

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****DATE: 17 OCTOBER 2014****LEAD OFFICER: PETER JOHN WILKINSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****SUBJECT: PROPOSED EXPANSION OF BISHOP DAVID BROWN SECONDARY SCHOOL****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Demand for secondary school places has increased in Woking and has reached a point where additional school places are required. Demand is likely to increase slowly in 2015 and 2016 but more significantly from 2017 and 2018. In the longer term, the Local Authority is planning to need between 9 and 10 additional forms of entry in Woking by 2021 - a total of 1350-1500 additional secondary places where 'one form of entry' equals 150 secondary places based on 5 year groups (ages 7-11) of 30 pupils.

Bishop David Brown (BDB) is a comprehensive community secondary school in Woking. The school is rated good with outstanding features by Ofsted and currently has a PAN of 150. Consultation has recently been undertaken on a proposal to expand BDB to create sufficient capacity for the school to admit 180 pupils at Year 7 (an additional 150 places in total) in the future and for this work to be carried out by 2016. The Cabinet Member is asked to consider the publication of statutory notices indicating the Local Authority's intention to expand the school.

This would provide capacity for a further 30 additional places at Year 7 from 2016 in Woking in addition to the 120 Year 7 places that are being proposed by the Hoe Valley Free School - recently approved by Government in June 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member considers the responses to the consultation and approves the publication of statutory notices indicating the Local Authority's intention to proceed with the proposal to expand the premises of the school.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

If Hoe Valley Free School opens in 2015, then the additional places created at Bishop David Brown are likely to create additional secondary school places to requirements in the first few years (depending on the relative popularity of schools). However, to date there is no confirmation that Hoe Valley Free School have secured a temporary site and the earliest that they could secure and open provision on their preferred permanent site is 2017 or 2018 subject to planning permission on what is expected to be a Green Belt site.

It is recommended that the Local Authority proceed with the proposed expansion work at Bishop David Brown, even if there is no requirement to increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) of the school immediately, for the following reasons:

- Bishop David Brown was recently graded as 'good with outstanding features' in their recent Ofsted inspection. Additional places will provide more choice for parents in the Borough.
- The scheme is relatively modest in scope (a 2 classroom extension with some internal remodeling) and the additional places would be needed in the longer term (2018/19).
- Creating additional capacity from 2016 will be cheaper than building two or three years later due to rising construction costs and the school will benefit from the enhanced facilities earlier.
- It creates some additional capacity if the above demand profile is an underestimate and covers any risk that the Hoe Valley Free School proposal delays or fails for any reason.
- It makes sense to create the additional capacity ahead of the planned regeneration scheme proposed in the Sheerwater estate to avoid too much disruption to the school in the construction phase of the Leisure Centre.
- The Local Authority are aware that Fulbrook School are considering reducing their PAN in 2016 from 280 to 240 (subject to consultation) which would increase pressure on places in the local area.

DETAILS:

Need for Secondary School Places

1. The need for additional school places in Surrey is clear. The issue has attracted national coverage with areas such as London and the South East particularly affected. As it is in the commuter belt for London, young families often move out of the city into areas such as Woking and therefore is an area where the pressure for primary places has been particularly acute over the last 3 years. The Local Authority has commissioned over 1000 additional places at 8 different primary schools in Woking, with further additional places being planned from 2015 and 2016.
2. Secondary demand follows primary demand and Woking has already reached a point where additional secondary school places are required. As table 1 below shows, demand is likely to increase only a little in 2015 but starts to increase significantly from 2017 and 2018. In the longer term, the Local Authority is planning to need between 9 and 10 additional forms of entry in Woking by 2021 - a total of 1350-1500 additional secondary places where 'one form of entry' equals 150 secondary places based on 5 year groups (ages 7-11) of 30 pupils.

Table 1 – Secondary demand profile in Woking

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Projected requirement for Year 7 places in Woking	823	867	882	919	952	1054	1105	1084	1150
Current places at Year 7 in Woking	840	870	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
Projected shortfall at Year 7 in Woking	+14	+3	-12	-49	-82	-184	-235	-214	-280
Shortfall in 'forms of entry'	-	-	1	2	3	6	8	7-8	9-10

3. Of the secondary schools in Woking, the Local Authority is of the view that Bishop David Brown and St John the Baptist both have the capacity for expansion but that Woking High and Winston Churchill could not be expanded further than they have already without significantly constraining the the quality of educational provision that they can offer. The overarching approach is to provide an additional form of entry at Bishop David Brown, to assume that there will be at least 4 forms of entry at the Hoe Valley Free School and a further 2 forms of entry at an expanded St John the Baptist. It is anticipated that any further capacity in the future would be provided at the Hoe Valley Free School or, if required, at Bishop David Brown through further expansion.

4. This approach clearly relies on the Hoe Valley Free School. In June this year, the Government approved the proposed Hoe Valley Free School which is due to open at 4 forms of entry (120 year 7 places) in the South Woking area from 2015. Given the scale of demand indicated above, the Local Authority is generally supportive of the Hoe Valley proposals and has worked quite closely with the group as their plans have progressed. Following the Government announcement, Hoe Valley are now in the 'pre-opening phase' which means that further work is taking place on finding a suitable temporary and permanent site for this school to operate from. Until a site is found and a 'funding agreement' is signed between the Secretary of State and the Hoe Valley Academy Trust, there is no guarantee that the school will open within those timescales or indeed at all (though it is likely). The Local Authority, as the responsible body, must ensure that there are sufficient school places in the future should the Hoe Valley Free School proposals fail or delay.

5. Given the lead in times for construction projects, the relative uncertainties of the current place planning environment and the likelihood that the places will be needed in the future (whether in the shorter or longer term), it is recommended that the Local Authority proceed with providing additional capacity at Bishop David Brown by 2016.

Links with New Vision Homes Proposals in Sheerwater

6. This proposal is independent from the Sheerwater regeneration proposals currently being considered by Woking Borough Council. This is because the future pressure on secondary school places in Woking exists irrespective of how the regeneration proposals in Sheerwater develop. Now that Woking Borough Council have given approval to New Vision Homes to continue with the master planning process and with a planning application expected towards the end of the year, the Local Authority is mindful of the additional pupil yield that will be generated from the circa 350-500 additional dwellings planned in the area (not taken into account in the above profile). The proposed expansion of Bishop David Brown will help meet any additional demand for secondary school places generated by the development in the future.
7. As part of the master planning process, the Project Team at New Vision Homes has been working in partnership with Woking Borough Council, Surrey County Council (SCC), Broadmere Community Primary School and Bishop David Brown Secondary School to develop an outline proposal for enhanced recreational facilities including a Leisure Centre that it is intended will be shared between the two schools and the wider community. This would be funded by the developer.
8. Modern sporting facilities will be of great benefit both to Bishop David Brown and to Broadmere Community Primary School. On this basis, SCC and Governors of Bishop David Brown have agreed 'in principle' to the location of these facilities on the existing school site (in-between both schools) on the basis that the facilities (including a four court sports hall) will be available to the school(s) during school hours and the local community outside of those hours.
9. If approved works on the recreational facilities could start on the site as early as 2016 so for this reason it would be better to have completed any enlargement of premises at Bishop David Brown in advance of this date to avoid multiple contractors on site and undue disruption to the school.

CONSULTATION:

10. The Local Authority published a consultation document to all statutory stakeholders on 10 September 2014 and held a public meeting at the school on 23 September 2014 to hear the views of any parents, residents or other interested parties. The deadline for all responses to the consultation was 3 October 2014 and the following results responses were recorded.
11. A total of 25 formal written responses were received during the consultation via the Surrey Says website and email. The responses included 11 from parents of children currently attending the school and a further 6 from parents of children attending other schools or considering sending children to Bishop David Brown in the future.
12. Of the 25 written responses, 8 agreed with the proposal to expand the school, 14 disagreed with the proposal and 3 did not know or offer a position.

Concern about the proposal can be themed in three areas, these are summarised in the following sections.

Size of school

13. Of the 14 responses that disagreed with the proposal, the main concern (raised in 8 of the responses) was that the school would become too large. In some cases, parents had specifically chosen Bishop David Brown for their children because it was a smaller school. Mention was made that standards in education and pastoral care would not be maintained; one response felt that the site was too small to accommodate a larger school. Three responses were not happy that assurances had been made in the past that the school would not be expanded. One response stated that they would only agree to expansion up to a maximum of 900 students.

Quality of education

14. Eight responses raised concern about the quality of education. Seven of these responses mentioned that only 51% of all pupils attained five GCSEs grade A* to C including English and mathematics in 2013 and felt that due to the school's 'poor' academic record it should not be expanded. Two responses felt that the school should concentrate on improving education for existing students.

Other issues

15. Other issues mentioned in responses included: building works having a detrimental effect on education (1 response); lack of privacy for neighbours if new building is too close to boundaries (1 response); increased noise and disturbance for neighbours (1 response); increased traffic (1 response) and parents parking (2 responses).

Conclusion

16. 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.
17. There were relatively few responses to the consultation given the size of the school so it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions from the consultation exercise and the views expressed cannot be said to be representative of the wider schools community.
18. The local authority, Head Teacher and governing body have taken on board the feedback received, but see no reason not to proceed with the proposal as it currently stands.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

19. There is a risk that this proposal will create surplus capacity in the shorter term should the Hoe Valley Free School deliver, but this is considered to be acceptable on the grounds that the places will be needed in the longer term and more choice of secondary school places in Woking will probably be well received by the local community. Pending the outcome of the Hoe Valley Free

School proposal, Bishop David Brown could delay the formal increase of their Published Admission Number until a later date.

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20. Other risks are largely associated with the capital works on site. In general, the scheme is relatively modest (two classroom extension, with internal remodelling) and the site sits in the urban area with no significant planning policy constraints. The project is only at feasibility stage and however a risk register will be maintained and updated on a regular basis as the project progresses. A phasing plan is being developed to manage the construction work and to ensure that there is minimal disruption to the school as possible.
21. There is a risk to the Local Authority that the regeneration project does not proceed and that the school is left without the sports hall planned as part of this provision. The school is currently underserved in this regard, a position that could be made worse if it expands. This represents a capital risk to the Local Authority as this would have been in scope had the regeneration project not been proposing to provide such facilities.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

22. The full financial implications will be evaluated in the business case and presented to the Investment Panel.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

23. The Section 151 Officer confirms that this scheme is included in the current Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

24. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on local education authorities to secure that efficient secondary 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

25. The additional classroom spaces will comply with DDA (Disabilities Discrimination Act) regulations. It will be for children in the community served by the school as well as providing opportunities for extended community use. Officers did not consider there to be any significant equalities implications and therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment has not been carried out.

Other Implications:

26. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	Additional sporting facilities in the community will contribute to Surrey's Joint Wellbeing and Health Strategy by providing more facilities for people to get involved in sporting and fitness activities.
Climate change	See Below
Carbon emissions	See Below

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

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

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 28. If the Cabinet Member determines to publish notices, a further 4 weeks for representations will be allowed. It is anticipated that the Cabinet Member will be asked to consider and representations and to determine the proposals on 11 December 2014. If approved a detailed planning application and tender package will be prepared for the project with works likely to start on site summer term 2015

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Local MP, Local Councillors, parents and pupils at Bishop David Brown, NW Secondary Schools, Woking Primary Schools, Dicoese.

Annexes:

None

Sources/background papers:

None

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