

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

DATE: 17 OCTOBER 2014

LEAD OFFICER: PETER JOHN WILKINSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

SUBJECT: A PROPOSAL TO PERMANENTLY EXPAND BISLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 1.5 FORMS OF ENTRY (315 PUPILS) TO 2 FORMS OF ENTRY (420 PUPILS) FROM SEPTEMBER 2013



SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To determine a proposal to permanently expand Bisley Church of England Primary School from 1.5 to 2 forms of entry (a total increase of 105 pupils) by September 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approve the proposal to permanently expand Bisley Church of England Primary School from 1.5 to 2 forms of entry to meet the likely demand for school places in the area arising from the Brookwood Farm housing development and any further service family moves to Pirbright Barracks. This would increase the Published Number of the school from 45 to 60 and would provide the school with the capacity for an additional 105 pupils to be admitted.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places and as a signatory to the military covenant is committed to addressing the specific needs of service families. For reasons set out in this report, this project is proposed to replace the Brookwood Primary School expansion project but will still ensure that there are sufficient school places for families returning to Pirbright Barracks and for any families generated from the circa 300 additional dwellings currently in construction on the Brookwood Farm Housing site.

DETAILS:

Background

1. The Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning determined an approval to expand Brookwood Primary School on a split site subject to planning permission on 11 September 2013. This was in response to a buoyant birth rate, planning being granted for circa 300 dwellings at the Brookwood Farm site and an indication from the Army that a significant number of families would be returning to Pirbright Barracks and requiring a school place in September 2014.

Since this decision, a number of things have changed:

- The Army changed its basing plan with significantly fewer families returning to Pirbright Barracks than originally expected.
 - Brookwood Farm Housing development delayed by a year, delaying the Brookwood Primary school project and increasing the costs of the project beyond the capital allocation approved by Cabinet in December 2013.
 - Detailed planning conditions relating to the scheme (mitigation measures required on the canal, proposed pathway and bridge etc...) have further increased costs beyond the approved Cabinet budget.
 - Recently published Office of National Statistics (ONS) data suggests that birth rates in Woking dropped back in 2013 suggesting that demand for primary places will remain high in 2015 and 2016 but will likely drop back in 2017.
2. With the prospect of further housing development planned in the area, and with pressure on school places expected in 2015 and 2016, officers recommend that additional places should be provided in the area but that the proposed expansion of Brookwood Primary School is no longer viable for the reasons set out above.
 3. Expanding Bisley Church of England Primary School will provide fewer primary school places (105 in total rather than 210). However, this is likely to be more commensurate with the demand arising from the housing development and the (reduced) number of families returning to Pirbright Barracks. The capital costs of the scheme are significantly lower than the proposed Brookwood project and it brings the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Bisley CofE Primary School up to 60 (from 45) which will eventually avoid the need for mixed age teaching at the school which is educationally beneficial for the school and for the local community.

Demand for primary school places in Woking

4. There has been a significant increase in primary school demand in Woking over the last 5-6 years. Surrey County Council (SCC) has a statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet the needs of the population in Surrey. Woking is second only to Epsom and Ewell in Surrey in population growth since the last census but its 0-4 year old population has grown significantly more than any other Borough. There were about 1600 more 0-4 year olds in Woking in 2011 than there were in 2001 - a 28% increase. The birth rate has increased since a low point in 2001 but the increase in applications for school places is also partly due to other socio-economic factors such as inward migration and additional housing.
5. The Local Authority plans primary school places on the year of intake – principally the reception year. The table below provides the demand profile that the Local Authority is working towards. The profile is based on actual birth data up to 2012 (Yr R intake in 2016) but is based on birth projections from 2013 (Yr in 2017 onwards). On the basis of the expected demand profile, Woking is likely to need between 3 and 4 additional forms of entry in the period 2015-2021.

Table 4 – Projected need for primary school places Yr R (2015-2023)

Academic Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Year R places needed	1295	1364	1304	1316	1333	1339	1337
PAN	1230	1230	1230	1230	1230	1230	1230
Shortage of places (against average case)	-65	-134	-74	-86	-103	-109	-107

6. The total number of available reception places in the table above includes the recent permanent expansion projects in Woking (Kingfield, Westfield, Beaufort, Goldsworth, The Marist, St Dunstan’s) and also assumes the delivery of permanent expansions planned at Sythwood Primary School and West Byfleet Infant and Junior School.
7. Bisley will provide a further 15 places towards the projected deficit in Woking with officers planning further expansions in other areas of Woking to meet the forecast shortfall.

CONSULTATION:

8. The School, Diocese of Guildford and Surrey County Council consulted on the proposal to expand the school between 27 September 2012 and 25 October 2012 when the Army were indicating that the 2 Yorks Regiment would be returning 120 families back to Pirbright Barracks in 2013. There were 31 responses to this consultation with 24 agreeing with the proposal to expand the school. A report was issued to the Governors outlining the responses that were received throughout that consultation and Governors determined to publish statutory notices on 9 November 2012 (see Annex A). At that time, the Cabinet Member could not determine the notice because the army moves were subsequently put on hold as part of the Ministry of Defence National Rebasing plan.
9. Given that the proposal to expand the school has remained essentially the same since the original consultation, and given that a planning permission has already been sought and granted, there is little merit in re-consulting on the proposal and therefore the Cabinet Member is asked to determine the original statutory notice as appended to this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

10. There are no significant capital risks associated this project. The scheme is a relatively modest three classroom extension and will be delivered by the Diocese of Guildford given that the school is Voluntary Aided. There are likely to be some programme risks as is the case with all building projects but a valid planning permission is already in place for the scheme, there are no

significant constraints on the site and the budget is well within the allocation originally ear marked for the Brookwood Primary School expansion which this project now replaces.

11. There are revenue risks to the school relating to the uncertain pupil yield from the housing development given that schools are funded according to the number of pupils on roll. In order to ensure there are sufficient school places in all year groups, it is proposed that the school open additional classes across a number of year groups (rather than just the reception year as is the case with most expanding schools). This will have a revenue impact as it is unlikely that all classes will fill straightaway. Growing schools funding support will be requested from Schools Forum in December but the school will also be expected to organise classes in the most efficient way to reduce the revenue risk of funding too many unfilled places.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

12. The scheme involves a relatively modest 3 classroom extension with toilets and a small group room. With a planning permission already in place there are no planning mitigation risks and the scheme is well within the budget set for Brookwood Primary expansion which this scheme replaces. The full financial implications for this scheme will be evaluated as part of the business case which will go to the Investment Panel.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

13. The Section 151 Officer notes that the scheme at Bisley replaces the Brookwood Farm scheme which has been included in the current Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

14. 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

15. 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:

16. 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

17. 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:

18. If approved, a detailed scheme and feasibility cost will be produced by the Diocese of Guildford and funding will be sought from Cabinet on 25 November 2014. Thereafter the project will be tendered with an estimated start on site date of April 2015.

Contact Officer:

Julie Stockdale, Strategic Lead for School Commissioning, Tel: 020 8541 8084

Consulted:

Local Councillors, parents and pupils at Bisley Church of England Primary School, Woking Primary Schools, Guildford Diocese.

Annexes:

Annex A - Bisley Statutory Notice

Sources/background papers:

None

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