

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****DATE:** 14 MAY 2014**LEAD OFFICER:** NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES**SUBJECT:** TO DETERMINE A PROPOSAL TO EXPAND MANBY LODGE INFANT SCHOOL**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Surrey County Council is putting plans in place to ensure that its most effective schools meet the increased demand for places. Primary school places in Surrey are in high demand, and Elmbridge is an area that has experienced a particularly significant increase. Weybridge primary planning area currently needs an additional form of entry; Surrey County Council plans to expand Manby Lodge Infant School to meet this demand at Key Stage One.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In order to meet increased demand for primary school places in Weybridge, it is recommended that:

- Manby Lodge Infant School is enlarged by 1 form of entry (from 2 FE to 3 FE) on 1 September 2015.
- The school roll will increase by one form each year until September 2017 when its capacity will be 270 pupils.
- An associated building programme goes ahead, in a single phase, to provide appropriate new classrooms and facilitate the removal of all temporary accommodation on site. The new build will improve the overall layout of the school and is intended to provide a modern educational facility which will enhance learning.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

School rolls have been rising steadily across Elmbridge since 2003. Over this period the birth rate has risen by 24.6%; additionally families have chosen to move into the borough, in part due to housing development. Weybridge primary school pupil numbers have reflected this borough trend. In 2007 there were around 220 applications for Reception places; by 2020 this is predicted to rise to 270 places, or nine forms of entry (9FE); this is one more form of entry (or 30 Reception places) per year than is currently provided.

**DETAILS:****Business Case**

1. The Weybridge primary school planning area is served by five schools: Oatlands Infant School (which was recently expanded from two forms of entry to three). Manby Lodge (2FE), St James (2FE) and St Charles Borromeo (1FE); providing 8FE in total. The shortfall is currently being met by some schools accepting 'bulge' classes and this has been the case since 2009.
2. To consistently provide the requisite nine forms of entry, or an additional 210 primary places to meet the ongoing demand in Weybridge, Surrey County Council needs to provide an additional form of entry and Manby Lodge has been assessed as the most appropriate school to expand.

The need for additional primary school places in the Weybridge planning area is illustrated in the chart below:

	PAN	1pref	InfPI	Spare	YR	Y1	Y2	I	JunPI	JSpare	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	J	Total	Cap
2007/2008	210	273	210	-14	224	211	196	631	255	18	237	243	237	237	954	1585	1620
2008/2009	210	222	210	5	205	230	207	642	255	12	243	243	241	233	960	1602	1620
2009/2010	210	230	240	10	230	206	237	673	240	-2	242	243	238	244	967	1640	1620
2010/2011	210	282	270	16	254	237	209	700	240	-4	244	241	240	238	963	1663	1650
2011/2012	240	269	240	15	225	250	223	698	240	2	238	238	239	234	949	1647	1680
2012/2013	240	306	270	1	269	239	259	767	240	-18	258	239	241	240	978	1745	1680
2013/2014	240	287	270	12	253	275	238	766	270	-16	286	255	238	239	1018	1784	1800
2014/2015	240	292	240	-18	258	259	273	790	240	-23	263	283	254	236	1036	1826	1800
2015/2016	240		240	-20	260	264	257	781	240	-61	301	260	281	252	1094	1875	1800
2016/2017	240		240	-23	263	266	263	792	240	-44	284	298	259	279	1120	1912	1800
2017/2018	240		240	-25	265	269	265	799	240	-51	291	281	297	257	1126	1925	1800
2018/2019	240		240	-27	267	271	267	805	240	-53	293	288	280	294	1155	1960	1800
2019/2020	240		240	-31	271	274	270	815	240	-56	296	290	287	278	1151	1966	1800
2020/2021	240		240	-32	272	277	273	822	240	-59	299	293	289	284	1165	1987	1800
2021/2022	240		240	-34	274	278	275	827	240	-61	301	295	291	286	1173	2000	1800
2022/2023	240		240	-35	275	280	276	831	240	-63	303	297	293	288	1181	2012	1800
2023/2024	240		240	-32	272	281	278	831	240	-64	304	299	295	290	1188	2019	1800

3. Details of the other schools in this planning area are iterated below. This includes reasons why the School Commissioning Officer considered them as currently inappropriate for expansion and why Manby Lodge is the preferred option.
  - **St Charles Borromeo RC Primary:** this is currently a very popular one form entry school which provides a catholic education and is Voluntary Aided. As such it sets its own admissions criteria and places are allocated to catholic children. The site is small and for these reasons it would not be an appropriate school to expand at present.
  - **St James C of E Primary:** this school took a junior 'bulge' class last year and is now at capacity. The school is currently two forms of entry and is popular. However, we have ruled out expansion here at present, largely because of traffic and parking considerations and the restrictions of the site. The school has also recently been judged to require improvement by OFSTED. However, it may be that, in future, we would look again at this school, once standards have improved and if there is a change in the forecast data which indicates a demand for even more primary places.
  - **Oatlands Infant School:** this highly successful and popular infant school was expanded to three forms of entry in the recent past. The site is now at capacity and cannot be expanded any further other than on a very temporary basis.

- **Cleves Junior Academy:** this four form entry junior school serves Weybridge and Hersham. Walton children have also had historical links with the school. The school is popular and academically successful. It should be noted that the former Head Teacher would have liked Cleves to become a primary school but it was felt that this would have been an unacceptably large primary school of over eight hundred pupils (including Early Years children) and would have cut off the route to key Stage Two places for both Oatlands and Manby Lodge. However the Local Authority is currently in discussion with the Governing Body of Cleves about establishing closer, more formal 'feeder school' links between Cleves and the two infant schools in Weybridge in order to secure a greater degree of certainty for parents in terms of securing Year 3 places in the town.
4. Officers have looked at the viability for expansion at all of the five schools in the Weybridge planning area and have concluded that Manby Lodge would be the best option to supply one more form of entry.
  5. Manby Lodge, as it stands has permanent accommodation for up to 240 pupils. It is situated in a residential area adjacent to the Weybridge cricket green and has limited parking and vehicular access. It also has a number of tree preservation orders within its grounds.
  6. The main building, known as 'the Lodge', was built in 1919 and used as a doctor's house and surgery in the 1930s. Since the development of the site as an infant school various other buildings have been added, some intended as temporary structures to accommodate increasing pupil numbers in the area.
  7. The Lodge houses the school's caretaker, the administration block, the reception area and headteacher's office (which are both very small). The classrooms, which are on two floors, are not ideal teaching spaces due to the construction of the Lodge as a house, rather than a school.
  8. It is probably fair to say that the site has been developed in a piecemeal fashion over the years in order to provide the required number of places for local families. This has often meant that Manby Lodge Infant School has admitted an additional Reception class as a temporary expansion. Manby Lodge is a popular school and has recently had a new headteacher who is keen to lead the school in its next phase of development, as is its Governing Body.
  9. The current building at Manby Lodge can only accommodate 2FE in every year group, and more classrooms will be needed if it is to permanently provide 3FE. The site covers 7,339 square metres, which although not large, is considered sufficient to support a 3FE infant school based on Department for Education (DfE) guidelines. It is proposed that the new classrooms will be based on or near the existing footprint of the school and the building will encroach as little as possible on the playground area and outdoor space.
  10. The government expects Local Authorities to expand successful and popular schools wherever possible, and this proposal meets that expectation. The school was judged as providing a good quality of education at its last OFSTED inspection in October 2011 and it is a popular school with parents.
  11. In the past two consecutive years Manby Lodge has taken a 'bulge class; in other words, it has admitted three forms of entry as a temporary measure. We now believe this arrangement should become permanent.

### **CONSULTATION:**

12. An informal consultation was carried out with both parents and the public between 27 January and 28 February 2014. A consultation document setting out the facts and the proposal was produced and circulated to all stakeholders and interested parties. In addition, a meeting was held at the school on 25 February; this was attended by approximately 20 parents and staff. The consultation document was also published on the school's website and the local borough and county councillors were sent copies of this.
13. In addition to comments made at the meeting run by the school, the council received 47 written consultation responses which were reported to the Cabinet Member at her meeting in March. In summary the governing body, plus thirty two respondents were in agreement with the proposal. Four people stated that they undecided about the proposal to expand the school, or they submitted a qualified view. Seven respondents were against the proposal.
14. The main concerns raised by respondents opposed to this proposal were the volume of additional traffic that an expansion would generate; a desire to keep the school relatively small, and a lack of certainty about available junior places in Weybridge. There was also concern expressed about the impact of a building project on site while the school remains fully in operation. One former parent felt that the site is unsuitable for further development because of the trees and lack of play space.
15. Those people in support of the proposal, including the governing body, recognise the need for more places in Weybridge and welcome the opportunity to provide these at Manby Lodge Infant School.
16. Having given due consideration to all consultation responses, the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning agreed to the publication of a Statutory Notice and a further four weeks of formal consultation. This ran from 17 March to 11 April 2014. During this period the County Council received no further responses.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

17. There are two key risks to this proposal: the first is the dependency on a successful planning application to develop the site. The second is a satisfactory negotiation with Cleves or elsewhere to assure parents of an equivalent number of junior places being available to children at Manby Lodge and Oatlands Infant schools.
18. If permission to expand the school is denied then there will be insufficient infant school places in Weybridge, and some parents living in relatively close proximity to Manby Lodge will have to travel further to obtain a school place for their primary age children. This is likely to cause the satisfaction rating based on first preferences to fall.

### **Financial and Value for Money Implications**

19. This scheme is included within the 2014/19 Medium Term Financial Plan. A detailed business case will be developed which will include the scheme costings and a considered options appraisal of alternative sites. The School Programme Office are developing a balanced scorecard of options which will balance both educational requirements against scheme costings for each option, so that informed and considered decisions can be made. This more detailed cost benefit

analysis will be outlined in the business case and will help to demonstrate value for money.

#### **Section 151 Commentary**

20. There is approved funding for this scheme in the current 2014/19 Medium Term Financial Plan. More detailed costings will be compiled for the business case which will be submitted to Investment Panel for approval.

#### **Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer**

21. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 contain the regulations that apply to prescribed alterations. The Department for Education (DfE) has published two pieces of Guidance relating to prescribed alterations: Expanding a Maintained Mainstream School or Adding a Sixth Form and Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School (Other than Expansion). These contain both statutory guidance (i.e. guidance to which proposers and decision makers have a statutory duty to have regard) and non-statutory guidance on the process for making changes to school provision. This Guidance has been followed by the School Commissioning Officer in the development of this proposal.
22. 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**

23. There are no direct equalities implications arising out of the proposal. The increased provision will be open to all applicants irrespective of race, gender, faith, ethnicity or ability. The Admissions arrangements will give the highest priority to Looked After Children and pupils on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register and/or those who would benefit from a statement of educational need, thus supporting provision for our most vulnerable children. Children with siblings will receive the next priority, followed by those children living closest to the school. There is no proposal to amend the Admissions criteria.

#### **Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications**

24. The school has a robust Safeguarding Policy which is monitored by the designated Child Protection Lead Officer, is regularly reviewed by the governing body and is subject to OFSTED inspection. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, have been considered and addressed in the planning and design of this building project.

#### **Climate change/carbon emissions implications**

25. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change. A safe walking route to the school will be identified as part of the School Travel Plan for use by children and families and a rear pedestrian entrance to the campus may be re-opened as part of this scheme. A traffic survey will be done and the School Travel Plan will be updated prior to any planning application.

Facilities are already provided on campus for children cycling or using scooters to come to school.

26. The location of additional school provision at Manby Lodge is centred close to the demographic demand and as a result will enable parents and children to attend a local school and thus should reduce either the need for, or length of school journeys.

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**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

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- Subject to Cabinet Member approval a planning application will be submitted and if successful a building programme will commence.
- The outcome of this consultation will be published on the Surrey County Council website and parents of pupils at the school will be notified by letter from the Governing Body.

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**Contact Officer:**

Melanie Harris

School Commissioning Officer NE Surrey tel. 020 8541 9556

**Consulted:**

Parents of pupils and prospective pupils of Manby Lodge Infant School

Staff and governors of the school; other local schools; local councillors

The Local Surrey County Councillor: Christian Mahne

Local residents via the consultation document delivered to their homes by hand

**Annexes:** None

**Sources/background papers:**

School Organisation Consultation Proposal

Consultation responses

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