoreditch Park** permanent build is being delivered by LB Hackney and is scheduled to open in September 2021. Contracts signing is imminent with the build programme due to commence in May/June. Site preparation has largely concluded. LB Hackney are working with the school, architects and contractor to resolve final design issues. There is some value engineering to be done, but nothing that affects availability of space or delivery of the curriculum.
7. **The City of London Academy Highbury Grove** has a capital build being delivered by LB Islington which consists of a refurbishment and extension of the existing Sixth Form provision. The build is scheduled for completion 30 August 2019 and is presently running with a two-week delay.
8. **Newham Sixth Form Collegiate, City of London Academy** has a capital build being delivered by the DfE which involves the expansion of NCS from 600 to 800 students on the former East Ham Police Station site, officers being successful in securing the lease in the funding agreement for the academy. Initial designs presented to date have been disappointing and rejected as they would not provide the quality of learning environment students enjoy in the rest of the school, the designers being restricted by the Grade Two listing of the building. Given the challenges here the DfE entered a pre-application for planning with Newham which was validated on 23 April with the target date for approval being 18 June.
9. In December 2018 the City of London Corporation, in its capacity as an academy sponsor, was approached by an existing stand-alone primary academy in Islington,

to explore joining CoLAT. A stakeholder meeting was held on 22 March 2019 to discuss the request, as per the due diligence process for any expansion of CoLAT, with the information presented at the meeting attached as **Appendix 2**. Following the Stakeholder meeting the Director Academy Development reported back to the school on the outcome. The Chair of Governors for the school subsequently responded stating they were now expecting to move through the process to become part of another Multi-Academy Trust. The LB Islington see the necessity of the Islington primary school joining a MAT, given the challenges stand-alone primary academies face and was supportive of the school becoming a City academy.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. All free schools are funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and there will be no financial liability to the City Corporation as the proposed schools would become part of the City of London Academies Trust, which is a charity and company limited by guarantee. However, as the Education Board can make discretionary grants, as it does to its other academies, from the central risk element of the Education Budget there will be financial implications within the agreed parameters of the increased grant funding approved this year.

Conclusion

11. The academy development programme through the City Corporation's sponsorship of CoLAT is an ambitious expansion of the City's support for education consistent with the City's commitment in its Education Strategy to provide a transformative education which enables pupils to achieve their potential, flourish and thrive. These ambitions remain consistent with those of CoLAT Members will particularly note the decision to delay the build programme at Galleywall, at the request of the school, and the financial implications on the build, and the continued challenges for the City of London Primary Academy Islington build as well as the arrangements in place to keep relevant members of committees updated.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – CoLAT capital builds table.
- Appendix 2 (Non-public) – Primary school sponsor approach – School information.

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