

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 10 July 2012	Meeting Name: Education, Children's Services and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Report title:		Southwark Schools for the Future: New School Rotherhithe and Free Schools	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Project Director, Southwark Schools for the Future	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Education, Children's Services and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee note the briefing provided below.

BACKGROUND - NEW SCHOOL ROTHERHITHE

2. In 2007 Southwark's Outline Business Case (OBC) established the case for a new 5 form entry (750 place) secondary school with a further 150 place sixth form to meet the needs of an expanding population in Bermondsey and Rotherhithe that would be delivered as part of Phase 3 of Southwark's Building Schools for the Future (BSF).
3. In April 2010 Partnerships for Schools provisionally allocated £19.6m to fund the delivery of a new school in Rotherhithe.
4. In July 2010 Southwark was informed that all our projects, including New School Rotherhithe, were unaffected by the cuts to the BSF programme that were announced.
5. In October 2010 Partnerships for Schools (PfS) - the government's delivery agent for capital investment programmes in schools, informed the council that projects referred to as 'unaffected' in July would be subject to a value for money review to be carried out on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).
6. In November 2010 the DfE wrote to the council advising us of their decision to no longer support New School Rotherhithe. The Council continued to argue the case to the DfE and PfS that there was a need to deliver the New School Rotherhithe to meet current local demand and anticipated future boroughwide need.
7. In April 2011 Southwark was invited by PfS to submit revised and current Pupil Place Planning data. This submission was made on the 18 April 2011 and it reiterated the need for investment to create new places.
8. This Pupil Place Planning submission concluded that new Year 7 places will be required boroughwide from September 2016, with 5 FE (forms of entry) required by 2019/20 – 150 Year 7 places. It is considered by the Council that these places should be provided in SE16 to respond to and support the ongoing regeneration in the area.

9. On 10 October 2011 the DfE advised that a 700 place University Technical College (UTC) for 14-19 year olds based at Southwark College's Bermondsey site will proceed to the pre-opening stage of the UTC development process with a view to it being open in September 2012.
10. The DfE also advised of their provisional agreement to fund a new Free School sponsored by the Compass School Trust which intends to offer 500 mixed secondary places.
11. On the 21 December 2011 the Department for Education advised the Authority in a letter that, in light of the Local Authority's pupil place planning submission, it considered a further 100 secondary places were required in addition to those that would be delivered through Compass and the UTC.
12. The letter invited the Council to 'work with the Department and Compass to consider whether an expanded Free School could be the most appropriate solution to addressing basic need in the area, or whether the additional places could be provided through expanding an existing school. If the latter route proves to be more sensible, ...the Department would be prepared to release funding to the Authority for this purpose.'
13. All schools, including Compass, were advised of the content of the additional places letter and invited to express an interest in expansion. The City of London Academy, St Michael's Catholic College and Compass responded to this invitation.

UPDATE

COMPASS

14. Compass School have yet to identify a site and this non-identification of a site, both permanent and temporary, is a significant risk to the school opening as proposed in September 2013.
15. This ongoing uncertainty may result in Compass not progressing and consideration may need to be given as to how additional places could be delivered within the existing estate.

UTC

16. The DfE has approved the deferral of the opening of the UTC to September 2013. The UTC proposals are not currently progressing as a result of the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the future of Southwark College and the potential for this to result in the non-availability of the site or the necessary ancillary facilities for the UTC. Even with the quick resolution of the site issues a September 2013 opening is unlikely to be achievable.

100 PLACES

17. Discussions and recommendations in regard to the delivery of the 100 additional places are not being progressed at this time as it is considered that these should be delivered in the context of the delivery of all the identified required places. These other proposed expansions are currently at risk due to site availability

issues and should they not proceed the delivery of 100 places at a particular school may undermine site potential and funding for expansion there or elsewhere if required.

SOUTHWARK FREE SCHOOL (Primary)

18. In 2011 Southwark Free School (SFS) secured Department for Education pre-opening approval to open in September 2012. At the time of this approval the school was proposed to be established at a site in Great Dover Street.
19. In March 2012 SFS initiated a public consultation process seeking feedback from local stakeholders in regard to proposals to establish a 420 place primary school at 399 Rotherhithe New Road. The current status of this site acquisition is unknown.
20. The preferred site is not in a condition that would enable the school to be established in September 2012 and Partnerships for Schools are therefore also seeking to identify a temporary site. No temporary site has been confirmed but a September 2012 opening date is still targeted by SFS and PfS. The school was not included in the 2012/13 admissions arrangements.

HARRIS FREE SCHOOL

21. Harris Federation has also secured pre-opening approval to open a 420 place primary school on the site of the Academy @ Peckham site in September 2012 and this school was included in Southwark's admissions arrangements

AUDIT TRAIL

Report Author	Sam Fowler	
Version	Final	
Dated	25 June 2012	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team	29 June 2012	