

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 28 NOVEMBER 2017



**REPORT OF: MRS MARY LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION
MR TIM OLIVER, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND
BUSINESS SERVICES**

**LEAD OFFICERS: JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER
LIZ MILLS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS AND
LEARNING**

SUBJECT: FARNHAM HEATH END SECONDARY SCHOOL, FARNHAM

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

There has been a significant increase in the demand for school places in the Farnham area reflecting increases in birth rates in the area and the consequent increase in the Primary age population. The Council has supported increases in primary schools in the area, and this increase is now being experienced in the Secondary Sector.

As a result the Cabinet is asked to approve the business case for the expansion of Farnham Heath End School from 190 places per year / 7 Forms of Entry (950 places) to 220 places per year / 8 Forms of Entry (1,100 places) to help meet the demand for additional secondary places in Farnham from September 2018.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the expansion set out in item 14 in Part 2 of this agenda, the Business Case is approved for the expansion of Farnham Heath End School, providing an additional 30 places per year (150 places in total).

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places relative to demand.

DETAILS:

Background

1. There is significant demand for new school places within Surrey resulting from increases in the birth rate and inward migration into the County. Demand for secondary places has increased in Farnham, with additional school places required from 2018. Primary expansions in Farnham have taken place in recent years. Weydon Academy (secondary) has been expanded to meet some of this demand. However, further places are required.

2. Projections for future places in the Farnham and Ash secondary planning area are shown below with an assumed increase in capacity from 2018

Year	Capacity	Forecast Demand	Surplus/Deficit
2017-18	948	955	-7
2018-19	978	1,071	-93
2019-20	978	1,023	-45
2020-21	978	1,046	-68
2021-22	978	1,082	-104
2022-23	978	1,076	-98
2023-24	978	1,162	-184
2024-25	978	1,104	-126
2025-26	978	1,062	-84
2026-27	978	1,070	-92
2027-28	978	1,059	-81

3. In 2018 it is projected that the need for places will be over 4 FE of the current published admission number (PAN) of the area. In the years ahead the places are projected to be between two to six forms of entry over the PAN, until 2025 where demand is projected to be 2-3 forms over the existing PAN.
4. With projections showing significant demand, but not sustained at the highest level it is intended that these numbers will be managed through a combination of maximising the use of available capacity in all surrounding schools, maximising capacity in neighbouring secondary schools in Hampshire and an increase in the provision of places by one form of entry to provide for the consistent higher demand for school places.
5. Options for secondary expansion in the area have been considered. The increase in the demand for places stems from families residing in the both the Farnham and Ash centres. In Ash, there is capacity at a school close by in Hampshire that can accommodate the over demand in that area for the time being although an expansion in Ash is anticipated in the future as numbers rise in both counties.

In Farnham there are three secondary schools: All Hallows Catholic School, Farnham Heath End School and Weydon Academy.

Weydon has been expanded to its fullest extent in recent years and further expansion is not feasible.

All Hallows' is an oversubscribed and popular school. However, due to its admissions criteria 60-70% of children attending reside out of county with the proportion growing year on year. Increasing the intake at All Hallows would admit more children from further away in the neighbouring county, and would therefore have limited ability in providing increased places for the Farnham area. There have also been no expansions of the primary Catholic schools which feed into All Hallows.

Farnham Heath End School caters for children from the local area with admissions criteria for feeder primary schools in the locality and children for whom the school is nearest to their home address.

6. This proposal would provide an additional 30 secondary places per year, a total of 150 additional places within Farnham that will help to meet the increasing need for school places.
7. Farnham Heath End School is an academy and joined the Weydon Academy Trust in April 2017. The school currently provides 190 places per from year 7 through to year 11, aged 11-16. The Trust has agreed to the Local Authority's request to expand the school by one form of entry to meet local demand for school places.
8. At the school's last Ofsted inspection in February 2016, Farnham Heath End received a Grade 3 judgement 'Requires Improvement'. Ofsted undertook a monitoring visit in December 2016 at which it was noted that the school is taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement in order to become a good school. From April 2017 the School joined the Weydon Academy Trust, a high performing Multi Academy Trust based in Surrey. Surrey Officers and the office of the Regional Schools Commissioner are confident of the ability of the trust to achieve significant improvement at the School.
9. As an academy, the expansion is considered a 'significant change' by the Department of Education (DfE) and as such is required to adhere to the associated guidance set out by the DfE. Following the consultation, summarised in the next section, the application for the expansion was submitted to the DfE and approved to proceed on 26 January 2017.
10. The project will include creation of a new sports hall and reconfiguration of existing internal spaces to create additional dining space, classrooms, science and ICT facilities. Some additional onsite parking spaces are proposed to meet planning requirements to mitigate the impact of additional vehicles on local roads. The project also re provides the schools SEND accommodation to the centre of the school in order to allow for the provision of additional class space in the existing SEND area. This will support the schools delivery of SEND within the school and add to the Councils inclusion agenda improving outcomes for some of the Councils most vulnerable children.

CONSULTATION:

11. The headteacher and the governing body of the academy worked closely with officers to undertake consultation on the expansion proposal.
12. A public consultation was run over a five week period from Monday 10 October 2016 with a public meeting on Wednesday 19 October at Farnham Heath End School. The consultation document was circulated to parents/carers, staff, local residents, parents of local primary schools, head teachers of local schools, and other stakeholders. Responses were invited in writing, by email and through the Surrey Says website.
13. The public meeting was attended by five local residents who raised concerns around additional parking and traffic.

14. 21 responses to the consultation were received. 8 agreed with the proposal to expand the school, 9 disagreed and 4 neither agreed nor disagreed. This was a low response rate for the size of school, although not unusual for a secondary school consultation.
15. Comments given included 16 responses regarding school standards and some concerns about the disruption of building works, staffing levels and children spending too much time in the study hall. 15 responses were given around traffic and road safety including safety of children and impact on local residents. 8 responses were made concerning premises and resources including loss of outside space, sports facilities and that improvements should be made to lunchtime arrangements. 2 responses included concerns about lack of parking for teachers and drop off facilities for parents.
16. As an academy, the governing body of Farnham Heath End School reviewed the consultation responses in December 2016 and unanimously agreed to proceed with the proposal to increase the PAN from September 2018, subject to provision of suitable buildings to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.
17. The consultation was undertaken when the school was undertaken as a standalone academy. The Weydon Academy Trust have agreed to obligations of the consultation.
18. The development of the programme of building works will be undertaken in consultation and adhering to the requirement of the planning Authority and Highways Department.

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 it progresses. Further financial details are set out in the report circulated as item 14 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

21. The County Council is facing a very serious financial situation, whereby there are still substantial savings to be identified and delivered to achieve a balanced budget in the current year and a sustainable budget plan for future years.
22. The Section 151 Officer can confirm that an estimated cost for this capital scheme has been included in the current School Basic Need capital programme as part of the 2017-20 Medium Term Financial Plan. A significant part, but not all of the school basic need capital programme is funded from DfE capital grant with the remainder having to be funded through Council borrowing.

23. It is therefore important to recognise that agreeing to this recommendation will reduce the council's options to achieve a sustainable budget in future years. The County Council is facing a very serious financial situation, whereby there are still substantial savings to be identified and delivered to achieve a balanced budget in the current year and a sustainable budget plan for future years.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

24. 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

25. The expansion of the school will not create any issues which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
26. The new classrooms will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
27. 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 with an Education Health and Care Plan, 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.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

28. This proposal would provide increased provision for secondary 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 have the opportunity of attending the school.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

29. The council has a duty to promote and improve educational outcomes for all children, particularly those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged. Farnham Heath End School is an inclusive school and has robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

30. 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 detailed design to allow procurement of tenders and subsequent contract award through delegated decision.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

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Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager – Business Services

Annexes:

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

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