

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****DATE: 13 DECEMBER 2012****LEAD OFFICER: NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****SUBJECT: TO DETERMINE A PROPOSAL TO EXPAND WEST EWELL INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

School rolls have been rising steadily across Epsom and Ewell borough since 2006. To ensure sufficient provision of infant school places in the area Surrey County Council is proposing the expansion of West Ewell Infant and Nursery School with effect from 1 September 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

1. The school is enlarged by one form of entry (from 3 FE to 4 FE) allowing for a roll of 360 pupils in total plus the 98 existing nursery places
2. Additional classrooms are provided through a building project to meet the requirements of a larger roll
3. This expansion is effective from 1 September 2013

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

West Ewell Infant and Nursery is a popular school which delivers a high quality education. It was rated by OFSTED at its previous two inspections as 'Outstanding'. The provision of additional places here meets the government's policy position to expand successful schools in order to meet parental preferences.

DETAILS:**Business Case**

1. There is a need for additional places in the Ewell planning area and this school has already been expanded on a temporary basis; it has accommodated additional classes in previous years by adapting existing space, but this is no longer possible.
2. The school has the capacity to expand on its existing site, and is keen to do so with some remodelling of existing buildings, some new building and the removal of an old Horsa building. The planned programme of works will improve the overall provision and the flow of movement around the site.

3. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. Based on the current projections the County Council is forecasting a need for two plus additional forms of entry in the Epsom and Ewell Borough in the short term. This proposal forms one part of an area strategy which includes the expansion of the St Martin's Infant and Junior schools in Epsom in 2014; the planned expansion of Stamford Green Primary in 2015 and the commissioning of additional junior provision in Danetree Junior School in due course. Riverview Church of England VA Primary is also part of the Guildford Diocese's capital rebuilding programme.

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| <u>CONSULTATION:</u> |
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4. A public consultation was carried out between 22 October and 23 November 2012. A consultation document was produced and circulated to all parents and other stakeholders and interested parties. In addition a meeting was held at the school on 6 November 2012; this was, however not well attended and only one parent and four governors of the school were present. The consultation document was also published on the Surrey County Council website and the local Borough and County Councillors were sent copies of this.
5. The Council has received 21 written consultation responses. An analysis of these is given in the table below:

| Respondent | Agree | Disagree | Don't Know |
|--|-------|----------|------------|
| Parent (in an early years setting or the school) | 11 | 0 | 7 |
| Potential Future parent | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Parent of child at another school | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Employee of the school | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| School governor | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other stakeholder | 0 | 0 | 0 |

6. Eleven responses are in agreement with the proposal. 7 respondents state that they do not know whether or not they are in favour; one respondent is against the proposal; one respondent was in favour but commented that they would prefer West Ewell to become a primary school and one response was void (so counted as a 'don't know'). The main concerns raised by respondents were that the access to the school was difficult and expansion may cause further traffic problems. A number of people commented that they wanted assurance that Danetree Junior would have sufficient places in Year 3 for children to transfer. The size of the infant school, the possible impact on standards, the family ethos and access to resources was also raised as an issue of concern to some parents. Those in support of the proposal supported the provision of places in quality settings.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

7. The key risk to this proposal is the dependency on a successful planning application to develop the site. This scheme has been discussed informally with planners throughout the design and development process and a planning application is ready for submission.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

8. The cost of the proposed project will be funded through the Schools Basic Need Capital Programme and was approved as part of the Medium Term Financial Planning process.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

9. The *School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007* contain the regulations that apply to prescribed alterations. The DCSF has published two pieces of Guidance relating to prescribed alterations: *Expanding a Maintained Mainstream School or Adding a Sixth Form* and *Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School (Other than Expansion)*. These contain both statutory guidance (i.e. guidance to which proposers and decision makers have a statutory duty to have regard) and non-statutory guidance on the process for making changes to school provision.

Equalities and Diversity

10. There are no direct equalities implications arising out of the proposal. However, the increase in provision will be open to all applicants with the highest priority given to Looked After Children and pupils on the SEN register and/or those who would benefit from a statement of educational need, thus supporting provision for our most vulnerable children.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

11. The school has a robust Safeguarding Policy which is monitored by the designated Child Protection Lead Officer, is regularly reviewed by the governing body and is subject to OFSTED inspection. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, have been considered and addresses in the planning of this project.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

12. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.
13. The additional school provision is centred close to the demographic demand and as a result will enable parents and children to attend a local school and thus reduce either the need for, or length of school journeys.

Section 151 Commentary

14. The section 151 officer confirms that the high level financial implications have been considered as part of this report and confirms that funding is available for this scheme. The detailed financial and business implications will be considered as part of the next stage.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- Subject to Cabinet Member approval, Statutory Notices stating the Council's intent to expand the school will be published. The Cabinet Member would then receive a report to determine the proposed expansion within two months of the expiration of the Statutory Notices.
- The outcome of this consultation will be published on the Surrey County Council website and parents of pupils at the school will be notified by letter from the Governing Body.

Contact Officer:

Melanie Harris

School Commissioning Officer NE Surrey tel. 020 8541 9556

Consulted:

Parents of pupils and prospective pupils at West Ewell Infant and Nursery School

Local Councillors

Local residents via the consultation document published on the SCC website

Annexes: None

Sources/background papers:

School Organisation Consultation Proposal

21 Consultation responses
