

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 24 MAY 2016



**REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS,
SKILLS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT**

**MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS
SERVICES AND RESIDENT EXPERIENCE**

**LEAD
OFFICERS:**

JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER

**JULIE STOCKDALE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS
AND LEARNING (INTERIM)**

SUBJECT: WEST HILL SPECIAL SCHOOL, LEATHERHEAD

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To approve the Business Case for the alteration of the age range of West Hill School, from a 100 place 11 - 16 mixed special secondary school to a 112 place 5 - 11 mixed primary school, with an additional nursery providing seven full time equivalent places for those who present with Learning and Additional Needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the alteration set out in Item 22 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of a new primary special school for pupils with Learning and Additional Needs be approved.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide appropriate facilities for all SEND children who attend the special school. A need has been identified for a countywide primary school and nursery for children with complex Learning and Additional Needs. The town of Leatherhead is a county central location for such a provision, allowing reasonable access for all.

DETAILS:

Background

1. The provision of appropriate school places within the County is vital in order to ensure that the Local Authority (LA) fulfils its duty to provide appropriate school places. The LA must develop specialist in-county provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to ensure the efficient and effective use of public resources. There are periodic reviews of the SEND provision across the county which inform future proposals to ensure the needs of this cohort of pupils is met in appropriate school places. The most recent review, called the Learning Difficulties Review (LD review) took place in 2012 and since that point a number of proposals have been developed, of which West Hill is one. The Council is currently undergoing a programme of change called SEND 2020

which will reshape the Special Educational Needs and Disability offer in the county with a view towards future need.

2. West Hill is an Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' teaching school located in Leatherhead that currently meets the needs of secondary aged pupils with Learning and Additional Needs (LAN).
3. The focus of the LD Review was on improving outcomes for young people and provided a commitment to reducing the number of SEND, students with an Education, Healthcare Plan (EHCP) or Statement, placed in schools within the Non-Maintained and Independent (NMI) sector. The current issues faced by the LA in making school provision for students with SEND include a mismatch between the overall SEND pupil profile and the range of provision available across all phases and types of schools.
4. There is currently an over provision of places for secondary aged pupils with LAN, with 650 places spread across seven sites. As a result there are an increasing number of vacancies in the lower year groups of some LAN schools and the position is unsustainable in the long-term. At the same time there is an increased pressure for primary aged LAN special school places. A need has been identified for a countywide primary school and nursery for children with complex learning difficulties. It is expected that the primary school would meet the needs of those pupils who present with developmental delay and a range of additional needs such as medical needs, communication needs and those whose needs cannot be met from the resources currently available in mainstream school or other specialist centres.
5. It is therefore important to meet this increased demand by developing new provision. Currently there is little provision in the county for primary aged LAN pupils. The only other special school for primary aged pupils with LAN is located in Bramley, South of Guildford. The proposed West Hill provision would offer completely new places in the centre of the county and would ensure that access to specialist school placements would be within an acceptable travelling time for primary aged pupils. Investment in the buildings at the West Hill site will substantially aid the delivery of primary special education within Surrey at an outstanding school.
6. The following table details the planned transition timetable commencing in September 2016 from the current 75 secondary pupils to 119 primary pupils in 2022.

Pupil numbers growth model

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Primary	16	39	55	71	87	103	119
Secondary	56	43	24	7			
Total Pupils	72	82	79	78	87	103	119

7. Secondary aged pupils currently at West Hill School will remain at the school until their education at the school ends in Year 11, when they will move into further education provision. From September 2016, the school will no longer admit secondary aged pupils. This means that by 2020, there will be no secondary aged pupils remaining at the school.
8. This development is intended to increase the quality of existing primary provision and increase specialist capacity to meet current and projected demand. The aim is to reduce reliance on high cost independent placements due to a lack of appropriate in county provision to meet these needs.
9. It is also intended to include nursery provision to provide younger children with earlier access to specialist teaching on an assessment basis. This will allow the school to work effectively with parents and children at an earlier stage in their education.
10. Initially the requirement to meet these demands will need to be met at West Hill School by the provision of internal modifications in the existing school building. This work will be carried out in a phased programme of refurbishment in different areas of the school as there are existing secondary aged pupils that continue to require access to specialist areas; consequently it is essential that the primary children are accommodated separately.

CONSULTATION:

11. The Headteacher and school governors have been fully consulted on the expansion proposals.
12. A public consultation was undertaken on this proposal between 18 March and 25 April 2014. A consultation document was published to all statutory stakeholders including parents and local residents. On 3 and 4 April 2014, public consultation meetings were held to which all interested parties and stakeholders were invited.
13. Having considered responses to the consultation, the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement published statutory notices on 5 June 2014.
14. On 21 November 2014, the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievements made the formal decision to alter the age range of the school.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

15. There are risks associated with the project and a project risk register has been compiled, which is regularly updated. A contingency allowance appropriate to the scheme has been included within the project budget to mitigate for potential identified risks.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

16. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as it progresses. Further financial details are set out in the report circulated in Part 2 of the agenda. These details have been circulated separately to ensure commercial sensitivity, in the interest of securing best value.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

17. The funding for this scheme has been identified within the capital funding for the SEN Strategy to develop the in-house local offer.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

18. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on a Local Authority (with responsibility for education) to ensure sufficient primary and secondary education provision is available to meet the needs of the population in its area. Section 5 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty to promote high standards. Therefore, there is a duty to provide efficient education and sufficient schools to do so.

Equalities and Diversity

19. A full Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the Learning Difficulties Review, from which this proposal stems.
20. The new school building will comply with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations.
21. The school will be expected to contribute towards community cohesion.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

22. This proposal would provide increased provision for primary places for children with learning and additional needs, which would be of benefit to the community served by the school. This means it would therefore also be of benefit to any Looked After Children who have a Statement of Special Education Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan identifying their learning and additional needs.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

23. The design philosophy is to create buildings that will support low energy consumption, reduce solar gain and promote natural ventilation. Any new infrastructure will be built to the local planning authority's adopted core planning strategy.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

If approved, to proceed to complete tenders and subsequent contract award through delegated decision.

Contact Officer:

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Julie Beckett, School Commissioning Officer – Tel: 01483 518109

Consulted:

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate for the Built Environment
Tim Hall, Local Member: Leatherhead and Fetcham East – Mole Valley
Julie Fisher, Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director for Children, Schools and Families
Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager – Business Services

Annexes:

None but Part 2 report with financial details attached to agenda as item 22.

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