

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING**DATE:** 12 FEBRUARY 2014**LEAD OFFICER:** NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES**SUBJECT:** PROPOSED EXPANSION OF WEST BYFLEET INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL FROM 2 TO 3 FORMS OF ENTRY**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

There is increasing pressure for primary school places in Woking. In addition to the demand generated by an increasing birth rate, there is a need to provide more school places in the Borough as a result of additional housing and net inward migration. The Local Authority has recently consulted on the proposed expansion of West Byfleet Infant and Junior Schools in partnership with the Governing Bodies of both schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that following the period for final representations, the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning approve the expansion of the infant and junior schools from two to three forms of entry from September 2015.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in Surrey. There is a need for more primary places in Woking and this project is essential to meeting that need. Following the decision by the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning to publish notices a four week period of representations was given for any further comments on the scheme. There have been no representations made so there are no reasons to reject the implementation of the proposal since notices were published.

DETAILS:**The Proposal**

1. Surrey County Council, in partnership with the Governors of West Byfleet Infant School and West Byfleet Junior School, is proposing that both schools expand from two to three forms of entry with a new Published Admission Number of 90. This would increase the capacity of the infant school from 180 to 270 and the capacity of the junior school from 240 to 360 pupils. The proposal would be effective from September 2015.

Rationale

2. Demand for school places – Demand for school places has increased significantly in Woking in recent years. In 2011, the County Council commissioned over a thousand additional school places in the Borough, permanently expanding primary schools including Maybury Primary School, Westfield Primary, Beaufort Primary, St Dunstan's Primary, The Marist Primary and Goldsworth Primary. Even with these expansions, all primary schools in Woking are expected to be full and to continue to be full in the

future. Three further projects are being planned in the Woking area with the West Byfleet Infant and Junior expansion proposal being one of those projects.

3. There are a number of different factors that can affect the demand for school places in an area. The most important is the birth and fertility rates in an area. Based on figures provided by the Office for National Statistics, births in Woking dipped from 1997 to a low point in 2001. Births then rose quite sharply year on year to 2007 before flattening out through to 2008. Births then rose again in 2009 and 2010. It should be noted that the recent increases in applications are unlikely to be the result of the number of births alone. There are other factors such as additional pupils from housing growth, inward and outward migration, parental preferences and the changing percentage of parents applying for independent or private provision - all of which can affect the number of applications in any given year making applications more difficult to model.
4. Housing development in the Borough - Woking Borough Council is the responsible authority for housing, it is for Surrey County Council to ensure there is sufficient infrastructure associated with population growth from housing. Between the period 2010 and 2027, Woking Borough Council are looking to provide just short of 5000 additional homes in the Borough to meet its housing targets – 35% of this will be affordable housing. Most development will be on previously developed land and, although the expected additional units in West Byfleet are likely to be modest, there is anecdotal evidence of additional units in the area being generated from the existing housing stock (larger houses being divided into two or three units).
5. On top of an increasing birth rate and additional housing, it would appear that Woking has in the past couple of years experienced net inward migration (more people moving into the area than out) which is consistent with the profile of Woking as an urban area with good employment opportunities and transport links to London.
6. In light of the above, it is clear that Woking's population is growing - it is second only to Epsom and Ewell in Surrey in terms of population growth since the last census but its 0-4 population has grown significantly more than any other Borough. There are about 1600 more 0-4 year olds now than in 2001 - a 28% increase. It is crucial that sufficient educational provision is commissioned in the Borough to keep pace with the growing population of school age children.
7. Parental Preferences - the Local Authority has a duty to secure diversity in the provision of schools and to increase opportunities for parental choice when planning the provision of schools. West Byfleet Infant School and West Byfleet Junior School are both popular schools and have been heavily oversubscribed against their published admission number of 60 for the last seven years by about a class of children. The Local Authority has a presumption to expand popular and successful schools where the demand for those places are demonstrable.
8. Location of pupils – The presumption to expand successful schools is not an absolute. The Local Authority must also consider the location of pupils in relation to schools as it also seeks to plan provision as close to the pupil population as possible so that local pupils can attend local schools. In

mapping the location of all 2013 applicants looking for a reception place in Woking this year (and those that will be seeking junior provision in 2016) there were 75 children living within 0.5 miles of the school with 197 pupils living within a mile of the school. The figures were very similar in 2012 with 70 children living within half a mile of the school and 189 living with a mile. There is a large number of pupils within good proximity to the school with a high percentage of those pupils with the potential to walk, scoot or cycle into school.

CONSULTATION:

9. Public consultation was undertaken on this proposal at the start of the academic year. A consultation document was published to all statutory stakeholders including parents and local residents. The document was published on 17 October 2013 with consultation responses required by 21 November 2013. In broad terms, there was very little disagreement with the need for more places – most parents and residents accepted that more school places are needed in the area.
10. Having considered the responses to the consultation, the Cabinet Member published notices on 12 December 2013. Following this notice there have been no representations received.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

11. Surrey County Council will be delivering and managing this project. The in-house project management team will have compiled a project risk register and will monitor and update this document at regular intervals. West Byfleet Infant and Junior School are on a very large site but located close to the highway with challenging access arrangements. The current strategy involves creating new staff parking facilities via Leisure Lane which is not currently in the County Council's ownership, which is a significant risk. Early discussions have taken place with the owners of this road which have proved positive but there are no formal agreements at this stage. It will be important that the school, contractor and Surrey County Council project management work closely together to manage the risks in this regard to ensure the site is safe, the compound and access points are sensible and that pupil safety is paramount.
12. Other risks relate to the capital budget and programme for the scheme. A full planning application has not yet been submitted, so it is not yet clear that mitigation measures might be necessary in terms of local amenity and traffic as well as the capital budgets that might be required for their implementation. This risk will be managed by ensuring a contingency sum is budgeted as part of this project. In terms of timescales, September 2015 is considered achievable and there is some allowance in the programme for delays with the planning application or during the construction phase.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

13. The 2014/19 Capital Programme includes this scheme. Funding for the scheme was approved as part of the 2013/18 medium term financial plan and it is expected that the 2014/19 medium term financial plan for the school basic need capital programme will be approved by Full Council in February.

14. A full business case for this scheme will be developed and the full financial implications will be considered at this stage. The estimated scheme costings will be updated as part of the business case development and this will inform future years funding.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

15. The scheme for West Byfleet has approved funding as part of the 2013/18 MTFP and is also included in the 2014/19 capital programme. The 2014/19 MTFP is expected to be approved by Full Council in February 2014.
16. The Section 151 Officer acknowledges that following consultation a full business case for this scheme will be developed and the estimated scheme costings will be updated. This will then inform future years funding requirements.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

17. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on local education authorities to secure that efficient primary education is available to meet the needs of the population of their 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

18. A full equalities impact assessment has not been undertaken on this proposal as it is unlikely that the proposal would have a negative impact on any groups with protected characteristics. The school does serve both traveller families and families from the armed services but this proposal ensures that there will be sufficient places for children from these groups to attend school in the future. The proposal does not change the nature of the admissions criteria for the school.
19. The new school building will comply with all DDA (Disabilities Discrimination Act) regulations. The expanded school will provide additional employment opportunities in the area.
20. The school will be for children in the community served by the school. If there is sufficient provision available, then it would be beneficial for all children, including vulnerable children.
21. The school will be expected to contribute towards community cohesion and will be expected to provide the normal range of before and after schools clubs, as are provided in a typical Surrey County Council school.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

22. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change. The new buildings will comply or exceed Building Regulations. The contractor will be required to provide a Site Waste Management Plan.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

23. A full business case detailing the financial and value for money implications of this proposal will be completed and submitted to Cabinet for their approval as part of the tendering and contracting phase.
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Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

All schools in Woking (including New Haw and the Grange)
Pupils and parents of West Byfleet Infant and Junior School
The Governing Bodies of West Byfleet Infant and Junior School
Local Residents
Local Members

Sources/background papers:

- Proposal to expand West Byfleet Infant and Junior School, October 2013. A copy of this report can be found here on the SCC website by navigating to, or clicking on, the following: [Learning > Schools > Education Consultation and Plans](#)
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