

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 26 MAY 2015

REPORT OF: MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES

MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

**LEAD OFFICER: JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER
PETER- JOHN WILKINSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING**

SUBJECT: WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL, WOKING



SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To approve the Business Case for the expansion of Westfield Primary School from a 2 Form of Entry Primary (420 places) by 90 places as phase 1 of a 2 phase expansion, to a 3 Form of Entry Primary (630 places) creating 210 additional places in Woking to help meet the basic need requirements in the Woking area from September 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion as set out in agenda item 19 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of an additional 90 places as phase 1 of a 2 phase expansion by 1 Form of Entry (210 places) primary places in Woking 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 Woking area.

DETAILS:

Background

1. The number of primary school places required in Woking is increasing. There are insufficient primary school places to meet this demand and increased primary provision is needed. Westfield Primary School is one of the schools best placed to expand to meet this demand. The demand is such that the expansion of Westfield Primary School is required for September 2015. This proposal alone will not permanently expand the school, but will provide up to 3 years of additional intake at the school. A second phase of building development at the school will be required to enable the full 1 Form of Entry expansion. The second phase of building would require further approval from Cabinet and full statutory consultation.

2. The requirement for school places has increased significantly in Woking. By September 2015, through the school expansion programme, the Council will have provided 1260 additional primary school places at a range of schools within the borough, representing an investment of £14,770,000. This action has been taken to address the additional demand that has arisen as a result of an increased birth rate, which peaked in the Borough in 2012 at 37% above 2002 levels, migration and local building. This proposal is part of a strategic response to this increase in demand.
3. The phased approach enables flexibility as to future provision which will allow the Council to react to potential changes that may result from the approval of future Free Schools. In part, this is to ensure that the Council does not over provide school places in the area and retains the sustainability of the existing pattern of provision.
4. Westfield Primary School was last inspected in 2012 and the school received a 'Good' Judgement. Officers are confident in the schools ability to manage the increase in pupil numbers.
5. The proposal is to provide a modular building providing three classrooms with associated storage, circulation and pupil toilet facilities. The foundations and building structure will allow the addition of a second storey to future proof for the planned phase 2 expansion.
6. The planning application has been submitted and is expected to be considered by the Planning and Regulatory Committee at its meeting on the 15 July 2015.

<u>CONSULTATION:</u>

7. Westfield Primary School has existing capacity in its current buildings for 420 pupils and this current proposal does not permanently alter the schools Published Admission Number. The Council's requirement to consult will be reached prior to the commencement of the phase 2 element of the capital build. At that stage there would be a need to undertake formal consultation on this proposal and the need to publish statutory notices to be determined by the Cabinet Member.
8. The Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning has therefore not received a formal report to consider the publication of notices or to consider representations. Cabinet Member determination of a Statutory Notice will be required prior to the third year in which the school recruits 90 pupils in this case September 2017. It is the intention to undertake consultation in the Autumn Term 2015. The increase in admission number will be the subject of a Council led consultation process, which it is intended will be held for a 4-week period. This process will engage a range of interested stakeholders, including the school community, local admissions authorities and the Surrey School Admissions Forum. Ultimately, the outcome of this consultation will be the subject of a statutory approval process that will report through the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning.
9. Whilst formal consultation is not required at this stage, significant informal consultation has been undertaken by the Local Authority with all primary schools in Woking regarding this proposal for some time and the school governors have consulted their parents and local communities through their existing communication channels.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

10. 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 unidentified risks.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

11. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as it progresses. 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

12. The funding for this scheme is included within the 2015/20 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

13. 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

14. The expansion of the school will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
15. The new school building will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
16. 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.
17. 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

18. This proposal would provide increased provision for primary 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

19. 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 authority's 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 for Assets and Regeneration
Will Forster, Local Member: Woking South
Julie Fisher, Strategic Director for Business Services
Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager – Business Services

Annexes:

None - Part 2 report with financial details

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