

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

22 MARCH 2018

SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING (BROMSGROVE AREA) – FAIRFIELD FIRST SCHOOL, DODFORD FIRST SCHOOL, HANBURY CE FIRST SCHOOL & ST ANDREWS CE FIRST SCHOOL (BARNT GREEN)

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr M J Hart

Relevant Officer

Director of Children, Families and Communities

Local Members

Mr P M McDonald, Mr R P Tomlinson, Ms S A Webb

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills is recommended to:**
 - (a) note the details of the School held consultations during the period 30 October 2017 to 8 December 2017;**
 - (b) approve the recommendation to enlarge the premises at Hanbury CE First School to accommodate an increase in the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 27 to 30 with effect from September 2020;**
 - (c) approve the allocation of £201,480, as part of the Children's Services Capital Investment Programme 2018/19, to support the project referred to in (b) above; and**
 - (d) authorise the Director of Children, Families and Communities to take all necessary steps to finalise and implement the decisions made in respect of the above, including the publication of the statutory proposal and public notice.**

Background

- 2. In October 2017 the Leader delegated authority for the publication of statutory proposals for prescribed alterations to maintained schools to:**
 - a) The Director of Children, Families and Communities, in consultation with the CMR for Education and skills, for all decisions in respect of initial**

- consultations for statutory proposals relating to prescribed alterations to maintained schools and organisation changes;
- b) The CMR with responsibility for Education and Skills to take all decisions in relation to the public notice of statutory proposals relating to prescribed alterations to maintained schools including school places and organisation changes
 - c) The Director to decide the proposals where no objection to the public notice is received and
 - d) The CMR for Education and Skills to decide proposals where objection to the public notice is received.

3. The County Council has a statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places for all children resident in the county who wish to attend a state funded school. In the September 2016 Reception Year intake the Council had sufficient places to meet immediate demand in the Bromsgrove area. However, it is now unable to accommodate children moving into the area (in-year changes).

4. The total number of places available in September 2017 was exceeded by four. Numbers now suggest that as this cohort passes through the first school phase, this demand will likely peak to an increase of 10.

Admission	Year Group	PAN	Current and forecast cohort using average intake rate	Surplus places
September 2016	Reception	730	729	1
September 2017	Year One	730	734	-4
September 2018	Year Two	730	739	-9
September 2019	Year Three	730	738	-8
September 2020	Year Four	730	740	-10

5. To address this matter, seven pupils have so far been offered places at surrounding out of area schools, four of which have been placed in Rubery schools, one in Droitwich, one in Wythall, and one has opted to be home educated. A further six applicants moving into Bromsgrove chose to remain in their original out of county school whilst awaiting vacancies. Officers of the Directorate's Provision Planning & Accommodation Team have been in consultation with the Bromsgrove first schools to find a solution that will enable further numbers in this particular cohort to be able to attend a school within the Bromsgrove District.

6. Any applications for Year 1 places, which is an existing year group in schools, are outside the normal admission round. These pupils are therefore exceptions to the infant class size legislation and schools were requested to take some children over the Published Admission Number (PAN). This however, does not provide a long-term solution. Therefore, following initial discussions with the first school Head Teachers, the Council has looked to create more places within those schools without waiting lists. Five Bromsgrove First schools (Catshill, Dodford, Fairfield, Finstall, and Hanbury) were approached in May 2017 by the Council to consider longer term expansions. To this end, three schools (Dodford, Fairfield, and Hanbury) volunteered for consideration, with St Andrews CE First School, Barnt Green requesting inclusion late on.

7. Of these, Fairfield First School was rated 'Good' by Ofsted during its last inspection in March 2015. Hanbury CE First School was rated 'Good' in October 2014; Dodford also

received a 'Good' rating in December 2016. St Andrews CE First School, Barnt Green was rated 'Outstanding' in December 2013.

8. In accordance with the DFE's guidance *Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained School Places – Statutory Guidance for Proposers & Decision-Makers* dated April 2016 local informal pre-publication consultations were undertaken during October to December 2017 to measure school and community stakeholder support for possible expansion. The responses from these consultations are summarised via Appendix A.

9. As with most school expansions, there were concerns raised by local residents about the impact of additional children on traffic congestion at the start and end of the school day. This was particularly the case at Fairfield First School, where the issue has been exacerbated by the location of the school on the main road of the village, and previous changes to parking in the local area. The school is proactive in encouraging parents and pupils to use sustainable methods of travel to school and to be mindful of local residents. A travel plan will be submitted as part of any planning application for the necessary building works and will consider appropriate measures to mitigate the impact on local residents.

10. In relation to the potential expansion of Fairfield First School, the proposal would require the Council to utilise some of the neighbouring farm land, currently owned by the Council but leased to a tenant for farming purposes. The tenant has raised an objection to his possible loss of livelihood if the expansion was to go ahead on land currently leased to him. Further consultation with the tenant and the Council's property agents, Place Partnership Ltd, is being undertaken in order to identify what the implications might be in this respect and no recommendation is currently being made regarding Fairfield school.

11. As part of the informal pre-publication consultations, stakeholders were advised that following these consultations, if the Council's Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills decided to support any of the proposals, the Council would then publish formal statutory proposals and public notices (where applicable). Stakeholders will then have a final opportunity to comment or object within the four-week representation period. Notices are published in the local press and displayed outside the school concerned. At the end of the four weeks if objections are received the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills will make the final decision, if no objections are received the Director of Children's Services will make the final decision.

12. The prescribed process as defined by the DfE does not require the Council to follow a formal statutory process for the expansion at Hanbury CE First School, as the size of the proposed expansion falls below the more than 30 pupils or 25% increase in the prescribed alteration guidance. However, the expansion proposals for the other three schools do require the Council to follow the statutory process.

13. At the same time as these informal consultations the Directorate commissioned feasibility work to be undertaken via Place Partnership Ltd to assess likely building options, costs, and timelines. The feasibility reports are summarised in Appendix B.

14. Following these schools-led consultations, St Andrews CE First School, Barnt Green, opted to withdraw from further consideration leaving the three others, Fairfield First, Hanbury CE First, and Dodford First schools still interested in possible expansion.

15. Further discussions with the three remaining interested schools took place. Given current demand for places within the bulge year group, both Fairfield and Hanbury schools confirmed that on the condition that they are expanded they would be able to admit up to 30 pupils each in the bulge year group from September 2018.

16. Dodford First School was unable to accommodate extra pupils in the existing year group from September 2018 as current accommodation and staffing ratios made this very difficult. The feasibility suggested that completion of proposed expansion works at Dodford would not likely be completed before November 2019. In the light of these two factors and given current demand of ten places, it is proposed not to proceed with this proposal.

Recommendations

17. On the basis of the information contained in this report, and taking account of the feedback from the consultation in Appendix A, it is recommended to proceed with the expansion of Hanbury CE First School from a PAN of 27 to 30 (Option 1 – classroom extensions only).

18. Expanding this school should not have a detrimental impact on other schools in the area as the Council is forecasting increased local need.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

19. Funding is available to support this project within the Council's Basic Need allocations.

20. The Cabinet on 4 February 2016 delegated authority to the Director of Children, Families and Communities, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, to allocate to specific schemes in the Basic Needs allocations.

Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments

21. A Privacy Impact Assessment Screening was completed in respect of the expansion proposal. The screening did not identify any potential Privacy considerations requiring further consideration during implementation.

Equality and Diversity Implications

22. An Equality Relevance Screening has been completed in respect of these recommendations. The screening did not identify any potential Equality considerations requiring further consideration during implementation.

Supporting Information

- Appendix A – Summary of Responses to School Consultations
- Appendix B – Analysis of Feasibilities Data

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

April 2016 – DFE Publication - Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained School Places – Statutory Guidance for Proposers & Decision-Makers.

Autumn 2017 – Public Consultation Information for Dodford First School, Fairfield First School, Hanbury CE First School, and St Andrews CE First School, Barnt Green.