

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 24 MARCH 2015****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: MANBY LODGE INFANT SCHOOL, WEYBRIDGE****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To approve the Business Case for the expansion of Manby Lodge Community Infant School from a two Form of Entry infant (180 places) to a three Form of Entry infant school (270 places) creating 90 additional places in Weybridge to help meet the basic need requirements in the Weybridge area from September 2016. This would be a major, phased building project which involves demolition and rebuilding of the oldest part of the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion as set out in agenda item 18 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of an additional Form of Entry (90 places) infant places in Weybridge 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 Weybridge area.

DETAILS:**Background**

1. School rolls have been rising steadily across Elmbridge since 2003. Over this period the birth rate has risen by 24.6%; additionally families have chosen to move into the borough, in part due to housing development. Weybridge primary school pupil numbers have reflected this borough trend. In 2007 there were around 220 applications for Reception places; by 2020 this is predicted to rise to

270 places, or nine Forms of Entry (9FE); this is one more Form of Entry (or 30 Reception places) per year than is currently provided.

2. The Weybridge primary school planning area is served by four schools delivering the infant curriculum: Oatlands Infant School (which was recently expanded from two forms of entry to three). Manby Lodge Infant School (2FE), St James Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary (2FE) and St Charles Borromeo Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary (1FE); providing 8FE in total. The shortfall is currently being met by some schools accepting Reception 'bulge' classes and this has been the case since 2009. There are junior places available at Cleves Junior Academy, which currently admits five forms of entry.
3. To consistently provide the requisite nine Reception forms of entry, or an additional 210 primary places to meet the ongoing demand in Weybridge, Surrey County Council needs to provide an additional form of entry.
4. Officers have looked at the viability for expansion at all of the five schools in the Weybridge planning area and have concluded that Manby Lodge would be the best option to supply the additional one more form of entry from Reception to Year Three and the equivalent junior places to be added to Cleves, subject to the academy's agreement.
5. Details of the other schools other sites in this planning area, which have been considered for expansion and the reason for discounting each are detailed below:
 - St Charles Borromeo RC Primary: this is currently a very popular one form entry school which provides a catholic education and is Voluntary Aided. As such it sets its own admissions criteria and places are allocated to catholic children. The site is small and for these reasons it would not be an appropriate school to expand at present.
 - St James C of E Primary: this school took a junior 'bulge' class last year and is now at capacity. The school is currently two forms of entry and is popular. However, we have ruled out expansion here at present as the opportunity to develop here is severely restricted due to the following constraints.
 - i) A significant part of the site is in the Green Belt requiring the demonstration of very special circumstances for any development.
 - ii) The site is heavily tree covered, with substantial Tree Preservation Orders.
 - iii) The site is of high archaeological importance as it includes 'The Weybridge Grotto' restricting development opportunities.
 - iv) The site is on very narrow residential roads presenting potential traffic and parking congestion issues.
 - Alternative non-educational sites in the area were also reviewed, but there were none that were found to be suitable.

The school has also recently been judged to require improvement by OFSTED. However, it may be that, in future, we would look again at this school, if we are able to overcome the site constraints. This will take a number of years and could not meet the current need. Standards will also need to improve and if there is a change in the forecast data which

indicates a demand for even more primary places.

- Otlands Infant School: this highly successful and popular infant school was expanded to three forms of entry in the recent past. The site is now at capacity and cannot be expanded any further other than on a very temporary basis.
 - Cleves Junior Academy: this a four form of entry junior school serving Weybridge. Walton on Thames children have also had historical links with the school. The school is popular and academically successful. The Local Authority is currently in discussion with the Governing Body of Cleves about establishing closer, more formal 'feeder school' links between Cleves and the two infant schools in Weybridge in order to secure a greater degree of certainty for parents in terms of securing Year 3 places in the town. Cleves governors have now agreed to this in principle.
6. Manby Lodge Infants, as it stands, has permanent accommodation for up to 240 pupils. It is situated in a residential area adjacent to the Weybridge cricket green and has limited parking and vehicular access. It also has a number of tree preservation orders within its grounds.
 7. The main building, known as 'the Lodge', was built in 1919 and used as a doctor's house and surgery in the 1930s. Since the development of the site as an infant school various other buildings have been added, some intended as temporary structures to accommodate increasing pupil numbers in the area.
 8. The Lodge houses the school's caretaker, the administration block, the reception area and Head Teacher's office (which are both very small). The classrooms, which are on two floors, are not ideal teaching spaces due to the construction of the Lodge as a house, rather than a school.
 9. The site has been developed in phases over the past years in order to provide the required number of places; however the age and diversity of buildings does not lend itself to providing cohesive educational learning accommodation.
 10. The Government expects Local Authorities to expand successful and popular schools wherever possible, and this proposal meets that expectation. Manby Lodge Infants was judged as 'good' by OFSTED at its last inspection in October 2011 and it is a popular school with parents. It has recently appointed a new Head Teacher who is keen to lead the school in its next phase of development, as is its Governing Body.
 11. In the past two consecutive years Manby Lodge Infants has taken a 'bulge' class; admitting three forms of entry as a temporary measure and the Council now believes this arrangement should become permanent.
 12. The current building at Manby Lodge Infants can only accommodate 2FE in every year group, and more classrooms will be needed if it is to permanently provide 3FE. The site covers 7,339 square metres which, although not large, is considered sufficient to support a 3FE infant school based on Department for Education (DfE) guidelines. The school is on a narrow site with difficult access arrangements. It is proposed that the new classrooms will be based on or near the existing footprint of the school and the building will encroach as little as possible on the playground area and outdoor space.
 13. The scheme has needed a comprehensive overview to address the complexity of the site and the significant accommodation changes that are required. The

project will be delivered in phases in view of the restrictive nature of the site and in order to minimize disruption to the school.

14. The proposal consists of the demolition of the Lodge building, removal of temporary classrooms, new extensions to the existing building to provide 7 additional classrooms, associated learning spaces, improved infrastructure, amenities and circulation, increased car parking and improvements to the main entrance from Queens Road.
15. Planning permission was granted by the Planning and Regulatory Committee at its meeting on 25 February 2015.

CONSULTATION:

16. Public consultation was undertaken on this proposal between 27 January and 28 February 2014. A consultation document was published and all statutory stakeholders including parents and local residents were informed. In addition, a public meeting was held at the school on 25 February 2014.
17. The results of the public consultation were summarised in the report to the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning on 14 May 2014.
18. Since the publication of notices there have been no formal representations on this proposal.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

19. 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

20. 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

21. The Section 151 Officer confirms this scheme is included within the 2015/20 Medium Term Financial Plan

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

22. 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

23. The expansion of the school will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
24. The new school building will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
25. 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.
26. The school will be expected to contribute towards community cohesion and will be expected to provide the normal range of before and after school clubs as are provided in a typical Surrey County Council school.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

27. This proposal would provide increased provision for infant 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

28. 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:

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Mr Christian Mahne, SCC Local Member – Weybridge - Elmbridge
Julie Fisher, Strategic Director for Business Services
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Annexes:

None - Part 2 report with financial details attached to agenda as item 18

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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