

Report to: Andrew Edwards, Assistant Director (Property and Assets)

November 2022

Award of contract for works to expand the Special Support Centre Programme at West Park CE Primary School, Worthing

Report by: Philippa Hind, Head of Development

Electoral division: Goring

Summary

The County Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for all children who need a place. Increasing provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) through the creation of additional places in Special Support Centres (SSCs) will assist with the aim of enabling children to attend school locally.

In line with this aim in November 2021 the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills approved the allocation of funding for the expansion and redesignation of the SSC at West Park Primary School (decision [LS09 \(21/22\)](#) refers). This will enable an increase in the capacity of the SSC from 10 to 14 planned places, catering for those children with Social Communication Needs.

A procurement has been undertaken and this report seeks approval to award the contract for the construction works to expand the SSC at West Park School.

Recommendations

That the Assistant Director (Property and Assets) approves the award of the construction contract to expand the Special Support Centre at West Park CE Primary School to Cheesmur Ltd. for the sum of £988,423.00.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 There is a need to reduce the number of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) moving from maintained schools and academies into costly out of county education provision. Increasing provision for children and young people with SEND through the creation of additional places in Special Support Centres (SSCs) will assist with the aim of enabling children to attend school locally and meets a key objective of the County Council's [SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019 - 2024](#).

- 1.2 It has been identified that children with autism and/or social, emotional and mental health needs are more likely to move into independent and non-maintained schools (INMS) because it is currently not possible to meet their needs in maintained schools and academies. By creating more provision to meet these areas of need the County Council will be able to reduce spending on both expensive placements at INMS and costs associated with transporting children to out of county provision.
- 1.3 In November 2021 the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills approved the allocation of £0.935m funding for the construction of the expansion and redesignation of the SSC at West Park Primary School (decision [LS09 \(21/22\)](#) refers). As part of this decision the Cabinet Member also delegated authority to the then Director of Property and Assets to enter a construction contract with the successful tenderer. At this point the Approved Budget was £1.055m, including design fees of £0.120m.
- 1.4 Further to this decision being made, and as the project progressed, it became clear that a higher budget figure would be necessary to enable expansion of the SSC. Therefore, in accordance with the Capital Programme governance requirements, two Change Control Requests (CCR) were submitted and approved, as detailed in the table below and explained in paragraph 1.5, bringing the total approved budget for this project to £1.460m. The Cabinet Member has been made aware of this increase to the budget.

Budget Approval Mechanism	Funding Sources	Budget Approved
Full Business Case (October 2021)	SEND Grant	£1,055,000.00
CCR01 (March 2022)	SEND Grant	£85,000.00
CCR02 (Sept 2022)	SEND Grant	£320,000.00
	Total:	£1,460,000.00

- 1.5 The project budget was adjusted to reflect the updated pre-tender cost reports which indicated that a higher budget figure was required due to material cost increases. The Change Control Request01 (£85,000) included additional funding to cover necessary investigatory work required as part of the Planning Application process. Change Control Request02 (£320,000) was necessary following the outcome of the procurement process, as the successful tender exceeded the previously agreed budget.
- 1.6 The County Council's Multi-Disciplinary Consultant (MDC) Faithful+Gould, undertook a competitive two stage procurement exercise. Bidders were required to complete the standard selection Questionnaire (SSQ) and Health and Safety Questionnaire, which are both scored on a Pass/Fail basis. The successful bid had the highest overall score based on Technical, Social Value and Commercial sub criteria.
- 1.7 The works to improve and expand the SSC will encompass the provision of a classroom; group room; calming room; sensory room; associated WCs; kitchenette and external play area. Providing a dedicated SSC at West Park, upgrading from the inadequate facilities currently in use.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 The Assistant Director (Property and Assets) is asked to approve the award of the building contract to deliver the approved scheme at the SSC at West Park CE Primary School to Cheesmur Ltd. Construction works are planned to start on site in late November 2022 and complete in Summer 2023.
- 2.2 The MDC have been appointed to provide contract administration, health and safety advice and services in relation to ICT for the full delivery of the project.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 There is an option to do nothing but this will not offer any savings to the high needs block, create much needed additional places for children with SEND or enable children to be placed in a Special Support Centre near to home.

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 These are set out in the Cabinet Member decision report, decision [LS09 \(21/22\)](#) refers
- 4.2 Planning Permission has been granted for the project Application ref [WSCCC/010/22](#) notification/determination date 26/07/22
- 4.3 Quality will be monitored during construction through the MDC

5 Finance

- 5.1 Revenue consequences

Additional capacity is required in SSCs to enable children to be on roll at a mainstream school close to home; to reduce revenue costs of Out County placements in INMS and to reduce costly home to school transport costs.

The 4 additional places along with the redesignation of the existing 10 accommodated places will deliver a 14 place SSC for children with Social Communication Needs.

Only 4 of the 14 Social Communication Needs places produce future cost avoidance of £34k per pupil (£0.136m per year) within the high needs block and a consequent reduction in future costs to the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant Block.

These costs are met out of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) (High Needs Block).

- 5.1.1 Capital consequences

Providing a dedicated centre for Social Communication Needs placements at West Park would reduce the reliance on INMS.

- 5.1.2 The gross Project Budget is **£1,460,000** and is broken down as follows:

Description	Value
Construction (inc. construction contingency @ 10%)	£1,088,000
Consequential Improvements	£132,000
Design fees	£154,000
ICT	Included in Construction Figure
Fixed furniture and Equipment	Included in Construction Figure
Liaising with stat bodies	£4,000
Planning and Building control fees	£3,000
Asbestos removal (if required)	£6,000
Contingency (Client @3%)	£44,000
Surveys	£29,000
Total	£1,460,000

5.1.3 The proposed costs in 5.1.2 are to be funded from SEND grant and the approved budgets totalling £1.460m are detailed in the table below.

	Up to 2021/22 £m	Current Year 2022/23 £m	Year 2 2023/24 £m	Total £m
Original Capital budget Approved	0.182	0.379	0.494	1.055
Change Control Requests 1 & 2			0.405	0.405
Revised Budget Approved	0.182	0.379	0.899	1.460

5.1.4 The number of Social Communication Needs places being created overall is 14. The gross cost per place is £0.105m. This is on par with and the lowest of the other Phase 2 projects of the SEND programme in delivery.

5.2 The effect of the proposal:

(a) **How the cost represents good value**

This project has been tendered competitively, and it is proposed to appoint the contractor that has demonstrated best value for money under quality and commercial criteria in accordance with WSCC procurement process and strategy.

(b) **Future savings/efficiencies being delivered**

N/A

(c) **Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact**

N/A

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Contractor's ability to deliver this project on time and to budget.	The WSCC Contracts Officer regularly reviews the programme, quality and cost alongside the MDC.
Current volatile marketplace for supplies and securing contractors. Delays caused by unavailability of materials to enable delivery as per the programme	This will be monitored throughout the project As the project construction is due to start late Autumn 2022, the market may incur other fluctuations to material availability and prices.

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 Our Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities and includes a commitment to help people and communities to fulfil their potential. This proposal will provide appropriate accommodation and facilities to meet the need for specialist SEND places in the area ensuring young people have a school place close to home.
- 7.2 Legal Implications
The procurement has been completed in compliance with the Council's Standing Orders and in line with the principles of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (although a below threshold procurement). Contract terms that comply with the Council's Standing Orders will be used and will be reviewed by Legal Services.
- 7.3 Equality Duty and Human Rights Assessment
Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that public bodies, in exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other unlawful conduct under the Act, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This proposal will ensure suitable school places for those with protected characteristics
- 7.4 Climate Change
The County Council's Design Guides have been adhered to in relation to the design of the remodelled accommodation. The Design Guides have sustainability guidance included in the design development and have been updated to ensure school building designs are in line with the County Council's [Climate Change Strategy](#).
- 7.5 Social Value
The contractor appointment will reflect the County Council's duty under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

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Background papers - None