

Committee:	Dated:
Education Board	18/03/2021
Subject: Academies Development Programme - Update	Public
Contribute to a flourishing society	3 & 4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For information
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Summary

This report is to update the Education Board on the progress of the Academies Development Programme, through the City of London Corporation's (CoLC) sponsorship of CoLAT and provide a summary of the overall programme to date.

In 2003 CoLC first became an academy sponsor, co-sponsoring a further 2 academies in 2006 and 2008 respectively. In December 2013, a report to Community and Children's Service Committee was approved to consider opening a primary school in Islington, which led the way to the CoLC submitting a total of six successful Free Schools application to the Department for Education (DfE) between 2014-16, supporting 4 surrounding local authorities in addressing the projected increasing need for school places across London.

10 academies are now sponsored by CoLC, all of which fall under CoLAT from a mixture of Free School applications, an existing academy joining, an academy conversion, and the two previously City co-sponsored academies joining in September 2020.

£96.5m of capital investment is projected to be injected into City academies, which may increase further as two of these capital developments progress on to Contractor's Proposals being agreed and the contracts is signed. This figure excludes the significant amount of temporary accommodation funding and the annual capital allocation from the DfE to CoLAT. **Appendix 1 (non-public)** of this report provide members with a financial overview of the capital build programmes and projected completion dates, with Appendix 3 **(non-public)** providing a more detailed summary of progress on these builds.

9,000 plus pupils will attend City academies each academic year when the current planned capital developments are completed, and academies are operating at full capacity. **Appendix 2** provides an overview of pupil numbers by academy.

Opening events are presently being explored for the two City academy new builds which complete in May and June 2021. City of London Academy Shoreditch Park has a projected completion date of 17 May 2021 with a possible opening event in November, and City of London Primary Academy Islington (COLPAI) has a projected completion date of 25 June 2021 with a possible opening event in October.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the progress of the academy's development programme to date.

Main Report

Background

1. CoLC first became a sole academy sponsor in 2003 with the City Academy (Southwark). This was followed by CoLC becoming a co-sponsor for City of London Academy Islington in 2006 (with City, University of London), and the City Academy Hackney in 2008 (with KPMG). In 2014, Redriff Primary School in Southwark, already an academy, joined as a City academy under The City Academy (Southwark) Master Funding Agreement.
2. Since 2010-11, the total number of school age pupils in London has increased more than in any region across the country. Between 2010-11 and 2018-19, London saw an increase in pupils of 13.8% across the capital, compared to 8.8% nationally. London local authorities have collectively forecast that between 2019-20 and 2022-23, the number of new school places needed to meet demand across the capital will increase by 7,553, with 68% of the expected shortfall to be in secondary schools.
3. The increasing need for school places from 2010 onwards, and conversations between CoLC and 4 surrounding local authorities, led to CoLC submitting 2 DfE Wave 8 Free School applications for primary academies in Southwark and Islington in 2014 which were confirmed as successful in 2015. This was followed by four Free School applications for academies in Wave 13 of the DfE application process in 2016, in Hackney (2 secondary academies), Newham (Sixth Form academy) and Islington (secondary academy), all of which were successful. However, following further projections on pupil numbers in Hackney a decision was made in 2019 not to proceed with the second secondary academy.
4. In January 2016, the CoLC Court of Common Council approved the establishment of a multi-academy trust which all 'new' City academies would fall under. In addition, in March 2017 the CoLC Policy and Resources committee approved CoLC becoming the sponsor for a failing secondary school, following a request for support from the London borough of Islington.
5. On the 17 May 2018, the CoLC Education Board reiterated its decision of March 2016 to limit the sponsor exposure through the expansion of the CoLAT to a maximum of 12 schools in the next few years. On 16 January 2020 Members of the Education Board supported the recommendation to the expansion of CoLAT

by the transfer of TCAH and COLAI to CoLAT, consent required from the CoLC under the CoLAT/CoLC Sponsorship Agreement.

Current Position

6. There are now 10 CoLC sponsored academies, all within CoLAT, which are listed below along with their date of opening within CoLAT.

• The City of London Academy (Southwark)	September 2003
• Redriff Primary – City of London Academy	September 2014
• 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	December 2017
• Newham Collegiate Sixth Form, City of London Academy	January 2018
• City of London Academy Islington	September 2020
• The City Academy Hackney	September 2020

7. There are 6 academy capital builds within the academies development programme with present projections showing an increase in capital investment for these developments since it was previously reported to this board from circa £80m, to £96.5m. This invest is from a variety of funding sources, notably the DfE, LB Hackney, LB Islington and CoLC. This figure does not include the significant funding for temporary accommodation for COLA Shoreditch Park and COLPAI. In addition, this projected capital investment may increase further when the two capital builds still at planning approval stage progress to Contractor's Proposals being agreed and the contracts signed later this year.

8. Members will also note the capital builds for COLA Highbury Grove and Galleywall Primary completed in 2019, with two further builds due for completion on 17 May 2021 (COLA Shoreditch Park) and 25 June 2021 (COLPAI), both of which having been in temporary accommodation since opening in September 2017. In the case of COLA Shoreditch Park, the length of time spent in temporary accommodation was largely anticipated with the cost being met by Hackney Council and the DfE. In the case of COLPAI, the capital build has been plagued with continued delays both at pre-planning, planning and construction stage, resulting in CoLC presently funding additional temporary accommodation costs in excess of £1m.

9. Regarding the capital builds for Sixth Form provision at COLA Highgate Hill and Newham Collegiate Sixth Form, these are presently projecting completion for Quarter 3, 2022. Attached as **Appendix 1 (non-public)** is a table showing a financial overview of the capital build programme for all academies.

10. On completion of these capital builds and when these academies reach their full capacity, City sponsored academies will be providing in excess of 9,000 pupil places across its schools each year, mainly in areas of London which are disadvantaged. **Appendix 2** of this report shows a breakdown of pupil numbers in each school.

11. For the 4 capital builds still to complete the key areas of potential risk are;

- a. For COLPAI, any continued delays as a subsequent impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, planning conditions being discharged, and the completion of S278 works on Baltic Street West being completed by 2021. In addition, this will be a partial completion of the site, meaning the school will be operating alongside the building contractor while construction works continues on the housing element of the development until quarter 2 of 2022.
- b. For NCS, it may take longer than anticipated to agree scope, programme and cost with the contractor, which may then impact on the practical completion (PC) date. Similarly, unforeseen obstacles may present themselves at some point during the build which will impact on the PC date. If this happens then adjustments will need to be made overall in order to ensure minimal disruption to NCS (e.g. sectional completion). There is a chance that running both sets of building works concurrently is too disruptive to NCS, in terms of the impact on its supervised study area. In this case, the programme will either have to be lengthened, or a temporary supervised study area (e.g. in the Town Hall adjacent) would need to be sourced.
- c. For COLA Highgate Hill, the main risk currently is around planning approval and confirmation it will go to planning committee in April. The projected completion date is presently July August 2022 and any delay in planning approval will obviously impact on this and the ability to accept pupil in September 2022.

12. A more detailed summary of the CoLAT capital builds showing a summary of key dates, potential risks, and next steps is attached as **Appendix 3 (non-public)**.

13. In terms of the broader risks, the number of surplus places at primary level across London has become a pressing issue in many local authority areas. In part this drop in demand has been driven by declining birth rates across the capital. Between 2012-13 and 2018-19, the number of live births across London decreased by 10%. In comparison the rest of England has experienced a marked drop in the live birth rate four years after London's birth rate first started to decline. This means that London's schools and local authorities are grappling now with reducing capacity in the capital's primary schools, ahead of the rest of the country. This pressure is set to continue, with a predicted drop in the 0-4 population across London boroughs of over 6,000 between 2020 and 2024. However, in the case of London borough's where the City sponsors primary academies, Southwark reductions in primary schools have already been implemented while Redriff Primary School presently provides 3 bulge classes. In the case of Islington primary pupil projections, these continue to show the level of need for school places aligns with the provision available in Planning Area 6 where COLPAI geographically sits. In due course these decline in primary school numbers will feed through to the demand in secondary school places.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. Strategic implications

This proposal delivers on the following strategic objectives of the CoLC:

- a. to contribute to the outcomes within the CoLC's Corporate Plan to 'Promote effective progression through fulfilling education and employment', and 'to contribute to a flourishing society' as its aim.

- b. the CoLC Education Strategy for pupils in the CoLC's family of schools to have access to transformative education, enabling them to achieve their potential, flourish and thrive.
- c. the Department of Community and Children's Services Business Plan's priority objective 'Potential', which states: "People of all ages can achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning", with the outcome to be achieved by "Delivering an outstanding education offer through the CoLC's family of schools."

15. Legal implications

Contained within the report

16. Financial implications

All free schools are funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, with any 'new' academies joining CoLAT requiring 'new' Supplementary Funding Agreements falling under the CoLAT Master Funding Agreement(s). There is no direct financial liability to the CoLC in respect to the CoLAT sponsored academies, which is a separate legal entity (being a charitable company limited by guarantee). However, the CoLC remains accountable to the DfE as sponsor for the on-going successful operation of CoLAT and the delivery of high-quality education at each of the academies sponsored by the CoLC, and this will be of strategic importance to the CoLC.

17. Risk implications

The risks are detailed in paragraphs 11-13 of the report,

Conclusion

- 18. The academy development programme through the CoLC's sponsorship of CoLAT continues to be an ambitious expansion of the City's support for education consistent with the CoLC's commitment in its Education Strategy. These ambitions remain consistent with those of CoLAT and are being successfully progressed as noted in this report. The board will note the potential risks to the capital builds and broader issue of reducing need for school places in future years.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - CoLAT Capital Builds Financial summary (**non-public**)
- Appendix 2 - CoLAT academy pupil numbers on completion of capital builds
- Appendix 3 - Detailed summary of capital developments (**non-public**)

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