

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING****DATE: 21 NOVEMBER 2012****REPORT OF: NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****SUBJECT: EXPANSION OF ST ANN'S HEATH JUNIOR SCHOOL - DECISION****KEY ISSUE/DECISION:**

To decide whether to approve the expansion of St Ann's Heath Junior School to become a three form entry (3FE) junior school on 1 September 2015 with a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 90.

DETAILS:

1. Numbers of children starting school in The Virginia Water and Englefield Green area have been increasing. There are not enough permanent reception places in September 2012 for those that need them. Therefore, an additional bulge class is being provided at Trumps Green Infant School and Surrey County Council is proposing a permanent expansion of infant provision. Additional junior places will be needed three years later. We have identified St Ann's Heath Junior School as a school that should expand to provide the additional junior places that will be needed.
2. On 19 July 2012 the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning authorised the publication of statutory notices regarding the Proposals.

Proposal

3. The notice period has expired and the Cabinet Member needs to consider the proposal and act as Decision Maker and, giving regard to the Decision Maker's Guidance, to examine the Prescribed Information (Annex A) and determine the proposals - decide whether to approve the proposals that:
 - St Ann's Heath Junior School expands to become a three form entry (3FE) junior school on 1 September 2015
 - the PAN would increase from 64 to 90 in September 2015
 - the school would increase its number of places by 26 pupils a year until 2018, when it will have fully expanded
4. Additional classrooms would be built to accommodate the additional pupils and increase the capacity of the school from 256 to 360 places

Issues**Pupil Numbers in the area**

5. St Ann's Heath Junior School is in the Virginia Water and Englefield Green primary planning area. The Virginia Water and Englefield Green area is a large

planning area in Runnymede with the Egham and Thorpe area in the north east, the Chertsey area to the east and Addlestone and the Ottershaw area to the south east. There is pupil movement across the planning area as well as across the boundaries of the planning areas. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider places in the wider area.

Births

6. All births in the Virginia Water & Englefield Green and adjacent areas have increased since the Millennium, though dropped from 2003 to 2005, but have increased since then. The births are now significantly higher than around the Millennium, and they are projected to increase slightly beyond that. Births are now about 14% higher than 4 years ago, which means there will be about 14% more children needing a junior place in 7 years than need a place now.

Housing developments

7. Despite a slowdown in building owing to the recession, some housing developments are taking place, with over 170 housing units being completed in Runnymede Borough in 2011. Families move into new housing developments, further increasing demand for places in the area. Pressure from housing developments is not only felt close to the development, but the increased numbers of pupils apply pressure on all schools in the wider area.

Historic Numbers on Roll and Forecast demand for primary places

8. Applications for places in the area have steadily increased apart from a dip in the 2008/09 school year. Numbers entering reception also dipped in 2008 but have steadily increased since then.
9. Numbers are forecast to increase significantly in the next few years and then steadily for the foreseeable future. The forecast assumes increasing births and additional new housing which already has planning permission and housing as identified in the borough's housing trajectory.
10. An expansion of primary provision by over two forms of entry (2FE) of infant places and over 4FE of junior places is needed in the wider area. St Ann's Heath Junior School has been identified as an appropriate school to expand in order to meet part of this additional demand.

Are there choices?

Option 1: No Change

11. There would be insufficient primary places in the area. Surrey County Council (SCC) would fail to meet its statutory duty of providing sufficient primary school places for those that need them.
12. Therefore, no change is not an acceptable option.

Option 2: Proceed with the proposal with modification

13. The only modification available would be to amend the implementation date. The additional junior school places will be needed in three years time, in September 2015. A delay in the implementation date would delay the provision of additional places. If the expansion were carried out earlier, then the

additional places would be provided earlier than they were needed, reducing the efficiency of provision of education in the area.

14. Therefore, the implementation date should not be modified.

Option 3: Proceed with the proposal

15. This would enable SCC to meet its statutory duty of providing sufficient primary school places for those that need them.
16. Therefore, it would be appropriate to approve the proposals.

Financial and value for money implications

17. This scheme is in the School Basic Need Capital Programme approved by the County Council in February 2012. The level of funding available for the capital programme was approved on the basis that through more cost effective build solutions and joint procurement efficiencies with Hampshire, financial savings could be made. All schemes within the capital programme have therefore been allocated a provisional budget which includes a savings target to be achieved. The cost of all schemes will be evaluated, monitored and reported against their target budget.
18. Additional school places would need to be funded wherever they are located, and so there would be no net effect on the revenue budget.

Consultation

19. The consultation included all those persons who are required to be consulted according to statutory requirements. The following were consulted: the governing body of the School; the families of pupils, teachers and other staff at the school; the trade unions who represent staff in Surrey schools; all primary schools in the Borough; the Church of England and Roman Catholic Dioceses in which the school is located; the local MP; the local SCC members; local borough councillors; the Primary Care Trust; SCC Early Years and Childcare Service; local Early Years settings.
20. Public consultation has taken place on the proposal to expand the School, and a Consultation Booklet was issued. Two public meetings were held at the School. A small number of people attended the consultation meetings.

Statutory Notice

21. There were no representations made in response to the publication of the Statutory Notice.

Consultation Response analysis

22. There were 66 responses received by the deadline for submitting responses. Of these 27 were parents/carers of a child, or a pupil, at the school, and 32 were parents/carers of a child, or a pupil, at another school.
23. There were an additional 6 response forms received after the deadline. The views in these have been considered, but are not included in the totals for the consultation analysis.

24. There are about 250 pupils at the schools, so this is a response rate of about 11% of the parents/carers of children at the schools depending on whether each child has one or two parents/carers and the number of children in the families. This is a relatively low response rate.
25. The figures for percentages may not add up to 100% owing to rounding errors or where either more than one response was made, or where respondents provided no response.

Expansion proposals

26. There was a high level of support for the expansion proposals.
27. Of the total respondents, 85% supported the expansion proposal, 3% neither supported nor opposed the proposal, and 12% of respondents opposed the proposal.
28. Of those respondents with a child, or a pupil, at the school, 74% supported the expansion proposal, 7% neither supported nor opposed the proposal, and 15% of respondents opposed the proposal.
29. Of those respondents with a child, or a pupil, at another school, 81% supported the expansion proposal, 6% neither supported nor opposed the proposal, and 16% of respondents opposed the proposal.
30. Five out of six of the late responses supported the proposal, with one opposing.

Feeder link

31. Two additional questions were asked on the Consultation Response Form. We believe that a clear progression route would be beneficial to the children at Trumps Green Infant School. This could be achieved by giving admission priority for places at St Ann's Heath Junior School to pupils at Trumps Green Infant School – that is to make Trumps Green Infant School a feeder school to St Ann's Heath Junior School.
32. Therefore a question was asked whether respondents agreed that priority for places at St Ann's Heath Junior School should be given to pupils at Trumps Green Infant School – it should become a feeder school; and a second question of whether this should happen in September 2014.
33. A change in the admission arrangements would happen separately from the proposed expansion as this change would not be necessary to implement the expansion proposals, were the expansion to be approved.
34. Having a feeder link with Trumps Green Infant School was not well supported.
35. Of the total respondents, 15% supported having a feeder link with Trumps Green Infant School, 0% neither supported nor opposed it, and 83% of respondents opposed it.
36. Of the total respondents to the date for the feeder link with Trumps Green Infant School, 18% supported 2014, 2% neither supported nor opposed it, and 76% of respondents opposed it.

37. It was considered that through this consultation process there was insufficient support demonstrated for establishing a feeder link between St Ann's Heath Junior School, and Trumps Green Infant School.
38. The governing bodies of both schools have subsequently consulted on proposing to establish a feeder link in the admission arrangements and there is very strong support shown through the Consultation by St Ann's Heath Junior School, and overwhelming support shown through the Consultation by Trumps Green Infant School.
39. Changed in the admission criteria are contained in the separate Admission Arrangements 2014 report.
40. Details of the expansion consultation are provided in the document "St Ann's Heath Junior School Expansion Consultation Analysis ", but the responses are summarised below with SCC's observations upon them.

Point 1

41. There were concerns about traffic and parking. This is an important issue both to local residents and those attending the school – 12% of respondents raised this as an issue.

Response 1

42. The low proportion of comments concerning traffic can be attributed to the high number of responses that concentrated on the feeder link question. It is recognised that there can be congestion when entering the school parking area. On occasion there can be inconsiderate parking by some people parking on the main road. Also people often block the main road when waiting to enter the school site.
43. The school currently serves a large area, with some pupils living at distance from the school. This means that inevitable a number of children are driven to school. If additional places were not provided at this school, then the children would be driven to other schools, increasing congestion on roads in the wider area.

Point 2

44. Changing the admission arrangements to make Trumps Green Infant a feeder school would have a detrimental effect on other schools – 50% of respondents raised this as an issue

Response 2

45. It is recognised that there is significant opposition to the feeder link proposal. The increase in places at St Ann's Heath Junior School is proposed to take place to coincide with the increased number of places at Trumps Green Infant School. This should, therefore, mean there will be very little affect on the number of places available for children at other schools if the feeder link was put in place.

46. Currently, children from Thorpe CE Infant School require a junior place, but there is a proposal that it becomes a primary school. If that proposal is approved, then that would mean about 30 children per year would not require a Year 3 place, increasing the number of places for children at other infant schools.

Point 3

47. Lyne & Longcross Infant School should be named as a feeder school – 368% of respondents raised this as an issue.

Response 3

48. It is important for community cohesion that schools serve local communities. Both Trumps Green Infant School and St Ann's Heath Junior School are community schools without a religious character, and so the admission arrangements do not contain any reference to church links.
49. Lyne & Longcross Infant School is a Church of England School and so as well as serving local children it has church links as a criteria on its admission arrangements. This would mean there would be a possibility that children who would otherwise not have gained a place at St Ann's Heath School owing to the distance they live from the school could be given a place at Lyne & Longcross school through a faith criterion and subsequently be given a place at St Ann's Heath School. This would disadvantage children of no faith who are not attending Trumps Green Infant School but who would otherwise have been given a place owing to living closer to St Ann's Heath.
50. The situation is further complicated by Lyne & Longcross Infant School not being the local church infant school. Christ Church Church of England Infant School is located in Virginia Water, and so is the closest Church of England infant school. Giving priority to pupils at Lyne & Longcross Infant School would disadvantage pupils at Christ Church Infant School, which is local to St Ann's Heath.

Point 4

51. There should be an extended sibling rule and a reverse sibling rule – 6% of respondents raised this as an issue.

Response 4

52. The first point is a concern to parents/carers who have children four years apart. If the older child was at a primary school, then the sibling rule would apply for six years. If the older child is at a junior school, then the older child will have left the school. An extended sibling rule would treat a junior school as if it were a primary school and allow priority for siblings who had attended that school, but were no longer there.
53. The reverse sibling rule would increase family links between a linked infant and junior school. Priority for the infant school would be given to a child with a sibling at the junior school as if the two schools were a primary school. This would increase the continuity of education for families. It is also a concern to those who move into an area and wish to have a place for both an infant and a linked junior school.

Equalities implications

54. This educational provision would be for children in the communities served by the school. If there is sufficient provision available, then it would be beneficial for all children, including vulnerable children. Therefore, enhancing provision would promote equalities.
55. The proposal is for an expansion of provision, so more staff would be employed. Employment opportunities would increase with a larger school. The range of opportunities would be enhanced by the expansion of the school and there would also be greater professional development opportunities.

Risk management implications

56. A project to provide additional classrooms for September 2015 will be required. There is a low risk that these classrooms will not be available in time.

Implications for the Council's Community Strategy priorities

57. The provision of sufficient school places contributes to the children and young people strand of the Community Strategy.
58. Expansion of community infrastructure in appropriate locations is in accordance with housing, infrastructure and environment policy.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

59. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

Legal implications/legislative requirements

60. Section 1 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserts section 13A into the Education Act 1996, which places a duty on local education authorities (ie Local Authorities with responsibility for the functions of education in their area) to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential. A local education authority shall exercise its functions with a view to promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to educational opportunity, and promoting the fulfilment by every child concerned of his educational potential. The duty of promotion means a local education authority should be proactive in the discharge of its functions.
61. 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 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local education authorities to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary education are available in 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.
62. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 contains the regulations that apply to prescribed

alterations. The former DCSF, now DfE 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.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

63. This proposal would provide increase provision in the area, which would be of benefit to all in the community served by the school. This means it would, therefore, also be of benefit to any looked after children who will attend the school.

Section 151 Officer commentary

64. The Section 151 Officer confirms that this scheme is part of the approved capital programme and that provisional funding has been allocated. The full costs of this scheme will be evaluated during the procurement process and reported to Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the proposals that:

- St Ann's Heath Junior School will expand on 1 September 2015
- the PAN would increase from 64 to 90 in September 2015
- the school would increase its number of places by 26 pupils a year until 2018, when it will have fully expanded
- Additional classrooms would be built to accommodate the additional pupils and increase the capacity of the school from 256 to 360 places.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Additional junior places in the area are necessary. The expansion of St Ann's Heath Junior School would increase parental choice and provide effective long-term provision to meet the needs of local children, promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to educational opportunity, and promoting the fulfilment by every child of their educational potential.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

Subject to Cabinet Member approval, Surrey County Council will implement the proposals. There will be a separate approvals process to authorise the spending of funds on the scheme.

Contact Officer:

Mark Burton, School Place Planning Manager, tel 020 8541 9142

Consulted:

David Hodge, Leader

Mel Few, Member for Foxhills and Virginia Water

Nick Wilson, Strategic Director – Children Schools & Families
Julie Fisher, Strategic Director – Change & Efficiency.

Informed:

Finance

Legal Services

Sources/background papers:

The Education Act 1996; the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; the Education Act 2002; the Education Act 2005; the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Consultation Booklet regarding the expansion of Trumps Green Infant School
St Ann's Heath Junior School Expansion Consultation Analysis.

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