

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 21 JUNE 2016



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

MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS, SKILLS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

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

SUBJECT: WEST EWELL INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To approve the Business Case for the conversion of West Ewell Infant and Nursery School from a 4FE infant school with 360 places plus a 100 nursery places, to a 2 form entry Primary (420 primary places plus 52 nursery). This will reduce the number of Key Stage 1 and nursery places at the school by half but will add 240 junior places into the planning area.

This forms part of an area re-organisation of primary schools within Ewell that seeks to deliver around 600 additional primary places across three schools. This will help meet the basic need requirements in the Ewell and NW Epsom primary planning areas from September 2017 and will assist the Local Authority to meet its statutory responsibility to provide sufficient school places to meet the local demand.

The net number of nursery places will be unaffected but the re-organisation allows for more 2 year old places and a more flexible offer to parents across the three nurseries at Danetree, West Ewell and Ewell Grove Primary schools.

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 two forms (240 places) of junior places in Ewell planning area 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 Epsom and Ewell borough.

DETAILS:**Background**

1. There has been an increasing trend in the demand for places in primary schools in Epsom and Ewell. There is also an historic mismatch between the number of infant and junior places available, especially in the Ewell area. The two infant schools have a combined PAN of 190 and yet Danetree's junior PAN is only 128. There is no other feeder junior school in this area.
2. The rising demand has been addressed by some permanent expansions in other planning areas and some infant and junior bulge classes in different local schools each year. This strategy has caused a degree of parental concern as to which schools will offer a Key Stage 2 place to children moving out of the infant phase.
3. The Council received requests from both infant schools in Ewell to convert them into primary schools for educational reasons and Danetree Junior academy also indicated a willingness to both expand and become an all through primary school. It is therefore possible to reduce the number of school transitions Ewell children have to make and add some more primary places into the net capacity if the Council agrees to fund a re-organisation of the provision at the three schools. This will ensure a sufficiency of places up to the end of the current forecast period which is 2024 and should facilitate a continuing rise in academic standards by pupils only attending one school, with its own nursery, for their entire primary education phase.
4. West Ewell Infant and Nursery School is a popular and successful school which delivers high quality education. It was rated Outstanding by OFSTED at its last inspection (April 2010) and was over-subscribed for 2016 Reception places. The proposed conversion to a 2 FE primary school and the provision of 240 additional junior places therefore meets the government's policy position to expand successful schools in order to meet parental preferences. The reduction of 180 infant places (2 FE YR-2) will be compensated by the conversion of Danetree to a 4 FE primary school in September 2016, which was approved by Cabinet on 22 March 2016. This will add infant places. The schemes are therefore intrinsically linked.
5. The Ewell and NW Epsom primary planning areas have been affected by the increase in births, new housing and pupil migration into the area. Births in the Borough in 2014 were 22.8% higher than births in 2002. These are the children that we expect to enter Reception classes in 2016. The development of the new estates on the former hospital sites has put additional pressure onto education infrastructure with many new residents either arriving with, or starting, families.
6. The combined Published Admission Number for Ewell is 360 in Reception classes. The Council has received 350 first preferences for places in September 2016, which implies that we may have 10 spare places. However the combined PAN for NW Epsom is 210 and we have received 235 first preferences for these schools. We are therefore at least 15 places short across the two areas based on only first preferences and without taking into account any late applications or SEN placements.

7. To facilitate the conversion to primary status the capital works at West Ewell Infant and Nursery school will be minimal. This is because the school has already been expanded to a 4 FE infant school which was completed in 2013/14. This included adding 6 classrooms and a new hall and kitchen facility. Officers are now proposing to make some internal modifications to the existing accommodation to enable it to function as a 2 FE primary school with a smaller nursery and a specialist centre for pupils with communication and interaction needs. During a transitional period the school will need additional temporary accommodation as larger cohorts of up to 120 pupils move through Key Stage 2.
8. Planned maintenance works including replacement windows and other external repairs funded from the capital maintenance programme have been included with the Basic Need project to achieve efficiencies.
9. A planning application has been submitted for this temporary accommodation and a delegated decision is expected by the end of June 2016.

CONSULTATION:

10. Public consultation was undertaken on this proposal twice, once informally in 2014, where it received strong support from parents. Then a second statutory consultation was held in July 2015 and again the response was overwhelmingly positive to all three schools (West Ewell, Ewell Grove and Danetree) converting to primary status. A consultation document was published and all statutory stakeholders including parents and local residents were informed. In addition, public meetings were held at all 3 schools during June and July 2015.
11. The results of the public consultation were summarised in the report to the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning on 28 July 2015. The West Ewell responses may be summarised as follows:

Thirty people attended the public meeting at the school on 30 July 2015. The Council received 71 written responses to the consultation of which 85% were in favour of the proposal (60 respondents) and 15% were not in favour (11 respondents).

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

12. West Ewell Infant and Nursery School is on a relatively compact site with difficult access arrangements up a narrow lane leading off a main road. However its previous major building programme was well managed in terms of site access, deliveries etc and the main issue this time will be the delivery of the temporary modular classrooms which will be arranged out of school hours. The delivery team will work closely with the school's management and contractor to manage construction risks and ensure the site is safe for pupils, staff and visitors.
13. There are minimal risks associated with the project nevertheless 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

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

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

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 conversion of the school will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
17. The school building already complies with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The conversion of infant classrooms and facilities to meet the needs of junior aged pupils will be undertaken and the relocation of the SEN centre to another part of the school will improve the access to learning for these pupils.
18. The school will be mainly for children in the community served by the school. However the SEN specialist centre will admit pupils from outside the immediate planning area as it will continue to serve a wider local need for specialist places.
19. The school will continue to provide Early Years education and is considering extending it to two year olds. Ewell grove Primary School will also continue to offer 'wrap around care' in the form of a Breakfast and After School Club.
20. The Admissions arrangements 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.
21. 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

22. 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

23. 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:

Keith Brown, Schools and Programme Manager – tel: 020 8541 8651
Melanie Harris, School Commissioning Officer – tel: 020 8541 9556

Consulted:

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate for Assets and Regeneration Programmes
Eber Kington, Local Member for Ewell Court, Auriol and Cuddington – Epsom and Ewell

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

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

This page is intentionally left blank