

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

Petition: To open a secondary school in Molesey

(i) Details of decision

That the response attached as an Appendix be agreed.

(ii) Reasons for decision

To respond to the petition.

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

None

Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)

None

Decision taken by:

(i) Name: Linda Kemeny

(ii) Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning

Date of Decision: 11 September 2013

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 12 September 2013

Date decision effective (i.e. 5 working days after date of publication of record of decision unless subject to call-in by the Children and Education Select Committee):
20 September 2013

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

BROOKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

(i) Details of decision

That the expansion of Brookwood Primary School to two forms of entry on a split site be agreed, subject to planning permission.

(ii) Reasons for decision

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places in the County. There are currently no Year R or 1 vacancies at schools in the local area and although there are some vacancies in other year groups they are not expected to be sufficient to meet the expected additional demand met by the housing development and returning service families.

Surrey County Council is a signatory to the Military Covenant and is committed to ensuring that children from service families are not disadvantaged in any way and are fully able to access key public services. It is important that there are sufficient school places in the area for service families which this proposal will ensure.

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

None

Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted

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CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

LANGSHOTT INFANT SCHOOL, HORLEY

(i) Details of decision

That the publication of Statutory Notices indicating the Council's intent to alter the upper age limit of Langshott Infant School so that it becomes a Primary School be approved.

(ii) Reasons for decision

This proposal is reflective both of an increasing demand for school places in the Horley area, resulting from an increase in birth rate and significant house building, and an opportunity to provide primary school structure throughout the town.

The provision of additional Junior places both meets the increased demographic pressures in the area and will allow the Council to admit those people who name the school as their preferred option thus, meeting the wider statutory duty to offer all applicants a school place.

It will enable a diversity of provision to be maintained within the Horley area and be part of a strategy that enables Horley residents to access to a local Primary School.

A programme of building works at the school will improve the general fabric of the school buildings and enhance the learning experience for pupils, parents and staff.

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

None

Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)

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CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

ECHELFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL, ASHFORD: THE SPECIALIST SEN CENTRE

(i) Details of decision

1. The Specialist Speech, Language and Communications Needs (SLCN) Centre be closed in January 2014.
2. No further admissions be made to the Specialist Centre with effect from September 2013.
3. Suitable alternative educational provision be arranged for pupils currently on roll at The Echelford Specialist Centre. This will be done in conjunction with their parents/carers and the Local Authority maintaining Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in order to enable their transition in January 2014 or sooner.

(ii) Reasons for decision

There are a number of unfilled places at this Centre and it has not been full for a number of years. This is partly due to fewer SLCN pupils in Surrey requiring this sort of provision. There is also another more popular and successful Centre locally. The Echelford Governing Body has been unable to secure appropriate specialist teaching and leadership of the Centre and standards there are judged as being unsatisfactory at present. The proposed closure will enable the Headteacher and Governing Body to concentrate on raising standards in the mainstream school which currently also requires special measures and is becoming an academy. More suitable and effective alternative provision has been identified for the six pupils currently on roll.

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

Beverley Clarke, Joint Head of Additional and Special Educational Needs confirmed that there had been wide consultation and that emergency statement reviews had been undertaken with the relevant authority for all children attending the centre. They have been amended accordingly with alternative provision. The changes have been accepted and with effect from today there are no children at this SEN centre.

Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)

None

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**CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING
RESPONSE TO PETITION TO OPEN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN MOLESEY**

The Petition

There is a huge shortage of Secondary schooling in Elmbridge, and specifically in Molesey. Primary schools are expanding to cater for the huge birth rate rise in recent years, and all these children will soon need to move on to secondary education.

Molesey sits within the official catchment area of Esher High School, which has a published admission number of 210 pupils, due to increase to 240. Molesey could fill these places entirely, as the 4 primary schools here are now catering for 240 children each year. Many Molesey children were sent to secondary schools outside the borough this year, in a trend that is due to continue unless something is done quickly.

Please show your support by signing this petition, which will be sent to the Education Department at Surrey County Council.

Response:

Thank you for your petition.

The Molesey primary schools that sit within the designated catchment area of Esher High School are Hurst Park Primary, Chandlers Field Primary, St Lawrence Church of England VA Primary and St Alban's RC Primary. Their combined Published Admission Number is currently 210 although there are proposals due to come forward to expand the number of primary places in the area to 240 in order to meet local need. Some of these places are already available in the form of temporary expansions of Reception classes at Hurst Park and previously at St Alban's. Therefore we concur with your assessment that approximately 240 Molesey pupils per year will require secondary school places.

However, some of these pupils will not request places at Esher High School. For example, the Catholic students at St Alban's tend to move on to either Salesians or St Paul's RC secondary schools. There are also a significant percentage of children who move into the independent sector at year 7 and some parents actively choose to request places in schools out of their home area. So our estimate of the number of secondary places required by Molesey residents is somewhat lower than 240 but, nevertheless, makes up a significant percentage of the roll of Esher High School.

We currently have plans in place to expand Esher High School, and also both Rydens and Heathside schools, in order to add capacity into Elmbridge Borough as a whole. There is also likely to be a secondary Free School in Cobham by 2015 or 2016 and there are proposals to change the catchment area of Hinchley Wood in order to benefit Claygate residents. All of these actions will change the pattern of uptake of places at Esher High School and potentially increase the number of places available to residents of the Moleseys living within the catchment area.

School Planning Officers do not think that a small Free School would be viable in this context. We would also be concerned that any new school in this area would be so close to the County border that it would fill up with pupils from Richmond who lived close by and not especially benefit Surrey residents, especially those living further away. We do however acknowledge that there is an overall capacity issue which we have not yet fully addressed across the Borough. My officers are currently working on this so that we have sufficient additional capacity, when and where it will be needed, from 2015 onwards.

At present officers' preference would be to seek to provide more forms of entry in the Dittons and Weston Green areas and we have a similar group of residents petitioning for a Free School there. Surrey County Council will support the commissioning of new schools where they are required but there is a legal presumption now that all new schools will be academies or free schools which are publicly funded by the Department for Education. It would be up to the promoters of the new school to find land and premises on which to build a school. It would be extremely rare for the council to build and maintain a new school under present legislation.

Given all of the above information I think it is unlikely that Surrey County Council would support a new school in the Moleseys but we would be keen to talk to any promoters about their ideas and we are happy to share our analysis of pupil forecast data with them before they make an application to the Department for Education.

If you wish to discuss your proposal further, please contact Melanie Harris, School Commissioning Officer for North East Surrey, at melanie.harris@surreycc.gov.uk, who would be pleased to meet you.

Linda Kemeny
Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning
11 September 2013