

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS & LEARNING****DATE: 9 OCTOBER 2013****LEAD OFFICER: NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****SUBJECT: ONSLOW INFANT SCHOOL EXPANSION - DECISION****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Numbers of children starting school in Guildford have been increasing in recent years. In order to meet the local need for primary school places, it is proposed that Onslow Infant School permanently expand from two to three forms of entry from September 2014.

An initial consultation has been undertaken and approved by the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning. A statutory notice stating the Council's intent to increase the school as described has been published and requires determination so that the proposal can be implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

1. The Statutory Notice stating the Council's intention to expand Onslow Infant School is determined, such that the school becomes a three form entry (3FE) infant school with a published admission number (PAN) of 90 from 1 September 2014.
2. Additional accommodation is built and a suitable travel plan is agreed.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is an immediate requirement for additional infant places in Guildford, as shown by place planning data. Additional temporary classrooms have been provided in 2013 but the proposal to permanently expand Onslow Infant School is in response to the ongoing need for places in the area.

Onslow Infant School is an outstanding school and it is appropriate that it should be expanded. This would be of benefit to the increased number of children in the community that would be able to attend the school.

DETAILS:**Business Case**

1. Onslow Infant School is a small school that serves communities mainly in the Onslow Village area of Guildford, but also further afield in the Guildford Town wider area.

2. The Guildford Town wider area is divided into four planning areas; this also includes Worplesdon. Onslow Infant School is in the South Guildford primary planning area, but there is some pupil movement across the boundaries of the four planning areas.
3. Pupil numbers are forecast to increase steadily for at least five years. The forecast assumes increasing births and includes the effects of new housing.
4. Births in the Guildford Town area decreased from 1999 to 2001, but have increased steadily since and this upward trend is likely to continue. The number of births is now significantly higher than ten years ago.
5. In terms of housing, there is a large development which includes staff accommodation at Surrey University, although there may not be many families coming to live there. There are also two large housing sites in the town centre that have been identified for future housing. These are located in the South Guildford planning area.
6. Increases in births over the last ten years combined with recent and planned housing developments mean that more children have needed a school place over recent years than the number of places available.
7. Additional permanent primary provision has been provided in other parts of Guildford, but not yet in the South Guildford area that includes Onslow Village. Owing to demand for places, Surrey County Council provided an additional 'bulge' class of 30 reception places at Onslow Infant School in September 2012 and September 2013.
8. An expansion of primary provision by another two forms of entry (2FE) to serve the Guildford Town area is needed. Expansion of provision at Onslow Infant School would partially meet this need for additional primary school places.
9. Onslow Infant School has been judged "Outstanding" by Ofsted and it is appropriate to expand the provision there.

CONSULTATION:

10. Full statutory consultation for a prescribed alteration has taken place. A consultation booklet was issued and two public meetings were held at the school in May 2013.
11. The Council received 23 responses to the public consultation; 15 of these were from parents of children attending Onslow Infant School. The parental response rate was estimated to be less than 10%, which is very low.
12. Of all the responses received, the majority of respondents were in opposition to the proposal. 17% supported the expansion proposal, 13% neither supported nor opposed the proposal and 57% opposed the proposal; a further three respondents (13%) did not indicate their support or otherwise, but returned comments.
13. The main concerns raised by the respondents were traffic and parking; the size of the site and the building provision; and the behaviour and safety of the

pupils. A small number of respondents also suggested that the former St Francis Westborough site should be re-instated as a primary school.

14. A report on the proposed expansion, incorporating an analysis of the consultation responses, was presented to the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning on 10 July 2013. The Cabinet Member considered the responses to the consultation and determined on 18 July 2013 that Statutory Notices should be published.
15. Statutory Notices were published and closed on 16 August 2013. No further representations have been received.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

16. A project to provide additional classrooms for September 2014 will be required. A scheme has been produced including viability studies with a short construction period.
17. The project will be monitored closely to remain on track for delivery in September 2014.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

18. There are insufficient permanent reception places in the Guildford Town area. If additional places were not to be provided at the school, then a number of children would be allocated places at distant school, for example in Godalming. If a school place is not offered within 2 miles of the child's home, and a preference was expressed for the nearest school to their home, then the children would be eligible for home to school transport, which could be a liability of the order of £5,000 per child per year.
19. The scheme is on the Schools Basic Need Programme and has approved funding in the 2013/18 medium term financial plan. All schemes are expected to remain within the funding which has been allocated to them in the MTFP and will be regularly monitored by Property Services. More detailed costings will be compiled as the scheme progresses to full business case.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

20. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the funding for this scheme is included in the current 2013/18 medium term financial plan. More detailed costings for the schemes will be developed as the scheme progresses to tender, but the Section 151 Officer expects the costs to be contained within the agreed funding levels.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

21. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on local education authorities to ensure that efficient primary education is available to meet the needs of the population of their area. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local education authorities to ensure that sufficient schools for providing primary education are available in their area.
22. The *School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007* contains the regulations that apply to prescribed

alterations. The Department for Education (DfE) 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. These regulations have been followed.

Equalities and Diversity

23. A full equalities impact assessment has not been undertaken on this proposal as it is unlikely that the proposal would have a negative impact on any groups with protected characteristics. The proposal does not change the nature of the admissions criteria for the school.
24. This educational provision would be for children in the community served by the school. The increase in provision will be open to all applicants with the highest priority given to Looked After Children (LAC) 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.
25. The proposal is for an expansion of provision, so more staff would be employed. Employment opportunities would increase with a larger school and there would also be greater professional development opportunities.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

26. This proposal would provide increased provision in the area, which would be of benefit to all in the community served by the school.
27. Looked After Children currently have a high priority in the Admissions criteria for both schools and as such may benefit from additional available school places in Guildford.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

28. Safeguarding vulnerable children is a high priority in Surrey schools. Schools have considerable expertise in safeguarding vulnerable children and adhere to robust procedures. The school would continue to apply good practice in the area of safeguarding. Safeguarding is monitored when Ofsted carries out inspections of schools.
29. The school has already put into place strategies for enhancing the safety of children and we are confident that the safety of children would continue to be paramount were it to be permanently expanded. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, have been considered and addressed in the planning and design of this building project.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

30. A planning requirement for the proposed expansion is a revised travel plan which will include strategies for reduction of car journeys and increase in sustainable modes of transport. The school has produced a comprehensive

travel plan to mitigate the potential effects of more children travelling to the school.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

31. Subject to approval the proposal will proceed to ensure that sufficient accommodation is in place at Onslow Infant School for September 2014.
32. The outcome of this report will be communicated to the school by letter and to the general public via the Surrey County Council website.

Contact Officer:

Dr Kathy Beresford
School Commissioning Officer (South West)
020 8541 9689

Consulted:

- David Hodge, Leader of the Council;
- David Goodwin, Member for Guildford South West;
- Nick Wilson, Strategic Director – Children Schools & Families;
- Julie Fisher, Strategic Director – Business Services;
- The public and parents

Sources/background papers:

- The Education Act 1996; the Education Act 2002; the Education Act 2005; the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
 - Consultation Booklet regarding the changing Onslow Infant School into a Primary School
 - Onslow Infant School Expansion Consultation Analysis
 - Statutory Notice for Onslow Infant School (July 2013)
-

This page is intentionally left blank