

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 37

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Proposed Expansions of Primary Schools
Date of Meeting: 4 January 2010
Report of: Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Name: Gillian Churchill Tel: 29-3515
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Key Decision: Yes Forward Plan No: CYP13474
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place for any child that wants one. Current and projected pupil numbers for the city as a whole show there is an immediate and ongoing need for additional school places in the city. This need is most acute in south central Hove and on the Brighton / Hove border.
- 1.2 At the Cabinet Member Meeting held on 5th October 2009 it was agreed that the CYPT would consult with the following schools and their communities on the proposal to expand;
- Goldstone Primary School (1 new form of entry)
 - Westdene primary School (1 new form of entry)
 - Queens Park Primary School (0.5 new form of entry)
- 1.3 This report sets out the consultation that has been undertaken with the schools and their governing bodies since that meeting in respect of these proposed expansions and seeks approval to undertake the next steps in the process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member agrees that the CYPT move to the initial consultation process regarding the proposal to permanently expand Goldstone, Queens Park and Westdene Primary Schools by one form of entry with effect from September 2011.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Pupil numbers across the city are rising generally and the rise in south central Hove is greater than the city generally and already causing a pressure on school places that cannot be met locally.
- 3.2 At the Cabinet Member meeting held on October 5th 2009 it was agreed that the CYPT should start discussions with three schools with a view to proposing permanent expansions from September 2011.

- 3.3 Since then meetings have been held at all three schools to discuss the expansion proposals with head teachers and the governing bodies. The need for local places for local children was explained to the schools as was an indicative timeframe for providing the extensions to the school premises that would be needed to accommodate the additional pupils.
- 3.4 It was also explained that to support the expansion of the schools we would work with them to design and build an extension of the school premises that will be funded by a combination of the Primary Capital Programme funding, the schools own Devolved Formula Capital and other council capital funding. These extensions will provide additional classrooms to accommodate the extra pupils. There will also be some internal remodelling and refurbishment to provide accommodation that will better fit the needs of current teaching and learning and the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 3.5 By increasing the number of places available at the junior school it is likely that more local families would be able to access their local primary school. This will assist the Local Authority ambition that schools become centres of community learning.
- 3.6 The initial view of the governing body of Goldstone Primary School is that they welcomed the opportunity to expand the school by a form of entry provided that the ethos of the school is not compromised as a result.
- 3.7 The initial view of Queens Park primary school is that they welcome the opportunity to expand by half a form of entry. They feel that this is a sensible proposal that will serve the community well and afford the opportunity to provide enhanced extended service provision at the school.
- 3.8 The initial view of the governing body of Westdene Primary School is that they welcomed the opportunity to expand the school by a form of entry and look forward to the positive benefits such expansion will bring, both for the school and for the local community.
- 3.9 The views of the governing bodies will be finalised following the consultation and they will hold a special meeting at the end of the consultation period to determine their final views on the proposal.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Discussions have been held with Head Teachers and their governing bodies at the schools potentially affected by the proposed expansions within this report.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The cost of providing the required additional primary school places will need to be met from within the resources allocated by the DCSF. This funding is notified to us on a three year rolling period to match Government spending review periods. We know the indicative allocations until March 2011 but not beyond. The funding between 2008/9 and 2010/11 is committed to providing the additional places at Balfour Junior, Davigdor Infant and Somerhill Junior Schools.

There is currently £1million not committed to these existing projects. This £1million will be allocated to the new projects proposed in this paper.

The funding that will be available for providing additional school places going forward from March 2011 will come from the New Deal for Schools, Primary Capital Programme and New Pupil Places funding. Using the current allocations as a basis for forecasting future settlements it is likely that there will be approximately £4.5 - £5million available each from 2011/12 year to meet the costs of these projects. In addition the Local Authority has just been notified that we have been allocated £5.7m under the Basic Need Safety Valve to provide additional school places in the primary sector. This funding has to be spent by August 2011 and could be used to meet the cost of these proposed expansions although consideration needs to be given to whether this is the best use of these funds.

Further details and their financial implications will be reported in due course as the individual projects are proposed and developed.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michelle Herrington

Date: 04/12/2009

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Council has a statutory duty under section 14 Education Act 1996 to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in its area. Given the projected future growth in pupil numbers the Council will need to ensure that there are sufficient school places within the city to meet its statutory duty. In seeking to permanently expand the three schools named in the report, the Council will need to comply with the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which sets out the statutory procedures to be complied with when expanding an existing mainstream school.

Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston

Date: 11/12/2009

5.3 Equalities Implications:

Planning and provision of school places is conducted in such a way as to avoid potentially discriminatory admissions priorities or planning processes. The city council and voluntary aided school governing bodies must be mindful of best practice as described in the Admission Code of Practice.

5.4 Sustainability Implications:

All new extensions to Brighton and Hove Schools utilise, where ever possible, environmental and sustainable principles such as higher than minimum insulation levels, the use of efficient gas condensing boilers, under floor heating, solar shading and natural ventilation. Materials are sourced from sustainable sources where ever possible.

5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

Throughout the development of the proposals consultation will be undertaken with community groups and the Community Safety team and police liaison officers. It is anticipated that by including the community in the development and use of the facilities at the schools that crime and disorder in the local area will be reduced. This will be further improved by offering extended use of the facilities to the community outside of the school day

5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

It is important that this opportunity is taken to ensure the future provision of learning and teaching, and continuing improvement in standards of education in the city.

5.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

To meet the projected future growth in pupil numbers we should be looking to provide a minimum of 135 additional primary school places by 2014, which equates to 4.5 forms of entry.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 There are no alternative options.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Current and projected pupil numbers for the city as a whole show there is an immediate and ongoing need for additional school places in the city as a whole. This need is most acute in south central hove and on the Brighton / Hove border.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- 1 Draft Consultation document for Goldstone Primary School
- 2 Draft Consultation document for Westdene Primary School
- 3 Draft Consultation document for Queens Park Primary School

Documents In Members' Rooms

- 1 None

Background Documents

1. None