

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 25

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Options for Providing Primary School Places
Date of Meeting: 5 October 2009
Report of: Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Name: Gill Sweetenham Tel: 29-3474
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Key Decision: Yes Forward Plan No: CYP12452
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 The most immediate need for places has been partially addressed by providing one permanent additional form of entry at Davigdor Infant and Somerhill Junior Schools and one temporary additional form of entry at West Blatchington Primary School.
- 1.3 To meet the projected future growth in pupil numbers we should be looking to provide a minimum of 135 additional primary school places which equates to 4.5 forms of entry by 2011.
- 1.3 This report sets out the options available to meet the increase in demand for pupil places in the primary sector in Hove and on the Brighton-Hove border where the need is most acute and immediate.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member notes the possible options for additional primary places within the City.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member agrees that the CYPT will pursue the option of providing a new two form entry Primary School by further considering the top 4 scoring sites in Appendix 2: Hove Park depot, Hove Park Upper School, BHASVIC and Leicester Villas.
- 2.3 That the cabinet member agrees that should a new primary school be developed, the LA would either enter the competition open to those who would wish to operate the new school or be assured that those competing would offer places to local children.

2.4 That the Cabinet Member agrees that the CYPT will consult with schools and their communities on the proposal to expand the following schools.

- 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)

2.5 Should the creation of a new school not be possible in the necessary timeframe, then the Cabinet Member agrees that the CYPT will consult with the following schools regarding proposals to expand by one form of entry:

- West Blatchington Primary School
- Aldrington or St Andrews VA Primary Schools

2.6 That the Cabinet Member agrees to urgent discussions with Westdene and Goldstone Primary Schools with a view to providing one extra form of entry at each school for September 2010, accommodated in temporary buildings, in order to help meet the immediate demand for places.

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 The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People has already agreed proposals to expand Davigdor Infant and Somerhill Junior Schools by one form of entry from September 2010 and 2011 respectively. However this will still leave a demand for a further 4.5 forms of entry by September 2011 based on the current GP registration data.

3.3 Consideration has been given as to how best to accommodate the additional pupils that are now looking for a maintained school place. The options available are to expand existing schools, to build a new school or a combination of both. Attached at Appendix 1 is a technical analysis which outlines relevant technical detail.

3.4 The size of a school site also has to be considered when proposing expansions of existing schools since increasing the intake of a school is likely to affect the size of the outside facilities required.

3.5 The options considered for a new school site are as follows:

- Connaught Road School
- Holy Trinity Church, Blatchington Road
- Playing fields between Cardinal Newman School and BHASVIC
- Site 1 Development site on the Brighton / Hove border
- Site 2 Potential development site in central Hove
- Park depot adjacent to Hove Park
- Co locating a school on the site of Hove Park Upper School
- Playing field accessed from Leicester Villas

3.5.1 Each of these proposals has its own issues and challenges. These are shown in the spreadsheet attached as Appendix 2.

3.5.2 Analysis of the options detailed in Appendix 2 identifies two sites where the Council owns the land and a further two options where the land is in private ownership.

3.5.3 In proposing a new school there are a number of factors that need to be considered. Owing to recent changes in School Organisation legislation it is now necessary to carry out a competition when proposing a new school. This competition is open to anyone who wishes to operate a school not just the local authority or existing faith groups etc.

3.5.4 In most circumstances the Local Authority (LA) will act as the decision maker in the competition. However if the LA decides that it wishes to enter the competition itself the decision is made by the Schools Adjudicator.

3.5.5 In the case of the need for additional places within the Hove area it is very clear that the need is for places available in particular community areas. If a faith group or a group with a particular ethos entered the competition it is possible that they will set admission criteria that will be based participation in their faith group or agreement with a particular ethos. This will not in itself assist in the provision of local community places as pupils could be drawn from a wide area, although it might be possible to negotiate with faith or other outside bodies on criteria that would support local attendance.

3.5.6 For this reason if it is decided that a new school will provide part of the solution to the current issue it will be important that the LA either submits an entry to the competition or is assured that other providers will make places available to children living in the locality of the new school.

3.5.7 The time needed to undertake a competition has to be added to the time it takes to identify a site and prepare a design for the new school. Consequently providing a new school is not a solution that can be implemented quickly.

3.5.8 The cost of providing a new 2 Form Entry (2FE) all through primary school is in the order of £7 - £7.5 million, not including site acquisition costs. The cost of providing a new school falls to the LA regardless of whether they win the competition or not. At the present time there is no funding specifically allocated for meeting this cost. It would be necessary to identify the funding from within the existing capital funding allocated.

3.6 The initial options considered for expanding existing schools are as follows:

- Goldstone Primary School by one form of entry
- Queens Park Primary School by 0.5 form of entry
- Westdene Primary School by one form of entry

Further option considered were

- West Blatchington Primary school by one form of entry
- St Andrews or Aldrington Church of England Primary Schools by one form of entry

Whichever of these options is taken forward it is important to note that the site size recommended by BB99 is not met at the majority of schools within Brighton & Hove.

- 3.6.1 Each of these proposals has its own issues and challenges. These are shown in the spreadsheet attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.6.2 Analysis of the options detailed in Appendix 2 identifies Goldstone, Westdene and Queens Park, Primary Schools as the best options for the provision of a new community primary school places within the next four years. It may also be possible to expand West Blatchington and St Andrews or Aldrington Primary Schools.
- 3.7 In addition to longer term solutions arising from school expansion or new build, the growth in potential pupil numbers (see Appendix 1) suggests that the Council should be considering the provision of extra Reception places for the 2010 admission round. Clearly places in the short term cannot be housed in permanent build. It is therefore suggested that if proceeding with the longer term provision of extra places at Westdene and Goldstone Primary Schools, temporary accommodation is located at those sites as soon as possible to allow an additional form of entry at both for September 2010. This will go some way towards relieving the immediate pressure on places in Hove and on the Brighton/Hove border.
- 3.8 If places are to be provided for 2010, then there is a need to consult the Schools Adjudicator as his permission is necessary for any changes to admission arrangements already published. It is also reasonable to ensure that any such changes are made known to parents and carers whose children will be in the 2010 admission round so that they can express school preferences made on the basis of full information. Practical arrangements for the procurement and installation of temporary accommodation will also require as long as possible lead in time.
- 3.9 Owing to the commitments we already have for projects to increase pupil numbers there is not sufficient funding to be able to house any of the pupil numbers in permanent accommodation before 2011.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Discussions will be held with Head Teachers and their chairs of governors at the schools potentially affected by the proposed options within this report.
- 4.2 Once it is agreed how best to progress with the provision of additional primary places within the city our formal consultation with schools, governors and the community will be carried out prior to changes being agreed.
- 4.3 City Planning has been consulted in relation to the potential sites for a new school and believes that the Depot site adjacent to Hove Park would appear in principle to present the fewest planning challenges.

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. This would mean that there was no funding for any other projects of any nature (apart from some very limited legislative works) until at least April 2014.

The Local Authority have submitted a bid to the DCSF to the Basic Need Safety Valve to help meet the costs associated with providing additional school places. Details of this bid are included in Appendix 1.

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

Finance Officer Consulted: Michelle Herington

Date: 14/09/2009

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Given that the report sets out that there is a projected future growth in pupil numbers and an anticipated shortfall in places in both the academic years 2010-11 and 2011-12, Members should be mindful that 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. Once decisions have been taken as to how the proposed increase in places will be achieved, the Council will need to comply with the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which sets out the procedures to be complied with

when proposing a new school or making changes to an existing mainstream school.

Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston

Date: 21/09/2009

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.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

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

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 This paper presents the range of options available to address the need for future primary places within the City.

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

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Technical analysis
2. Options Analysis

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None

