

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES AND
RESIDENT EXPERIENCE****DATE: 4 MAY 2016**

**LEAD OFFICERS: JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER
JULIE STOCKDALE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SCHOOLS AND
LEARNING (INTERIM)**

SUBJECT: DOWNS WAY INFANT SCHOOL, OXTED**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To approve the Business Case for the expansion of Downs Way Infant School from a 1.5 Form of Entry infant (135 places) to a 2 Form of Entry infant (180 places) creating 45 additional places. This will help meet the basic need requirements in the Oxted area from September 2016.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion set out in agenda item 5 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of an additional 0.5 form of entry (45 places) infant places in Oxted be approved.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places relative to demand. There is an increasing demand for primary school places in Oxted and Limpsfield, which reflects a rise in the primary-age population over recent years. In order to meet this demand, there is a need to expand school capacity in the area. The proposal to expand the capacity of Downs Way School by 0.5 FE is a core element of Surrey County Council's (SCC) strategy in this respect.

DETAILS:**The Proposal**

1. On 21 September 2015, SCC published a proposal to:
 - Enlarge Downs Way School from one-and-a-half forms of entry (1.5 FE) at Reception to two forms of entry (2 FE) at Reception, to allow for a roll of 180, comprising two classes of 30 pupils in each year group.
 - Build additional permanent classrooms and ancillary space to facilitate this.
2. It was proposed that the above enlargement would be effective from 1 September 2016 and that the school would grow incrementally, year-on-year, as the higher intake of 60 pupils worked its way progressively through the age range. However, it should be noted that, as the school has taken an additional

bulge year half-class in the 2015/16 academic year, the school will effectively reach its new capacity of 180 places in September 2017.

Reasons for the Proposal

3. Tandridge is experiencing a steady increase in the demand for school places, reflecting both a rise in birth rate and increased house building and migration within the area. Births in the Borough in 2014 were 9.2% higher than births in 2002. Additional primary school places have been provided reflecting this demand and further growth is anticipated in the short to medium-term, which needs to be accommodated via further expansions of school provision.
4. Within the Oxted and Limpsfield Planning Area, there is presently provision for 165 places per year in Reception, composed of the following:
 - Downs Way School (offering 45 Reception places per annum);
 - Hurst Green Infant School (offering 30 Reception places per annum);
 - Limpsfield C of E Infant School (offering 60 Reception places per annum); and
 - St. Peter’s C of E Infant School (offering 30 Reception places per annum).
5. Demand for primary school places has been rising in Oxted and Limpsfield, in line with the general increase across the whole of the Tandridge District. Projections of future demand for school places are presented in the below table:

Year	Inf. PAN	Inf. Projection	Surplus	Jun. PAN	Jun. Projection	Surplus
2015/16	165	159	6	150	152	- 2
2016/17	165	170	- 5	150	129	21
2017/18	165	173	- 8	150	139	11
2018/19	165	160	5	150	139	11
2019/20	165	153	12	150	148	2
2020/21	165	153	12	150	150	0
2021/22	165	153	12	150	139	11
2022/23	165	153	12	150	133	17
2023/24	165	153	12	150	133	17
2024/25	165	153	12	150	133	17

6. As can be seen from the above, there is a need for additional Infant places in the area in the short to medium-term. This is also a relatively popular area for admissions applications and, even in years where a projected surplus has existed, placing all children with a preference in the area has proved difficult. This ultimately culminated in the “bulge” year expansion of Downs Way School for the 2015/16 academic year. The proposed expansion of Downs Way Infant School by a half a Form of Entry would reduce all of the above projected deficits by 15 places and add further surplus in other years, thereby augmenting the scope for parental preference. In this respect, it should be noted that a 0.5FE expansion neatly aligns with the profile of demand in the area. This, coupled with the fact that the expansion would enable the school to operate on the basis of full forms of entry (which supports effective financial and curriculum planning), was provided a key part of the rationale for proposing to expand Downs Way to meet demand in the area.

7. Where possible, SCC's strategy is to expand high quality provision that meets parental demand, whilst also ensuring that there is a diverse pattern of provision, so as to provide families with some element of choice. The most recent Ofsted report on the school, from November 2014, rates the school as 'Good'. In particular, this report noted that "[t]he headteacher, ably supported by other leaders and governors, has ensured that all staff have high expectations of pupils' learning and achievement. As a result, teaching staff focus strongly and effectively on ensuring that pupils make enough progress". The evident quality of education provision at Downs Way was a key reason underpinning the move to expand this school and thereby increase the provision of high-quality school places to the local community.
8. The project provides a modular building with one classroom, toilets and associated spaces. Replacement hard play for the area lost to the footprint of the new building and associated landscape works.
9. A planning application was submitted in March 2016. A decision is expected to be made by the Planning and Regulatory Committee in June 2016.

CONSULTATION:

10. As a Community School, the increase in admission number was the subject of a Council-led consultation process which was held for a 4-week period, between 21 September and 19 October 2015. This process engaged a range of interested stakeholders, including the school community, local residents, local admissions authorities and the Surrey School Admissions Forum. On 7 October 2015, a consultation evening was held at the school, to which all interested parties were invited. A summary of the feedback from the entire consultation process is appended to this report as Annex 2.
11. The feedback to the consultation was largely positive and in support of the proposed expansion; in total over 85% of respondents expressed support for the proposal. The feedback raised a number of issues, most of which were neutral in character. One core concern was raised in relation to the proposal, in terms of the perception that access to the site was restricted and thereby problematic, especially at peak drop-off/pick-up times. Naturally, this is an issue that will be addressed through the planning process, with suitable highways measures being introduced to the scheme, if it is deemed to be necessary, in order to mitigate the proposed level of expansion.

Risk Management and Implications

12. There are risks associated with the project and a project risk register will be compiled and regularly updated by the project management team. 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

13. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny by SCC officers to drive optimum value as it progresses. Further financial details are set out in the report circulated as item 5 in Part 2 of the agenda. These details have been circulated separately to ensure commercial sensitivity, in the interest of securing best value.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

14. The funding for this scheme is included in 2016-21 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

15. 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

16. The expansion of the school will not create any issues that would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
17. The new school building, and the internal modifications, will comply with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations.
18. The Admissions arrangements currently give the highest priority to Looked After and previously Looked After Children (LAC/PLAC) and those in exceptional circumstances are admitted under the second priority. The third priority is given to siblings. Fourth priority is given to children of staff employed for two or more years at the school and fifth to children for whom the school is nearest to their home. Other applicants that do not meet these criteria are considered after all of the above. There is no proposal to amend the 2016 admissions criteria, which are fully compliant with the School Admissions Code.
19. The school already contributes positively towards community cohesion and provides the normal range of before- and after-schools clubs typical to Surrey County Council schools. If the expansion is approved it intends to provide the service to the additional pupils in line with its ethos and values.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

20. 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 would therefore also be of benefit to any Looked After Children who have the opportunity of attending the school, with this grouping of children receiving the highest priority ranking within the school's admission arrangements.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

21. 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:

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

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Mrs Linda Kemeny, Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement
Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate for the Built Environment
Nick Skellett CBE, Local Member for Oxted – Tandridge and Vice-Chairman of the County Council
Julie Fisher, Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director for Children, Schools and Families
Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager – Business Services

Annexes:

None - Part 2 report with financial details attached to agenda as item 5.

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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