

**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 JUNIOR (KEY STAGE 2) PROVISION AT WORPLESDON PRIMARY SCHOOL BY ONE FORM OF ENTRY****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Surrey County Council has consulted on a proposal to expand the junior provision at Worplesdon Primary School by one form of entry, to three forms of entry in September 2016.

The education consultation period was from 3 July 2014 to 15 August 2014. There were also two public meetings held at the school on 14 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, stating 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 the junior provision at Worplesdon Primary School is determined, such that the school will admit a form of entry at junior level (Year 3) with a Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 30 from September 2016. The PAN for Reception will remain at 60 meaning that the school will have an overall capacity of 180 places in Reception – Year 2 and 360 places in Years 3 – 6.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

This action is reflective of the ongoing demand for school places in the North and West Guildford planning areas, 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.

This proposal is in conjunction with the local authority's proposal to permanently expand Stoughton Infant School from two forms of entry to three forms of entry. If agreed, the increase in places at Stoughton Infant School will reduce the number of Year 3 places available at Northmead Junior School for children attending Wood Street Infant School which has historically been the typical route of progression to Key Stage 2. The proposal to expand Worplesdon is therefore intended to provide a

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clear and secure route through to Key Stage 2 for all children attending Wood Street Infant School, which will be reflected in the admissions criteria established at Worplesdon for the 30 additional places.

Worplesdon Primary School is a good school and it is entirely appropriate to expand good schools in line with government policy. The provision of places 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.

#### **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. Worplesdon Primary School is part of the West Guildford Planning Area. The other schools in the planning area are Guildford Grove Primary, St Joseph's Catholic Primary and Wood Street Infant Schools. Currently there is no separate junior provision in the Planning Area, other than as part of the primary provision provided at the three primary schools.
3. At present, Wood Street Infant School is a feeder school for Northmead Junior School but if provision at Stoughton Infant School is expanded (currently proposed) this feeder route would not be secured. As such, it is necessary to provide a secure route to Key Stage 2 provision in the planning area for children attending Wood Street Infant School.
4. Following determination of the proposal, if successful, the Admissions criteria for Worplesdon and Northmead Junior will be reviewed with the local schools to establish the most appropriate and fair criteria for all children from September 2016 onwards.
5. 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.
6. This demonstrates ongoing demand for school places and that there are not currently enough permanent junior places in the area.
7. 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. At junior level, Northmead Junior took a bulge class in September 2011 and will be admitting another bulge class in September 2015 to cater for local demand.
8. There is now a clear requirement to provide permanent junior provision in this area, particularly to cope with the additional places that have been added in infant schools as these students pass into Key Stage 2.

9. The school is a vital part of the Council's education offer in the local area. Increasing the number of school spaces within the North and West Guildford areas is essential for ensuring that the County Council performs its statutory duty of educating all resident pupils who request a school place.

### **Building**

10. Subject to consultation, this proposal will become effective from September 2016. Additional accommodation will be provided at the school to cater for the additional pupils joining the school.
11. New classrooms and a hall extension will be provided which will be funded by the Government's Targeted Basic Need Programme. In addition, the two 'portacabin' blocks will be replaced with 4 new classrooms in the new building. A new staff car park will be provided and the areas currently occupied by the 'portacabin' blocks will be redeveloped into additional outdoor space. The building works will be completed by January 2016.

### **CONSULTATION:**

12. A consultation was undertaken by Surrey County Council with relevant stakeholders and consultation documentation was issued. Two well attended public meetings were held at the school, after which Statutory Notices were issued.

### **Consultation responses**

13. The public meeting was attended by in excess of 50 parents, residents and other interested parties. A total of 50 formal written responses were received during the consultation via the Surrey Says website, post and email. The responses included 26 from local residents and 16 from parents.
14. There was consensus through the consultation responses and the public meetings that additional school places are required within the local area. However significant concern was raised at both the public meeting and in the written responses to the proposed expansion particularly with regard to traffic and parking.
15. Of the 50 written responses, 21 agreed with the proposal to expand the school, 18 disagreed with the proposal to expand the school and 11 did not know or offer a position.
16. Of the 18 responses that disagreed with the proposal, 14 explained that they were in support of the need for more places at the school but disagreed on the grounds of the traffic and parking concerns.
17. Concern about the proposal can be themed in three areas, these will be summarised and responded to in the following sections.

### **Size of school**

18. Some concerns were raised over the increase in the size of the school and the impact on the children and on teaching and learning.

19. The local authority has worked closely with the school in developing this proposal. The Head Teacher and governing body are in full support of the proposal and are confident that teaching and learning standards and the ethos of the school will be maintained with a larger school community.

### **New building/facilities**

20. A number of concerns were raised related to the proposed two storey building. These included the size of the proposed building and if it might overlook neighbouring properties or be intimidating for younger children.
21. There was also concern over loss of outdoor play space due to the proposed building being situated in the corner of the current playground.
22. Some respondents raised concerns over the size of the kitchen facilities and other communal spaces such as the library.
23. The proposed building design and position has been considered carefully by architects who are experienced at designing schools and this has been carried out in consultation with the school and with planners to ensure that the position of the building will have the least impact on neighbouring properties and will be fit for purpose for an education environment.
24. Although there will be a loss of some of the current hard play space, the building has been positioned to ensure that this loss is minimised. Architects have worked closely with the school to ensure that the proposed plans will work for the school. The current staff car park that is adjacent to the playground will be returned to playground use and the car park will be re-provided on the opposite side of the school site with a new entrance. In addition, the removal of the older modular buildings (by replacing them with 4 classrooms in the new block) will create additional outdoor space that can be used by the school.
25. The school is confident that their kitchen facilities and other communal facilities are capable of coping with the increased number of children. The proposed building plans include increasing the size of the school hall and this will increase the dining space available for the children at lunchtimes.

### **Traffic, access and parking**

26. The main area of concern at both the public meeting and in the consultation responses was related to traffic, parking and access to the school. Worplesdon Primary School is situated on a residential estate which has only one entrance and exit to the main road – the A323, which is a busy A-road between Guildford and Ash.
27. Although a number of informal travel policies have been undertaken by the school, such as a walking bus in the summer, informal one-way system, and letters to parents to encourage considerate parking, there are ongoing issues with parking and traffic on the estate and near the school during the morning and afternoon drop off/pick up times.
28. A number of suggestions were discussed at the public meetings and have been raised in the consultation responses as to how the situation could be approached. These suggestions included establishing a drive through drop

off/pick up point; re-instating a bus service, considering other school sites and improving alternative routes to school – walking routes, cycling routes and crossing points on the main road.

29. The development of the programme of building works has been undertaken in consultation with the planning authority and highways department. The planning application will draw out specific responses to the traffic and access issues and possible enhancements. A detailed travel survey has been undertaken and has included mitigation measures to be included as part of the planning application. In addition, further measures may be required by Highways as a condition on approval of the planning application.
30. It is clear that traffic and access in the vicinity to the site is a genuine and widely held concern and will need to be addressed throughout the planning application process. The information received from the public meetings and the formal consultation will be incorporated into the planning application process.

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

31. A project to deliver the new school buildings for September 2016 is required and as such there are risks associated with this proposal. There is a risk that the project will not be completed within the timescales outlined above and there may be site abnormalities not identified as part of the initial feasibility exercise. A risk register is being maintained and updated on a regular basis.
32. There is the further risk that the scheme will not achieve planning permission. The consultation received a significant response citing planning concerns, particularly regarding traffic and parking in the immediate local area and the surrounding residential area. A range of suggestions were discussed at the public meeting and the concerns and possible solutions will need to be addressed through the planning application.
33. 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. There is a particular risk in this area of Guildford as all other possible site options for expansion have either been undertaken or considered and dismissed due to site size, cost or planning issues.

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

34. The building project resulting from this proposal is included in the County Council's school basic need capital programme and the aged demountable maintenance 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 (TBNP). The scheme of works is being carried out by Property Services.

#### **Section 151 Officer**

35. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the school basic need scheme and the aged replaced demountable are included in the 2014/19 MTFP. Funding from

the Government's Targeted Basic Need Programme underpins the capital programme for this basic need scheme.

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

36. 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.
37. 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**

38. 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.
39. 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.
40. 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.
41. 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**

42. This proposal would provide increased provision in the area, which would be of benefit to all in the community served by the school.
43. 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 West Guildford planning area.

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

44. 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 carries out inspections of schools.

45. 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**

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

#### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

48. The next steps are:
- Subject to Cabinet Member approval of the Statutory Notice, the proposal will be confirmed and Worplesdon Primary School would be permanently expanded from September 2016.
  - A planning application for the expansion is being pursued and will be determined in accordance with relevant planning legislation.
  - Subject to Cabinet Member approval, the Admissions criteria for Worplesdon and Northmead Junior will be reviewed with the local schools to establish the most appropriate and fair criteria for all children from September 2016 onwards.

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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:**

- Worplesdon Primary School Consultation Document
  - All responses to the consultation
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