

Subject:	Options for Providing Additional School Places in September 2013		
Date of Meeting:	14th January 2013		
Report of:	Director of Children's Services		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Note: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Council Procedure Rule 3, Access to Information Procedure Rule 5 and Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) are that the timeframe for the statutory consultation process did not expire until, 4 January 2013 which was after the report deadline.

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Current and projected pupil numbers for the city show there is an immediate and ongoing need for additional school places in the city as a whole. This need is most acute in the west of the city.
- 1.2 To meet the projected future growth in primary pupil numbers we should be looking to provide a minimum of 120 places by 2015 in Hove, and a further 30 places in the south of Brighton by 2014.
- 1.3 The Children and Young People Committee agreed at its meeting on 15th October 2012 on the preferred option for providing an additional two primary forms of entry that are needed by September 2013.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to report the outcome of the initial consultation undertaken in November and December 2012 and to seek Children and Young People Committee endorsement to proceeding with the publication of the necessary statutory notice.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Children and Young People Committee endorses the preferred option of expanding Stanford Community Infant School and Aldrington Church of England Primary schools by one form of entry each from September 2013.
- 2.2 That the Children and Young People Committee agree to the publication of the required Statutory Notices to progress these proposals.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Primary pupil numbers across the city are rising generally and the rise in south central Hove is greater than the city generally. This has already caused pressure on school places that could not be met locally. This prompted the introduction of 6 primary 'bulge' classes for September 2012.
- 3.2 In the last four years the Council has permanently expanded Davigdor Infant and Somerhill Junior, Balfour Primary, Goldstone Primary, Benfield Primary and Westdene Primary schools by one form of entry each and Queens Park by half a Form of entry. The Connaught building was converted in 2011 to take an additional three forms of entry as part of West Hove Infant School.
- 3.3 Officers now anticipate a demand for a further 4 forms of entry in Hove by September 2015, and a further one form of entry for south Brighton by September 2014. These projections are based on post code and current GP registration data. The Council will therefore need to secure additional school places on these timescales in order to comply with its statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure sufficient suitable school places for pupils in the area of the Authority.
- 3.4 Following the Children and Young People Committee meeting on 15th October 2012 it became apparent that it would not be possible to expand the Connaught site of West Hove Infant School in time for September 2013 as recommended at that meeting. Discussions were therefore held with other schools in the appropriate areas of the city following which Aldrington Church of England Primary School and the diocese confirmed that they were willing to be brought forward in the process.
- 3.5 The report to Children and Young People Committee meeting on 15th October 2012 also recommended that Stanford Infant School be proposed for expansion from September 2013. This was on the basis that this school is within the area of need for additional school places.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006, associated Regulations, and statutory Guidance published by the Department for Education all provide that those bringing forward statutory proposals to expand a school must carry out a period of formal consultation prior to publishing statutory proposals. Although the Regulations do not specify the consultation's duration the Guidance advises that proposers should allow a period of at least 4 weeks. Further, the methods by which the consultation should be undertaken are not prescribed, that is a matter for the proposers, to determine.
- 4.2 Following the Children and Young People Committee meeting on 15th October 2012 a consultation document was prepared for each of the schools and was circulated to the parents, pupils, staff and governors at the schools. Copies of the document were also placed in the reception areas of each school and on the website of each school.
- 4.3 Copies of the consultation document were also sent to ward councillors, the local Members of Parliament, representative of the Diocese and displayed at pre school settings in the relevant areas of the city.

4.4 The consultation document included details of how to respond and a tear off response slip. The closing date for the consultation for Stanford Infant School was 21st December 2012, and 4th January 2013 for Aldrington Church of England Primary School. A summary of the responses to the consultations are reported below. A copy of all consultation responses received by midday on Monday 7th January 2013 have been placed in the Members room.

4.5 Aldrington Church of England Primary School.

4.6 At the time of writing this report a total of 27 responses were received of this 12 were in favour, 11 were against and 4 were undecided. Copies of all responses received by midday on Monday 7th January 2013 are in the Members rooms.

4.7 The main reason for supporting the proposal was an understanding of the need for additional places locally.

4.8 The main reasons for not supporting the proposal were;

- Lack of space on the school site (both inside and out)
- Road safety implications
- Disruption caused by building works
- The detrimental effect on the Christian ethos of the school
- The effect on other schools in the city.

4.9 The school governors accept the need for additional school places and are keen to ensure that the plans for school expansion help facilitate cohesion throughout the whole school community, and that the proposed building design takes this into account.

4.10 The results of the consultation indicate that there some opposition to the proposal, particularly among parents of pupils already at the school. There is also some support for the proposal, particularly among parents of future pupils of the school. In light of the situation it is recommended to proceed to the next stage of the process which is the publication of the statutory notices.

4.11 Stanford Infant School

4.12 At the time of writing this report a total of 192 responses were received of this 22 were in favour, 162 were against and 8 were undecided. Copies of all responses received by midday on Monday 7th January 2013 are in the Members rooms.

4.13 The main reason for supporting the proposal was an understanding of the need for additional places locally.

4.14 The main reasons for not supporting the proposal were;

- Lack of space on the school site (both inside and out)
- Road safety implications
- Detrimental to the wellbeing of staff and pupils
- The consultation process and the proposal have been rushed
- Disruption caused by building works
- Main hall not large enough for whole school assemblies
- What happens when the pupils move to junior school?

- Portacabins are not desirable accommodation for learning.
- 4.15 In addition to the above representations a 500 name petition in support of the proposal has been handed in to the Council. A copy of the petition is in the Members room.
- 4.16 A further petition against the proposal is to be presented at the committee meeting. It is understood that this petition has circa 300 signatures.
- 4.17 There have also been a further 4 representations received asking questions about the implication of the proposal. These questions will be answered by the lead member at the Committee meeting. Copies of these questions are in the Members rooms.
- 4.18 The School Governors have concluded that they do not support the proposal at the present time because they feel that the consultation has been inadequate as a result of there being no building plans to discuss. Very initial plans have been shared with the school but at this stage in the process there are no detailed plans available.
- 4.19 The results of the consultation indicate that there is considerable opposition to the proposal, particularly among parents of pupils already at the school. There is also some support for the proposal, particularly among parents of future pupils of the school.
- 4.20 Although it is noted that there is considerable opposition to this proposal, this must be balanced against the need for local school places in this part of the city which is acute. Without the additional places this proposal would provide it is highly likely that parents would have to travel some considerable distance across the city to east Brighton in order to access a school place for their very young children. It is therefore recommended that Members agree to proceed to the next stage of the process which is the publication of the statutory notices. Following publication of the notices there will be a further period within which interested parties can make representations about the proposals.
- 4.21 The feasibility into the proposed building works can proceed at the same time which will hopefully result in greater clarity for those who expressed concern about this issue.
- 4.22 Guidance issued by the DfE entitled 'Expanding a Maintained Mainstream School by Enlargement or Adding a Sixth Form' sets out the procedures that will have to be followed by the Authority in order to effect these proposed changes. A copy of this document is in the members rooms for information.
- 4.23 Once the four week period for making representations has passed, a decision on the proposals must be made within two months. The proposals will therefore be referred to full Council for decision on 28th March 2013. It should also be noted that parents are due to be advised of the outcome of their applications for infant school places for the academic year 2013/14 in April 2013. If these expansion proposals are agreed this timetable will enable these places to be taken into account when offering parents school places.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1.1 There are no direct implications as a result of the recommendation to note the outcome of the informal consultation on the proposal to extend the age range of the three schools, or the recommendation to publish the statutory notices. However if the proposals are approved at a later stage then any Capital implications of the expansion will have to be met from the existing Capital programme in 2013/14.
- 5.1.2 The revenue costs of funding the additional forms of entry will be met from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from 2013/14 onwards.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name Louise Hoten Date: 27/11/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 In order to achieve the proposed expansions it has been necessary to carry out a formal consultation exercise with all interested parties. If the decision is now made to proceed with the proposals following this consultation, statutory notices will need to be published in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and associated regulations. There will then follow a period of 4 weeks within which any person may make comment or object to the proposal.

At the end of this representation period a decision on the proposals will need to be taken within 2 months. Admission arrangements are specifically reserved to full Council under the constitution. It is therefore proposed that the proposals will be considered at full Council on 28 March 2013.

Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston Date: 07/01/2013

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 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.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 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.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 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

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 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

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 These proposals are an essential element in providing additional local school places for children.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The paper presented to the Children and Young People Committee on 15th October 2012 presented the full range of options available to address the need for future. These were the preferred options for addressing the immediate need.

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 the west of the city.
- 7.2.1 To meet the projected future growth in pupil numbers we need to provide additional forms of entry for primary age children.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. DfE document 'Expanding a Maintained Mainstream School by Enlargement or Adding a Sixth Form'
2. Responses to the consultation for the proposed expansion at Stanford Infant School

3. Responses to the consultation for the proposed expansion at Aldrington Church of England Primary School

Background Documents

