

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 16 DECEMBER 2014****REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES****LEAD OFFICER: PETER- JOHN WILKINSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER****SUBJECT: WORPLESDON PRIMARY SCHOOL, GUILDFORD****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To approve the Business Case for the expansion of Worplesdon Primary School from a 2 Form of Entry Primary (420 places) to a 2 Form of Entry at Reception and 3 Form of Entry at Year 3 Primary (540 places) creating 120 additional Key Stage 2 places in Guildford to help meet the basic need requirements in the Guildford area from September 2016.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion as set out in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of an additional 1 form of entry (120 places) Key Stage 2 places in Guildford be approved.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of the population in the Guildford area.

DETAILS:**Background**

1. Annual birth rates in Guildford borough rose by over 20% between 2001 and 2012 with peaks in 2011 and 2012. Although the number of births dipped slightly in 2009, 2010 and 2013, there has been a steady upward trend since 2005.
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.
3. At present, Wood Street Infant School, along with Stoughton Infant School, is a feeder school for Northmead Junior School. The recently approved expansion at

Stoughton Infant School will mean that the current feeder route will 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. The Admissions criteria for Worplesdon Primary 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 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. 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. There is now a clear requirement to provide permanent Key Stage 2 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.
7. 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.
8. The school is a vital part of the Council's education offer in the local area. Increasing the number of school spaces within the 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.
9. The proposals include a new two storey teaching block, using a standardised design to drive value, with eight Key Stage 2 classrooms and associated amenities, stores, cloakrooms and storage; an extension to the existing school hall. In addition, the two demountable classroom blocks will be demolished to enable expansion of the hard play area into an area currently being used as parking and re-provision of parking with additional spaces to accommodate additional visitors and the staff required for the expanded school. The building works will be completed by January 2016 for the September intake.

CONSULTATION:

10. A consultation was undertaken by Surrey County Council with relevant stakeholders, local schools, Guildford Borough Councillors from the local area, Guildford, Portsmouth and Arundel & Brighton Diocese and consultation documentation was issued. Two well attended public meetings were held at the school, after which Statutory Notices were issued.
11. Concern was raised at both the public meeting and in the written responses to the proposed expansion, particularly with regard to the size of the school and potential impact on the children and on teaching and learning; the visual impact of the two storey building on neighbouring properties and the greenbelt; and the adverse effect on residents from increased traffic and parking in the locality of the school. However there was consensus through the consultation responses and

the public meetings that additional school places are required within the local area. 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.

- 12. 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 early discussions with the Local Authorities planners, to ensure that the position of the building will have the least visual impact on both neighbouring properties and the greenbelt.
- 13. A transport assessment has been undertaken and a revised school travel plan produced to assist in minimising the traffic journeys to and from the school. In addition, the school currently has parking for some 25 vehicles for staff and visitors to the school. This will be increased to 39 spaces to provide facilities for the additional staff that will be needed and in order to minimise parking in the vicinity of the school.
- 14. 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.
- 15. 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 and additional playground and outdoor space is being created. The architects have worked closely with the school to ensure that the proposed plans will work for the school and will be fit for purpose for an education environment.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

- 16. The planning application is anticipated to be considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 10 December 2014.
- 17. There are risks associated with the project and a project risk register has been compiled and is regularly updated. A contingency allowance appropriate to the scheme has been included within the project budget to mitigate for potential identified risks.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

- 18. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as they progress. Further financial details are set out in the report circulated in Part 2 of the agenda. These details have been circulated separately to ensure commercial sensitivity in the interests of securing best value.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

- 19. The Section 151 Officer confirms that this scheme is included in the 2014/19 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

20. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on a Local Authority (with responsibility for education) to ensure sufficient primary and secondary education provision is available to meet the needs of the population in its area.

Equalities and Diversity

21. The expansion of the school will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
22. The new school building will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
23. The school will be for children in the community served by the school. The Admissions arrangements will give the highest priority to Looked After Children and pupils on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register and/or those who would benefit from a statement of educational need, thus supporting provision for our most vulnerable children. Children with siblings will receive the next priority, followed by those children living closest to the school. There is no proposal to amend the admissions criteria which is fully compliant with the Schools Admissions Code.
24. The school will be expected to contribute towards community cohesion and will be expected to provide the normal range of before and after schools clubs as are provided in a typical Surrey County Council school.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

25. This proposal would provide increased provision for places in the area, which would be of benefit to 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.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

26. The design philosophy is to create buildings that will support low energy consumption, reduce solar gain and promote natural ventilation. The school will be built to the local planning authorities adopted core planning strategy.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

If approved, to proceed to complete tenders and subsequent contract award through delegated decision.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate Member for Assets and Regeneration Programmes
Keith Witham, SCC Local Member, Worplesdon
Julie Fisher, Strategic Director for Business Services
Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager – Business Services

Annexes:

None - Part 2 report with financial details attached to agenda

Sources/background papers:

- The Education Act 1996
 - The School Standards Framework Act 1998
 - The Education Act 2002
 - The Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - Report to Cabinet: Schools Capital Budget Allocations Service update based on latest or most appropriate report year and version
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