

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS & LEARNING****DATE: 9 OCTOBER 2013****LEAD OFFICER: NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****SUBJECT: ST BARTHOLOMEW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL PROPOSED EXPANSION – DECISION****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

There is an increasing demand for infant places in the Haslemere and Hindhead planning area. There are not enough permanent primary places in the area.

St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School is one of the schools that has been identified for expansion. It is proposed that the school will expand to become a two form entry (2 FE) primary school with 420 places; the school currently has 375 places (1.5 FE at infant phase, 2 FE at junior phase).

An initial consultation has been undertaken and the Governing Body has published Statutory Notices stating the intent to increase the school as described. The Statutory Notice requires determination so that the proposal can be implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

1. The Statutory Notice stating the Governing Body's intention to expand St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School is determined, such that the school becomes a two form entry (2FE) primary school with a published admission number (PAN) of 60 from 1 September 2014.
2. St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School no longer has an admission into Y3 in September 2015.
3. The Governing Body of St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School implement the proposal, with funding for the building provided by Surrey County Council.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is an increasing demand for infant places in the Haslemere and Hindhead planning area. Numbers of children starting school in the area have been increasing over recent years. Additional classes have been provided at a number of schools including an additional half a class of reception places at St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School in both 2012 and 2013. There are not enough permanent primary places in the area.

St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School is an outstanding school and it is entirely appropriate to expand successful and popular schools in line with government policy.

<u>DETAILS:</u>

Business Case

1. Births in the Haslemere and Hindhead area dipped during 2000 and 2001 but then increased to a peak in 2005 and 2006. Since 2008, births have been relatively stable but with a gradual increase that is forecast to continue. Births are now about 10% higher than ten years ago. This means that the number of children requiring a school place has also gradually increased over the last ten years.
2. There are a number of housing developments taking place and more are proposed for the area. Families moving into new housing developments result in increased demand for school places in the area.
3. Pupil numbers entering reception in the Haslemere and Hindhead area have steadily increased apart from a slight dip in 2009. The extra demand for reception places in 2011 and 2012 was equivalent to half a class (0.5 FE).
4. To cope with the extra demand for places, an additional class was provided at Shottermill Infant School in both 2010 and 2011. A further half a class of reception places was provided at St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School in both 2012 and 2013. An additional class has also been provided at Beacon Hill Primary School for 2013. There are not enough permanent primary places in the area.
5. St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School is a popular school and for several years the numbers applying for reception places have exceeded the number of places available.
6. St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School has been judged "Outstanding" by Ofsted and it is entirely appropriate to expand successful and popular schools.
7. In addition to parental demand, the expansion of the school would increase the number of places that would be available for local children. This is likely to result in a reduction in travel, including car journeys, as fewer children would travel to more distant schools.

<u>CONSULTATION:</u>

8. Statutory consultation for a prescribed alteration has taken place with all relevant stakeholders. A consultation booklet was issued and two public meetings were held at the school in June 2013.

Consultation responses

9. Twenty four consultation responses were received. Fifteen of these were in support of the expansion (63%), eight disagreed (33%) and one did not know.
10. The large majority of those in support of the expansion were either parents of children at the school; parents of prospective pupils; staff or governors at the school. A small number were local residents.

- 11. Seven of the eight respondents who disagreed with the proposal were local residents.
- 12. The only theme and concern raised by the consultation was that of traffic and parking. This was the reason stated by all those who disagreed with the proposal but was also raised by three respondents who agreed with the proposal.
- 13. The majority of responses identified concerns that an increase in the size of the school would result in an increase in the traffic arriving at the school, causing further degradation to the un-adopted road outside the school. Inconsiderate or illegal parking by parents and carers were mentioned by several respondents and the potential safety concerns related to children needing to cross a busy road with many cars parked on either side.
- 14. Many of the respondents suggested that the expansion should only proceed if the road condition were improved as part of the plans and that a suitable travel plan be put in place for school drop-off and collection times.

Comments on responses

- 15. The planning application required for the programme of building work for the expansion will draw out specific aspects of the traffic and access issues related to St Bartholomew’s Church of England Primary School.
- 16. A further requirement for the planning application is a revised travel plan which will include strategies for reduction of car journeys and increases in sustainable modes of transport. It is likely that the expansion of the school will result in an increase in places for children who live locally; this should reduce the number of children travelling to more distant schools and therefore decrease the number of car journeys.

Statutory Notices

- 17. The Governing Body considered the responses to the consultation and determined that Statutory Notices should be published. Statutory Notices were published and closed on 23 August 2013.
- 18. Six further representations have been received; all stated objection to the proposal on the basis of the condition and the safety of the un-adopted road outside the school and how it will be affected by an increase in the size of the school.
- 19. At least half of the representations stated that the proposals should only go ahead if the condition and safety of the road were to be collectively addressed by all involved parties, including the school, the Council and the Diocese.
- 20. As stated in points 16 and 17, these issues will be required to be considered as part of the planning application.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

- 21. A project to provide additional buildings will be undertaken by Guildford Diocese and as such there are risks associated with this proposal. There is a risk that the project will not complete within the timescales outlined above and

there may be site abnormalities not identified as part of the initial feasibility exercise.

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22. Should the approval of additional school places not be granted there is the risk that Surrey would fail to meet its statutory duty in providing sufficient school places, without mitigation at another site.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

23. The scheme is on the Schools Basic Need Programme and has approved funding in the 2013/18 medium term financial plan. The scheme will be implemented by the Governing Body of the school in partnership with Guildford Diocese and Surrey County Council. All schemes are expected to remain within the funding which has been allocated to them in the MTFP.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

24. 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

25. 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.
26. 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

27. 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.
28. 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.

- 29. 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.
- 30. It is intended that the school will promote cohesion of the local communities in the area served by the school through extended services to enhance the well-being and future opportunities of those children in the area.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

- 31. This proposal would provide increased provision in the area, which would be of benefit to all in the community served by the school.
- 32. 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 the Haslemere and Hindhead area.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

- 33. 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.
- 34. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, will be considered and addressed in the planning and design of this building project.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

- 35. 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.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 36. Subject to approval, the Governing Body of the school in partnership with Guildford Diocese and Surrey County Council will proceed with the proposal to ensure that sufficient accommodation is in place at St Bartholomew’s Church of England Primary School for September 2014.
- 37. 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)
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Consulted:

- David Hodge, Leader of the Council;
- Nikki Barton, Local Member for Haslemere
- 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 increasing the PAN of St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School
 - Consultation responses for St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School
 - Statutory Notice for St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School (July 2013)
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