

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR ALL-AGE LEARNING

DATE: 5 NOVEMBER 2019

LEAD OFFICER: DAVE HILL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFELONG LEARNING AND CULTURE



SUBJECT: CREATION OF SPECIALIST CENTRES FOR CHILDREN WITH COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION NEEDS (COIN) IN TWO PRIMARY SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY VISION OUTCOME: People

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To review the education rationale for the project and agree the commencement of two specialist centres for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at two primary schools.

A decision was made by Cabinet on 16 July 2019 to release the Capital for the specialist centre at Worplesdon Primary School in partnership with Freemantles School subject to full public consultation and statutory notices. The statutory notices were published from 23 September to 21 October and the outcomes are shared in this paper.

A decision was made by Cabinet on 24 September 2019 to release the Capital for the specialist centre at Bell Farm Primary School subject to statutory notices. The statutory notices were published from 16 September to 14 October and the outcomes are shared in this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning determines the statutory notice thereby bringing into effect the formal commencement of:

1. A specialist centre with 21 places for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Worplesdon Primary School in partnership with Freemantles School
2. A specialist centre with 21 places for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Bell Farm Primary School

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

A new specialist provision centre at Worplesdon Primary School would meet the demand for additional places for children and young people with communication and interaction needs (COIN). This is the first centre in Surrey that is being developed in partnership between a special school and a mainstream primary school. The two schools working in partnership ensure pupils benefit from the expertise of a special school as well as inclusion in a mainstream primary school.

A new specialist provision centre at Bell Farm Primary School would meet the demand for additional places for children and young people with communication and interaction needs (COIN).

For these reasons, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning determines the Statutory Notice for each project (appended to this report as Annex 1 and Annex 2), so as to bring the creation of the two specialist centres into effect.

DETAILS:

1. Demand for specialist centre provision for pupils with special educational needs is high, particularly for pupils with COIN. As a result, other specialist provision is operating at or above capacity. The provision of an additional specialist COIN centre will help support local families who would otherwise have to travel further afield. This will not only enable local provision for local children, but also decrease home to school journey times and associated costs.

Specialist centre for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Worplesdon Primary School in partnership with Freemantles School

2. Worplesdon Primary School is a primary school in the borough of Guildford in Surrey with a two form entry for infants and three form entry for juniors. The school has a 'good' Ofsted rating and does not currently have a specialist centre. Freemantles School is a special school in the borough of Woking in Surrey catering for the needs of children and young people with complex social communication needs. The school has an 'outstanding' Ofsted rating.
3. It is proposed that Freemantles School and Worplesdon Primary School work in partnership to host a specialist Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) centre for 21 pupils on the site at Worplesdon Primary School. The staff would benefit from supervision and training as employees of Freemantles School but would be based in the centre at Worplesdon Primary School. All pupils admitted to the centre would have an EHCP specifying the school as an appropriate placement to meet their individual needs.
4. It is anticipated that the centre would be organised with three places per year group. A bespoke building would be provided for the specialist centre and located within the school grounds.
5. Appropriate pupils for this provision would be identified and placed at this specialist COIN centre using the Education Health Care Plan and subsequent review pathways.
6. The mainstream published admission numbers (PAN) for the reception intake will reduce from 60 to 57 to accommodate the additional pupils at the centre. This is subject to School admissions consultation for community and voluntary controlled schools for September 2021. The year 3 PAN is unaffected.
7. There will be 15 places available in September 2020. This is made up of a reception intake of 3 places and a Year 3 intake of 3 places in September

2020. In addition there is currently a temporary centre at Freemantles School for Junior years. There will be 9 places available for pupils currently attending the temporary centre, who will be moving into years 4, 5 and 6 in September 2020. Those pupils will be offered a place subject to the placement still being named on their Education Health and Care Plan. There will then be 3 reception places offered each year, bringing the total number of places to 18 in September 2021 and the full capacity of 21 places in September 2022.

Specialist centre for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Bell Farm Primary School

8. Bell Farm Primary School is a three form entry primary school in the borough of Elmbridge in Surrey. The school has a 'good' Ofsted rating and does not currently have a specialist centre.
9. It is proposed that Bell Farm Primary School hosts a specialist Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) centre for 21 pupils. All pupils admitted to the centre would have an EHCP specifying the school as an appropriate placement to meet their individual needs. It is anticipated that the centre would be organised with 3 places per year group, although this number is not fixed and on occasions some year groups may have more or less than 3 pupils. A bespoke building would be provided for the specialist centre and located within the school grounds.
10. Appropriate pupils for this provision would be identified and placed at this specialist COIN centre using the Education Health Care Plan and subsequent review pathways.
11. Pupils attending the centre would be in addition to the mainstream Planned Admission Number (PAN) of the school.
12. It is proposed the centre at will open in September 2020 with 12 places available growing to 18 in September 2021 and the full 21 places in September 2022.

CONSULTATION:

Specialist centre for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Worplesdon Primary School in partnership with Freemantles School

13. An informal public consultation ran from 24 June 2019 to 19 July 2019 and the consultation document is available at www.surreysays.co.uk. A public meeting was held on Thursday 11 July 2019. Five people attended and the views shared at the meeting were supportive of the proposal. A total of five responses were received during the consultation period which closed on Friday 19 July 2019. All five responses agreed with the proposal.
14. As a result of the consultation, a decision was made to proceed with statutory notices which were published from 23 September to 21 October. The full documents are available on www.surreysays.co.uk and the long version of the statutory notice is appended to this report as Annex A.

15. One response was received during the statutory notice period. The respondent didn't know whether to agree or disagree with the proposal as they had negative experiences of specialist units in the past.

Specialist centre for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Bell Farm Primary School

16. An informal public consultation ran from 10 June 2019 to 19 July 2019 and the consultation document is available at www.surreysays.co.uk. A public meeting was held on Friday 21 June 2019, approximately 20 people attended and the views shared at the meeting were supportive of the proposal. A total of 5 responses were received during the consultation period of these, 3 responders agreed with the proposal, while 2 responders shared concerns regarding the impacts on mainstream pupils, suitability of learning environment for pupils with autism and impacts on traffic and parking.
17. As a result of the informal consultation, a decision was made to proceed with statutory notices which were published from 16 September to 14 October. The full documents are available on www.surreysays.co.uk and the long version of the statutory notice is appended to this report as Annex B.
18. A total of 9 responses were received during the statutory notice period. 6 respondents agreed with the proposal and 3 opposed the proposal. The respondents who agreed with the proposal mentioned benefits of providing places for children with autism and learning opportunities for existing pupils and staff. The respondents opposing the proposal raised concerns regarding negative impacts on existing pupils and staff due to class sizes and potential disruption. There was also concern that the centre may not be funded adequately.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

19. There will be a partnership agreement between Worplesdon Primary School and Freemantles School to ensure effective governance for future sustainability and manage any potential divergence between the two parties
20. It is important that the two primary schools are supported in providing stable places for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) and that any risk of placement breakdown is reduced. A support package is being considered to offer additional support to the two centres in the first year. Linden Bridge has been identified through the SEND teaching schools as a potential partner for Bell Farm Primary School in the first year. Freemantles School will be working in partnership with Worplesdon Primary School and could also be commissioned to provide extra support in the first year.

Financial and value for money implications:

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

Specialist centre for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Worplesdon Primary School in partnership with Freemantles School

22. A decision to release the capital costs of £1.1m from the SEND Capital Grant was initially made by Cabinet on 16 July 2019, subject to public consultation and statutory notices which are now complete.
23. The EDGE forecasts for specialist COIN places show that there is an emerging need in Guildford with a projection of 168 places needed by 2024/25. There are currently 37 specialist COIN places across the South West and there are no specialist COIN places in the neighbouring borough, Woking.
24. The cost per year per pupil is projected to be £17,000. This is based on planned place funding, top up funding, estimated Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) and cost of estimated therapies. This means the creation of the unit at Worplesdon Primary School is estimated to save approximately £9,000 per child per year from the High Needs Block Budget through containing provision locally in maintained settings in comparison to similar placements in a non-maintained independent provision where the average cost is £26,000.
25. A support package will be considered in the first year to reduce the risk of placement breakdown which could result in pupils needing a place in the non maintained independent sector.

Specialist centre for pupils with communication and interaction needs (COIN) at Bell Farm Primary School

26. A decision to release the capital costs of £800k from the SEND Capital Grant was initially made by Cabinet on 24 September, subject to public consultation and statutory notices which are now complete.
27. The EDGE forecasts for specialist COIN places show that there is an emerging need in the North East with a projection of 114 places needed by 2024/25. There are currently 51 specialist COIN places across the North East and there are no specialist COIN places in Elmbridge where Bell Farm is based.
28. The cost per year per pupil is projected to be £17,000. This is based on planned place funding, top up funding, estimated Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) and cost of estimated therapies. This means the creation of the unit at Bell Farm Primary School is estimated to save approximately £9,000 per child per year from the High Needs Block Budget through containing provision locally in maintained settings in comparison to similar placements in a non-maintained independent provision where the average cost is £26,000.
29. A support package will be considered in the first year to reduce the risk of placement breakdown which could result in pupils needing a place in the non maintained independent sector.

Section 151 Officer commentary:

30. The Council is facing a very serious financial situation, whereby there are substantial savings which need to be achieved to establish a balanced budget on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the initiative to reduce reliance upon non

maintained independent schools and colleges through the creation of additional places in local authority maintained schools and academies.

31. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the use of the SEND Capital Grant to create a unit at Worplesdon costing £1.1m and a unit at Bell Farm costing £0.8m has been agreed at Cabinet subject to public consultation and statutory notices which are now complete.
32. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the cost of the unit places at Bell Farm and Worplesdon would cost £9,000 less on average than an equivalent placement in a non-maintained independent provision, and therefore the proposals provide better value for money and are in line with SEND transformation objectives. The analysis of need indicates the likelihood that without creation of these placements pupils would likely require placements in more expensive non-maintained independent provision.

Legal implications – Monitoring Officer:

33. There is a statutory requirement for consultation in this context as set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. Such consultation will need to involve those directly affected by such changes together with relevant representative groups.
34. In considering this Report, Cabinet must give due regard to the results of the consultation as set out in the report attached and the response of the Service to the consultation comments and conscientiously take these matters into account when making its final decision.
35. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on the Council to secure that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs (including special educational needs) of the population in its area. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in its area. There is a legal duty on the Council therefore to secure the availability of efficient education in its area and sufficient schools to enable this. This report sets out how the Authority will meet its duties in response to the increasing demand for COIN specialist places in two locations.

Equalities and diversity:

36. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is in progress

Other implications:

37. The potential implications for the following Council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	Set out below

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Set out below
Environmental sustainability	Set out below
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report/Set out below

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications:

38. This proposal would provide increased provision for primary places for children with communication and interaction needs (COIN), 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 an Education Health and Care Plan identifying their communication and interaction needs.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications:

39. Safeguarding vulnerable children is a high priority in all Surrey schools. Schools have considerable expertise in safeguarding vulnerable children and adhere to robust procedures. The schools will continue to apply good practise in the area of safeguarding as they are currently. In addition, safeguarding is a key area for monitoring when Ofsted carries out inspections.

Environmental sustainability implications:

40. The design philosophy is to create buildings that will support low energy consumption, reduce solar gain and promote natural ventilation. Any new infrastructure will be built to the local planning authority's adopted core planning strategy

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 41. The building of the centres and employment of staff will be completed in preparation for the centres to open at the beginning of the autumn term in September 2020.
- 42. Support packages for the first year will be proposed and considered by the budget holder. It should also be considered whether funding can be released for recruitment of Heads of Centre from April 2020 to set up in preparation for a start date of September 2020.

Contact Officer:

Jane Keenan, Commissioning Manager, Tel. 020 8541 7017 Mob. 07970 645 745

Consulted:

Kareen O Brien, Headteacher, Worplesdon Primary School
Justin Price, Headteacher, Freemantles School
Parents of children attending Worplesdon Primary School and Freemantles School
Staff members and Governors at Worplesdon Primary School and Freemantles School
Anne Cooper, Headteacher, Bell Farm Primary School
Parents of children attending Bell Farm Primary School
Staff members and Governors at Bell Farm Primary School

Governing body, Worplesdon Primary School
Governing body, Bell Farm Primary School
Governing body, Freemantles Primary School
Residents
Cllr John O'Reilly, Councillor for Hersham
Cllr Keith Witham, Councillor for Worplesdon

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Worplesdon Primary School in Partnership with Freemantles School
Statutory notice (Full)
Annex 2 – Bell Farm Primary School Statutory notice (Full)
