

Department for Education - School Build Meeting Update - Tuesday 24th January 2023

Attendees: Ben Parnell (CEO), Emma Kerr (Executive Principal), Carla Barnard (Chair of Governors), Darren Crockford (Estates Manager), Gary Chapman (Deputy Estates Manager), Richard Malyon (DFE Project Director), Chris Hedges (DFE Project Manager), LPS staff, parents, and prospective parents.

Background:

Richard gave a brief recap of the delay with the school build. He explained that the original contractor Caledonian went into administration in March 2022. From then the DfE had been working with consultants, technical advisors and contractors, and appointed Keir as the new contractor. In depth surveys of the school build were concluded in December 2022. This is where they undertook a full review of the build quality, which confirmed that the building has not been constructed in accordance with DfE quality and safety standards.

Richard and Chris confirmed that a recommendation was made to DfE Directors to demolish the existing building (to foundation level) and rebuild traditionally from that point. They looked at different options, however this will be the quickest and safest solution to rebuild the school. This means it will have the structure and fire integrity and complies with the DfE standard. Recommendation to accelerate the demolition ahead of finalised design and detailed cost position was given to directors before Christmas and was approved.

Current Position:

Richard explained that they are on programme from what was advised in September. The partnership with Kier remains strong and director support within DfE is very strong and committed to delivering the building as quickly as possible. He explained that market conditions generally remain difficult.

The DfE has instructed Kier to progress engaging a demolition contractor and to undertake all necessary design to comply with the existing planning approval. The design of the school will be unchanged, however the standard specification has been updated and consequently the revised specification will be adopted where practical and does not lead to any delay.

Plan:

It is likely that Keir will be on site from the middle of March 2023. They will start stripping down the current build and recovering resources that can be reused. Other resources that can't be used will either be given to charities, clubs, the Trust or recycled. Dismantling of the building will start from April 2023. It will approximately take 7 weeks for the initial phase. The new steel frame will be erected from Summer 2023, with an aim for completion of the school at the end of June 2024, or earlier. Any risk to delivery date is low, however if that risk increases, a contingency for year 4 will be made by the February 2024 cut of date. All contracts have retention clauses in place, which means that money is withheld until the job is complete. There are also contractual penalty clauses for when a completion date is not met, which have financial implications for contractors.

When the school is complete and handed over to the Trust, it will be guaranteed and warranted - this will cover any future defects that may occur in the normal course of

construction projects. We are moving forward with a competent contractor that is confident they can deliver to the time scale.

Temporary accommodation:

Design on the temporary site has been completed and costed. Tenders for the building will go out in February 2023. Subject to market interest, a contractor will be selected in March. Building works will likely commence in April ready for September 2023. This build does not require planning permission as it is adapting an existing educational use building.

There will be a new fence across the carpark for a bigger hard standing playground. There will be minimal impact on the current pupils, due to the work itself being contained and fenced off. All safeguarding requirements will be undertaken. When the new school is built, the temporary site will continue to be used by the trust.

The next meeting will be scheduled near Easter for a further update. The parent/carer survey will be shared again prior to this meeting, to ask any questions to the DFE.

Questions & Feedback received via Parent/Carer Survey (Live from 17/01/23 to 23/01/23) addressed in points above.
As discussed at the previous meeting, Please can we now know what needs to be done to get this school to be ready for the children?
Do you plan to add extra resources to try and speed up the build? - DFE can use extra resources, but not needed at the moment
When is the work going to commence, I know in September you said it would be April, however has this changed or is there an opportunity to bring it forward now you know what needs to be done?
Updates on development and time frame
What is the contingency plan if there are further delays to the build and what capacity do you have at the temporary site?