

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****DATE: 11 SEPTEMBER 2014****LEAD OFFICER: NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****SUBJECT: THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF STOUGHTON INFANT SCHOOL BY ONE FORM OF ENTRY****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Surrey County Council has consulted on a proposal to expand Stoughton Infant School from two forms of entry to three forms of entry in September 2015.

The education consultation period was from 3 July 2014 to 15 August 2014. There were two public meetings held at the school on 17 July 2014, following which Statutory Notices were published at the school, at a local community facility, in the local newspaper and on the Surrey Says website which stated the intention to expand the school. This is in accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained School) Regulations 2013.

The Cabinet Member is asked to review the comments received during the consultation period and it is recommended that the Statutory Notice be determined so that the proposal can be implemented.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the Statutory Notice stating the local authority's intention to expand Stoughton Infant School is determined so that the school becomes a three form entry infant school from September 2015, with a published admission number (PAN) of 90 and a total of 270 infant places.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

This action is reflective of the ongoing demand for school places in the North Guildford planning area, demonstrated by several years of additional 'bulge' classes. Additional classes have been provided at a number of schools, including Stoughton Infant School, which has already admitted two 'bulge' classes, increasing their current Reception and Year 1 cohorts to 90. They will admit another 'bulge' year of 90 places into Reception in September 2014, giving an overall capacity of 270.

Stoughton Infant School is an outstanding school and it is entirely appropriate to expand good schools in line with government policy. The provision of 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, meeting the wider statutory duty to offer all applicants a school place. It will also reduce the impact of school travel in the area as it will mean that an increased number of local children are able to attend a local school.

**DETAILS:**

## Business Case

1. Births in Guildford borough have risen by nearly 250 per year over the last eight years. Although the number of births dipped slightly in 2009 and 2010, there has been a steady increase since 2011, which is forecast to continue.
2. Stoughton Infant School is part of the North Guildford Planning Area but there is a high volume of cross border movement for school places between the North and West Guildford Planning areas.
3. Parental preferences for places in the immediate local area including at Stoughton Infant School, Wood Street Infant School, Weyfield Primary Academy, St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Guildford Grove Primary, Worplesdon Primary and Northmead Junior have, on average, been greater than the places available over the last three years. All local schools are likely to remain full due to the actual and projected birth rates, projected numbers and the consistent popularity of the schools.
4. This demonstrates ongoing demand for school places and that there are not currently enough permanent places in the area.
5. As a result, there have been a number of expansions and additional classes in the West and North Guildford area over the last 5 years. Stoughton Infant School has taken 2 bulge classes (and is taking a 3rd bulge class in September 2014); St Joseph's Catholic Primary took several bulge classes before expanding by 1 form of entry in September 2013 and Northmead Junior took a bulge class in September 2011.
6. There is now a clear requirement to provide permanent provision in this area. It should also be recognised that there is a need to meet both future demand for infant places but also to cope with the additional places that have been added in infant schools as they pass into Key Stage 2. A connected proposal at Worplesdon Primary School will add junior places in the adjacent West Guildford planning area to support the additional infant places provided in the North Guildford planning area.
7. The school is a vital part of the Council's education offer in the local area. Increasing the number of primary school spaces within the North and West Guildford areas is essential in ensuring that the County Council performs its statutory duty of educating all resident pupils who request a school place.
8. In addition to parental demand, the expansion of the school would increase the number of places that would be available for local children. This is likely to result in a reduction of travel in the area, including car journeys, as fewer children would have to travel to more distant schools.

### **CONSULTATION:**

9. A consultation was undertaken by Surrey County Council with relevant stakeholders and consultation documentation was issued. Two public meetings were held at the school, after which Statutory Notices were issued. Less than 15 people in total attended the two public meetings.

**Consultation responses**

- 10. There were three responses to the consultation, one via the Surrey Says online consultation website, one via email and another in the post. These included a local resident, a local councillor and a parent of a child at the school who is also both a local resident and school governor.
- 11. Two respondents agreed with the proposal; one did not indicate either way.
- 12. Given that there are currently in the region of 240 pupils at the school, the response rate to the consultation was very low but not untypical for consultation exercises of this nature.
- 13. Although attendance at the two public meetings was relatively small, there was plenty of opportunity for discussion in these meetings and parents and residents made their views known. It may be that the consultation information provided to parents and other stakeholders was sufficient in addition to the meeting so that they did not feel a need to formally respond.
- 14. It would be unwise to draw any specific conclusions from the outcomes of the consultation as they could not be considered representative but all stakeholders have been given the opportunity to make their views known.
- 15. It is the officer's view that the low response probably reflects general approval for the proposal and for the need for more school places in the area.
- 16. One comment was received raising concern about traffic and parking in the area outside the school on Grange Road and that consideration should be given to the impact on local residents prior to making a decision.

**Comments on responses**

- 17. The permanent planning application will draw out specific aspects of the traffic and access issues related to Stoughton Infant School. It is worth noting that almost all children currently attending the school live within 1.5km of the school site and many live within a few hundred metres. More places at Stoughton Infant School will increase numbers of children in the immediate area offered a place at their nearest school, thus reducing car journeys to alternative schools further afield.
- 18. A further requirement for the planning application is a revised travel plan which will include strategies for reduction of car journeys and increases in sustainable modes of transport.

**RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

- 19. A project to deliver a new modular school building has been completed to provide school places for the bulge class that is entering the school in September 2014. Permanent planning permission will be required to extend the use of this building beyond the three years included in the initial temporary planning permission to provide for the bulge class.
- 20. Should the approval of additional school places not be granted there is the risk that Surrey would fail to meet its statutory duty in providing sufficient school places, without mitigation at another site.

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

21. The building project resulting from this proposal is included in the County Council's school basic need capital programme as part of the 2014/2019 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This particular scheme has been approved for funding from the Government's Targeted Basic Need Programme. The scheme of works is being carried out by Property Services.

### **Section 151 Officer**

22. The Section 151 Officer confirms that this scheme is included in the 2014/19 MTFP and that the funding from the Government's Targeted Basic Need Programme underpins the capital programme for this scheme.

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

23. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on Local Education Authorities to ensure 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 ensure 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. There is a duty to provide efficient education and sufficient schools to do so.
24. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that came into force on 28 January 2014 provide statutory and non statutory guidance on the process for making prescribed alterations to schools, including the establishment of new provision.

### **Equalities and Diversity**

25. 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 proposal does not change the nature of the admissions criteria for the school.
26. This educational provision would be for children in the community served by the school. The increase in provision will be open to all applicants with the highest priority given to Looked After Children (LAC) and pupils on the SEN register and/or those who would benefit from a statement of educational need, thus supporting provision for our most vulnerable children.
27. The proposal is for an expansion of provision so more staff would be employed. Employment opportunities would increase with a larger school and there would also be greater professional development opportunities.
28. It is intended that the school will promote cohesion of the local communities in the area served by the school through extended services to enhance the well-being and future opportunities of those children in the area.

### **Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications**

29. This proposal would provide increased provision in the area, which would be of benefit to all in the community served by the school.
30. Looked After Children currently have a high priority in the Admissions criteria for the school and as such may benefit from additional available school places in the North Guildford planning area.

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

31. Safeguarding vulnerable children is a high priority in Surrey schools. Schools have considerable expertise in safeguarding vulnerable children and adhere to robust procedures. The school would continue to apply good practice in the area of safeguarding. Safeguarding is monitored when Ofsted carry out inspections on schools.
32. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, were considered and addressed in the planning and design of the building project.

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

33. A planning requirement for the proposed expansion is a revised travel plan which will include strategies for reduction of car journeys and an increase in sustainable modes of transport.
34. The proposal is likely to reduce some local journeys as more places will be available for local children.

### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

35. The next steps are:
  - Subject to Cabinet Member approval of the Statutory Notice, the proposal will be confirmed and Stoughton Infant School would be permanently expanded from September 2015.
  - A permanent planning application for the modular classroom would be pursued and will be determined in accordance with relevant planning legislation.

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#### **Contact Officer:**

Dr Kathy Beresford, School Commissioning Officer, Tel: 020 8541 9689

#### **Consulted:**

Local MP for Surrey, Anne Milton  
SCC County Councillors for the local area  
Guildford Borough Councillors for the local area  
All local schools  
Guildford, Portsmouth and Arundel & Brighton Diocese  
Parents of children at the school

**Sources/background papers:**

- Stoughton Infant School Consultation Document
  - All responses to the consultation
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