

Committee(s)	Dated:
Department of Community and Children's Services	13/10/2017
Subject: City of London Corporation's Academies Development Programme	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
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Summary

This Committee is responsible for the exercise of the City of London Corporation's education functions in its local authority capacity. This report is to inform Members of the progress being made by the City of London Corporation (City Corporation) in its general corporate capacity in the London Boroughs of Southwark, Islington, Hackney and Newham through the City of London Academies Development Programme which is led by the Education Board.

The City Corporation is a long-standing supporter of education and in January 2016 the Court of Common Council agreed the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) should become the legal vehicle for all the City Corporation's existing and future sole-sponsored academies, consistent with the City Corporation's Education Strategy to provide access to 'world class' education and learning opportunities and that "City schools" will provide outstanding education that enriches and inspires students.

In addition to the pre-existing sole-sponsored City academies, the City of London Academy (Southwark) and Redriff Primary – City of London Academy, the City Corporation, as an academy sponsor, has since made six successful applications under the Free Schools application process to open new academies, and has also agreed to be the sponsor for a seventh academy, following the Academisation Order made in respect of an existing maintained school after an inadequate Ofsted inspection.

Good progress has been made to open all of these academies in the 2016/17 and 2017/19 academic years and therefore to expand world class primary and secondary education provision in neighbouring boroughs.

However, academies in general will continue to face challenges, such as securing pupils, financial stability, academic excellence and capital programmes. To this end, the inclusion of potential risks has been added to the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) Risk Register. This will identify potential challenges at the earliest stages and resolve them to ensure these academies are ready to open and deliver 'world-class' education

and learning opportunities.

The academies development programme is an ambitious expansion of the City's support for education, consistent with the City's commitment in its Education Strategy, to provide access to 'world-class' education and learning opportunities and ensure that 'City schools' will provide outstanding education that enriches and inspires students.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the progress made by the City Corporation as sponsor in its academies development programme, and that this adds to the opportunities for City children to attend a range of establishments offering high standards of education.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation (the City) is a long-standing supporter of education both in its general corporate capacity and more recently as local authority for the City of London. This Committee is responsible for the exercise of the City of London Corporation's education functions in its local authority capacity. The Education Board has responsibility *inter alia* for leading on the development and implementation of the City Corporation's Education Strategy (support for education being one of our corporate aims), and for the City Corporation's sponsorship of academies acting in the City Corporation's general corporate capacity.
2. In January 2016 the Court of Common Council agreed that the City of London Academies Trust (04504128) (CoLAT), previously "The City of London Academies (Southwark)", should become the legal vehicle for all the City Corporation's existing and future sole sponsored academies. The City Corporation is also a co-sponsor of two other secondary academy schools run by The City Academy, Hackney (06382192) and the City of London Academy Islington Limited (06426966) which are co-sponsored by KPMG and the City University, respectively. Academy trust companies are private companies limited by guarantee and exempt charities.
3. The City Corporation (through the Education Board and Policy and Resources Committee) has agreed to expand the number of academies for which it is sole sponsor through CoLAT (to a maximum of 12 schools consistent with Government policy and that multi-academy trust companies should seek to achieve economies of scale).
4. In October 2014, the City Corporation, as an academy sponsor, submitted applications to the Department for Education (DfE) to open two primary Free Schools, one in Southwark in September 2016, and one in Islington in September 2017, as part of Wave 8 of the Free School application process. Following interviews held at the DfE on 5 February 2015, both applications were successful.

5. In March 2016, the City Corporation submitted four further applications to the DfE to open Free Schools as part of Wave 11 of the Free School application process. Following interviews held at the DfE on 13 May 2016, confirmation was received on 7 July 2016 that three applications had been successful, and on 9 December 2016 that the fourth application had also been successful.
6. In addition to the successful applications to open academies, the City Corporation was approached to convert an existing maintained secondary school in Islington into a City of London Academy following an inadequate Ofsted inspection. This placed the school in special measures, and therefore subject to an Academisation Order. On 16th March 2017, following approval of the proposal by, the Education Board, Policy and Resources Committee, and the CoLAT Board of Directors, the City Corporation was named as the sponsor by the Regional Schools Commissioner on 20th March 2017.
7. The details of these academies and when they are due to open are in the City of London 'Family of Schools' table in Appendix 1.
8. While the proposed academies are in the Pre-opening Development Grant (PDG) stage with the DfE, the programme management falls under the remit of Director of Academy Development for the City as sponsor (working with CoLAT). This arrangement continues until these schools progress to a Readiness for Opening Meeting (ROM), a Pre-OFSTED inspection visit is undertaken, a funding agreement is entered into by CoLAT, and the Secretary of State for Education agrees to open the school. At this point full management of the school becomes the responsibility of the CoLAT Board and operates under CoLAT's approved local governing body arrangements. The capital programmes for these academies also falls under the remit of the Director of Academy Development, either with the City as responsible for the capital build, or monitoring of capital programmes delivered by the local authority in which they are being built. An overview of the academy capital programmes which shows where the responsibilities lie in terms of delivery, and key dates is attached as Appendix 2.
9. While in the PDG stage, monthly project board meetings, chaired by the Director of Academy Development, manage these projects by putting in place the necessary infrastructure to open a school, effectively a multi-million-pound business. The progress reported at the project boards is monitored by a quarterly programme board, chaired by the Director of Community and Children's Services, with representation from the local authority in which the new academy will be located, and from the CoLAT Board. Updates are also reported to the CoLAT Board and the City's Education Board meetings.

Current Position

10. The academies expansion programme has made considerable progress in increasing the number of academies sponsored solely by the City of London, with a successful opening of a primary academy in Southwark in September 2016, a further five academies to open in this academic year across Islington, Hackney and Newham, and a further academy scheduled to open in Hackney in September 2019. Although these academies' admissions policies do not set aside places for City residents – as was the case with the original three secondary City sponsored academies which were established under the old

academies programme and permitted that type of provision, – the academies do increase the options available for City residents applying for places. This is particularly important in the case of the City of London Primary Academy Islington, since again this year no City child was able to secure a place at Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School under the distance criterion. Details of each of these new City academies are listed below.

11. **Galleywall Primary, City of London Academy** is a two-form entry (FE) primary school which opened in September 2016 with the full number of 60 reception pupils taking up places, and a further 58 pupils in this academic year. The academy is based in an existing Victorian Board School in Southwark which is undergoing extensive refurbishment, delivered by the City. The Headteacher of Redriff Primary is also Executive Head for Galleywall, supporting the newly appointed Head in her first headship.
12. **City of London Primary Academy Islington** is a 2FE primary school which opened in September 2017. Despite the high number of applications received, 41 pupils have started at the school for the 60 places available, with eight of these places offered to City residents. The school will be based on a temporary site at Moreland Primary School in Islington for two years while the permanent site is being built. The temporary site seen as the main reason why all the applications did not result in pupils starting at the school. The permanent site is presently going through the planning application process and is being delivered by the City. The Headmistress of the City of London School for Girls is also Executive Head for this academy, supporting the newly appointed Head in her first headship.
13. **City of London Academy, Shoreditch Park** is a 6FE secondary school plus sixth form which opened in September 2017, with the full complement of 180 pupils. The academy will be in temporary modular accommodation for the first three years before moving to its permanent site in Hackney. The permanent site is being delivered by Hackney Council. The Principal appointed was previously the Vice Principal at The City Academy, Hackney.
14. **City of London Academy, Highgate Hill** is the conversion of the existing Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Technology College for Girls, to a 5FE City of London Academy, which opened in September 2017 in Islington, with 92 pupils in Year 7, for the 140 places available. Despite this previously being a successful school, numbers at the school had been declining due to a lack of demand for a single-sex Catholic school in the area, whereas there is a demand for a co-education, non-denomination school.
15. **City of London Academy, Downs Park** is a 6FE secondary school plus sixth form which is due to open in September 2019 in Hackney. The capital programme will be delivered by Hackney Council.
16. **Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre (NCS), City of London Academy** is the conversion of a successful 600-pupil sixth form school into a City of London Academy. It was due to convert from September 2017 but will now do so before the end of this academic term. NCS is a high-performing school with results in the top 1% of schools in the country. The delay in confirmation from the DfE that the City Corporation was successful in becoming the sponsor for this academy is partly why a funding agreement is not yet in place, along with negotiations not being completed with Newham Council on the lease arrangements for the site.

17. **City of London Academy, Highbury Grove** is a 7FE school in Islington. The City agreed to become its sponsor following an inadequate Ofsted inspection in December 2016, leading to an Academisation Order being issued by the Regional Schools Commissioner. Colleagues across the CoLAT, the City and Islington Council have been working very closely over the past few months on the transition of this maintained school to a City Academy. The Principal of City of London Academy, Islington has taken on the role of Executive Head across the two schools. CoLAT's input over the previous summer term has already demonstrated an impact, as shown by the recent academic results and successful Ofsted inspection in September 2017.

Implications

18. The key challenges in opening academies is ensuring that the necessary infrastructure and funding arrangements are in place for the running of a school and that there is an outstanding physical learning environment. Good progress is being made in these areas for the academies in this report. Any delays caused by not securing the necessary infrastructure, financial stability and/or premises will have detrimental effect on the reputation of the CoLAT and the City Corporation, as well as on the delivery of world-class education to pupils at the academies. With this in mind, potential risks have been added to the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) Risk Register, which will escalate to the Corporate Risk Register and the Chief Officers Risk Management Group, should the need demand. Officers will keep matters under regular review and report to the Education Board consistent with that Committee's responsibilities for the oversight and monitoring of the City Corporation's sponsorship of its academies.

19. All free schools are funded directly by the Education Skills and Funding Agency. There is no direct financial liability to the City Corporation as each Board of Directors/Trustees has ultimate responsibility for the success of that academy trust company and its schools. The City Corporation has rights of appointment to the company membership and Board of Directors/Trustees of each academy trust company, and the City Corporation can choose to provide financial or other support to its sponsored academies to help achieve successful outcomes. Strong project management and governance arrangements are in place to support the successful opening of the new academies.

20. The second objective of the City Corporation's Education Strategy 2016–2019 states any new academy is expected to be outstanding within three years and that schools will have cluster arrangements by geographical location.

Conclusion

21. The Academy Development Programme is an ambitious expansion of the City's education portfolio to support the aims of the Education Strategy to provide access to 'world class' education and learning opportunities and that City schools will provide outstanding education that enriches and inspires students. The academies expansion programme is making good progress and adds to the opportunities for City children to attend a range of establishments offering high standards of education.

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City of London ‘Family of Schools’ table
- Appendix 2 – City of London Academies Capital Programme