

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 13

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Proposed Additional Primary Places in Hove (NB-Item was originally titled 'Proposed new school for Hove Interim Measure')

Date of Meeting: 12th July 2010

Report of: *Director of Children's Services*

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Key Decision: Yes Forward Plan Number CYP

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report is complemented by a separate report and appendices in Part 2 of the agenda.
- 1.2 Current and projected pupil numbers for the city (see Appendix 1) as a whole show there is an immediate need for additional primary school places in the city which is likely to continue to grow. This need is most acute in south central Hove and on the Brighton / Hove border.
- 1.3 Projections of pupil numbers indicate the urgent need to find further additional forms of entry in the primary sector in Hove by 2011. Given the overall pressure on places and the location of existing surplus places in the east of the City, three forms of entry in Hove, in addition to those in the City already proposed at Goldstone, Westdene and Queens Park, are now needed to meet local need for places and avoid long journeys to schools in the east of the City where there are vacant places.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) To establish in Hove a 3 form entry temporary school expansion taking 90 Reception age children, opening in September 2011
- (2) To base this temporary expansion at the Connaught Centre site or another site subject to further negotiation.
- (3) To make arrangements for the management of the additional places by a Hove primary phase school for a period of up to two years.
- (4) On 11 October to present the Cabinet Member with proposals identifying the site and governance of the temporary provision.

- (5) In December 2010 to present to the Cabinet Member with proposals to make the temporary expansion permanent provision on a specific site by September 2012, or earlier if possible, including the options and legal requirements for permanent governance arrangements for the additional 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 in the city generally and is already causing a pressure on school places that cannot be met locally. 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 temporary additional forms of entry at West Blatchington Primary School, Goldstone Primary School and Westdene Primary School. In addition to these changes Benfield Junior School has been temporarily expanded for September 2010 to take two reception classes (a total of 6 additional forms of entry).
- 3.2 Consultation is currently being undertaken on proposals to permanently expand Goldstone and Westdene Primary Schools by one form of entry and Queens Park Primary School by half a form of entry. It is also proposed to consult on a permanent change in the age range of Benfield School from September 2011. However this will still leave a demand for additional forms of entry based on the basis of current GP registration data and the forecasting model.
- 3.3 Consideration has been given as to how best to provide these additional forms of entry. At the meeting on 26th April 2010 the Children and Young People Cabinet Member agreed that the CYPT should pursue the option of providing a new two form entry Primary unit either on the site of Hove Park Upper School or at the Depot adjacent to Hove Park. Since that meeting revisions to the forecast have been made which suggest that an additional three forms of entry in Hove would be justified rather than two. This would also help prevent the need for lengthy pupil journeys from Hove to the east of the City to take up vacant places.
- 3.4 A further development since the April CMM is that City College have declared that The Connaught Centre is surplus to their requirements and the Council has entered negotiations to acquire the site.
- 3.5 The Council will continue to examine other options for a new school site, temporary or permanent, against the possibility that the Connaught site could not be used or could not be in use until later than 2011.
- 3.6 Given the urgent need for school places the Council will seek to establish three additional forms of entry on one of the Hove site options. This will be under the temporary management of a local primary phase school for a period of up to two years. This will allow sufficient time to consolidate the planning for the longer term delivery and governance of a permanent three form entry all through primary school, including a competition to determine who should run the school if that is required.
- 3.7 Options for the permanent governance arrangements for the additional places must be determined after two years of their management by another school.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Council is negotiating with City College regarding the acquisition of the Connaught site.
- 4.2 The Council will explore with schools in Hove the options available for governance and management of the temporary provision.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Financial Implications:

- 5.1.1 The Capital Cost of any additional extension(s), additional build on council land, or purchase of any other site(s) would have to be met from the Schools Capital programme budget for 2011/12 onwards. Depending upon which option is taken, there may be opportunities to link this with any BSF funding that may be allocated to the Council in 2011/12 onwards. However given that the recent budget announcement indicates that government departments will have to find reductions of 25% over the next 4 years, we are not sure if this will impact on funding for School Capital. If this reduced in 2011/12 then the funding for an expansion, additional build or purchase in Hove will have to be the first call on any reduced budget.
- 5.1.2 There is a risk that approval to move forward with any of these options, additional funding might have to be found from elsewhere in the Council's Capital Programme to ensure that any option taken can be achieved within the timescales set out.
- 5.1.3 The revenue funding implications will be that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2011/12 will include the funding for 3-16 year old pupils, therefore when planning the 2011/12 schools budgets, the funding for any expansion to a particular school will have to be calculated.

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore

Date: 30/06/2010

5.2 Legal Implications:

- 5.2.1 Given that the report sets out that there is a projected future growth in pupil numbers and an anticipated shortfall in places in the academic year 2011-12, Members should be mindful that the Council has a statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in its area. In the event that the recommendation is rejected and the additional places described are not provided, Members must be satisfied that there are still sufficient school places across the City. If Members are satisfied that there are sufficient places across the City, Members will also wish to consider the impact upon parents who would then live in an area of the City with too few school places under the current admissions criteria.
- 5.2.2 The recommendations provide for the CM to make a decision as to the site and management of the temporary expansion of an existing school on a new satellite site at the meeting in December, by which time the negotiations involving the Connaught will have concluded and it will be known whether this is a viable option for the City. This will enable a more informed decision to be made than would be realistically possible at this stage.

- 5.2.3 The recommendation allows the CM to proceed with a temporary solution to the spaces problem for September 2011, whilst allowing further time for more detailed proposals to be developed concerning a permanent solution by way of either the expansion to an existing school, or the provision of a new school. These options can then be considered at a time when the national developments in the legislative and financial position of the LEA will be clearer, as well as the position in relation to the Connaught is known.
- 5.2.4 Were the Council to wish to proceed with proposals to establish a new school at this stage the implications of the statutory requirements against the key deadlines for decision making if a new school is to be provided by September 2011 need to be considered. 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 changes to a maintained mainstream school.
- 5.2.5 By contrast the recommendations in the report can allow the school places identified to be delivered upon the timeframe needed.
- 5.2.6 The absolute national deadline for expressing preferences for an infant/primary school place is 15 January 2011. To avoid a breach of the admissions code it is important that the final decision can be published in compliance with the admissions code. The recommendation does not allow for a decision to be made in time to go into the admissions booklet for September 2011, due for publication in August 2010. However the admissions booklet can alert parents to the prospect of a decision being made in October identifying a site and arrangements for a temporary school. It is recommended that in the event the recommendation is agreed following any decision in October all parents are contacted and notified of the new temporary arrangement, so that they are given the option of including this when expressing a preference.

Lawyer Consulted : Natasha Watson

Date: 29/06/2010

5.3 Equalities Implications:

- 5.3.1 Planning and provision of school places are 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:

- 5.4.1 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:

- 5.5.1 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:

5.6.1 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:

5.7.1 Given the overall pressure on places and the location of existing surplus places in the east of the City, three forms of entry in Hove, in addition to those proposed at Davigdor, Westdene and Queens Park, are now needed to meet local need for places.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 This paper presents proposals to address the need for additional primary places within the City.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 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 as a whole. This need is most acute in south central Hove and on the Brighton / Hove border.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Projected Pupil Numbers

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. NONE

Background Documents

1.

2.

