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| <b>Committee:</b>   | <b>Dated:</b>          |
| Education Board   | 01/07/2021             |
| <b>Subject:</b> Academies Development Programme - Update                          | <b>Public</b>          |
| <b>Contribute to a flourishing society</b>  | <b>3 &amp; 4</b>       |
| <b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>          | <b>No</b>              |
| <b>If so, how much?</b>   | <b>N/A</b>             |
| <b>What is the source of Funding?</b>   |                        |
| <b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>     |                        |
| <b>Report of:</b><br>Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services | <b>For information</b> |
| <b>Report authors:</b><br>Gerald Mehrtens, Director of Academy Development        |                        |

## Summary

This report is to update the Education board on the progress of the Academies Development Programme, since it was last reported to this board on 18 March 2021.

10 academies are now sponsored by City of London Corporation (CoLC), all of which fall under City of London Academies Trust (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.

Of the six academies embarked on capital builds, three have completed with a further build on the final stages of completion. The remaining two capital builds have recently received planning consent and have projected completion dates of Quarter 3, 2022. The total projected capital investment is £96m, which may increase further as two of these capital developments progress on 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 Department for Education (DfE) to CoLAT.

Opening events are presently being explored for City of London Academy (COLA) Shoreditch Park build which completed in June, with a proposed opening event in November, and City of London Primary Academy Islington (COLPAI) which has a projected completion date of 9 July 2021, with a proposed opening event in October.

Of the two previously co-sponsored City academies, which joined CoLAT in September 2020, COLA Islington has been dissolved while The City Academy Hackney remains "Active" with the proposal to Strike Off' still pending.

The work of the Academies Development Programme to date will see on completion of these builds, and when the academies are operating at full occupancy, in excess of 9,000 pupils being educated in City sponsored academies each academic year.

Attached as **Appendix 1 (non-public)** to this report provide members with a financial overview of the capital build programmes and projected completion dates, with

**Appendix 2** providing an overview of pupil numbers by academy when operating at full capacity.

## **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. The increasing need for school places across London 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 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.
3. 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.
4. 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**

5. 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

6. There are 6 academy capital builds within the Academies Development Programme with present projections showing a capital investment of £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.
7. In terms of progress on the remaining capital builds, opening events are presently being explored for the two recently completing City academy new builds. City of London Academy Shoreditch Park build which completed in June with a proposed opening event in November, and City of London Primary Academy Islington (COLPAI) has a projected completion date of 9 July 2021 with a proposed opening event in October. The Sixth Form provision at COLA Highgate Hill received planning permission in May 2021 and is presently scheduled for completion in Quarter 3 2022. Equally, the expansion of Sixth Form provision at NCS received planning approval in May 2021 and is scheduled for completion in the same period. There is no indication presently that the slight delay in obtaining planning approval will in turn delay completion of these builds
8. On completion of these capital builds and these academies reach their full capacity, City academies will be providing in excess of 9,000 pupil places across its schools each year, mainly in areas of London which are disadvantaged. Attached as **Appendix 1 (non-public)** to this report is a table showing an overview of the capital build programme for academies. **Appendix 2** of this report shows a breakdown of pupil numbers in each school when the academies will be operating at full capacity.
9. For the capital builds still to complete the key areas of potential risk are;
  - a. For COLPAI, the school is scheduled to move into the new building from 16 July and any further delay to completion will impact on this move. The completion of S278 works on Baltic Street West to be carried out by LB Islington should have been carried out in June but is delayed. In addition, this will be a partial completion of the site, meaning the school will be operating along 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, as with 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. 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.

10. In terms of the broader risks, the projected changing demand for pupil places across London is showing areas of surplus school places. Also, there is increasing competition as schools improve the provision they offer. CoLAT will wish to consider these in terms of the City's academies ability to fill its places and/or further expansion. Pupil Place Planning is the subject of a separate report to this board.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

### 11. 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.

### 12. Legal implications

Contained within the report

### 13. 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.

### 14. Risk implications

The risks are detailed in paragraphs 9 & 10 of the report,

## **Conclusion**

15. 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. The contents of this report evidence the significant progress that has been made in contributing this ambition. The board will note the potential risks to the remaining capital builds and broader issue of reducing demand for school places in future years, the latter being the subject of a separate report to this board.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - CoLAT Capital Builds Financial summary (**non-public**)
- Appendix 2 - CoLAT academy pupil numbers

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