

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 18

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Primary School Places in Brighton & Hove
Date of Meeting: 15th September 2010
Report of: The Director of Children's Services
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 There is increasing pressure on primary school places within the City and particularly in Hove as the child population continues to grow. The Council has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools and thus school places for all those in the area who want a place in a maintained school.
- 1.2 The Council has processes in place to estimate how many places are needed and translate this data into planning and a capital programme. This has recently been set out to the CYPT Cabinet Member Meeting through a series of reports relating to individual school developments and wider planning for places in Hove. The report on "*Proposed Additional Primary Places in Hove*" is attached as an appendix to this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the actions proposed to secure additional primary places in the City and particularly in Hove.
- 2.2 That the Committee notes the statistical basis on which these proposals have been based, and the potential variations in outcome which must be allowed for in forecasting.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 16th June the Committee agreed to request a report for this meeting to include information on:

- a three-year timeline from September 2010 – September 2013 that demonstrates clearly the numbers of children in the city entering primary education;
 - which parts of the city will experience particular pressures;
 - the planned additional capacity being identified by the LA and when that additional capacity will be available.
- 3.2 The CMM report “Proposed Additional Primary Places in Hove” (Appendix 1) sets out increases in school places already underway across the City as a whole, and proposals for further places currently at the planning and negotiation stage. In doing so it refers to data anticipating the requirement for places up to 2013 based on children already born and currently living in the City. It goes on to project the numbers of places needed as far as 2021 based on two different population growth models.
- 3.3 It refers to the use of the Connaught site, subject to availability, to provide additional primary places. It also refers to other possibilities to be taken forward simultaneously so that there are options available for places in Hove should one planning route not come to fruition. Part of the purpose of the building proposals for primary places is to reduce the necessity for pupil travel so that reasonably local places can be offered.
- 3.4 The Council bases its pupil number projections on GP Registration data which identifies the home post code of all those living in the City. This data is updated every year. This is then further broken down by placing birth dates into academic years, and using postal areas as the basis for more local projection. This data is naturally limited to those already born and living in the City. Longer term planning must be based on projecting trend.
- 3.5 The forecasting to date does not take into account possible future housing developments in the City. Where developments receive approval and developers take the build forward then the projections will need to be adjusted. In doing so a number of assumptions will have to be made about the proportion of school age children that any type of development is likely to yield. This will vary depending upon the type of housing especially the size of each unit; the proportion of affordable housing and the location of the development. The CYPT has models for this purpose. It may also be the case that not all those moving into new developments will be from outside the City (which is particularly true in the case of affordable housing), so this possibility needs to be factored in.
- 3.6 Appendix 2 sets out the GP Registration data into postal areas by the academic year in which a child resident in the City is born. The Committee may wish to note the population growth shown in the Hove postal areas BN3 1 to BN3 5 for birth years from 2004 onwards. Although other parts of the City also show some growth, some show steady state or even decline. This more local data is taken into account when considering the required location of new school places.
- 3.7 However, care must be taken in the use of this data as those living in some postal areas in the most recent birth years may not remain there by the time that

they reach school age. Some may move within the City, for examples to areas where larger housing is available. Children tend to be most mobile in terms of address in the first few years of their lives. This is why the use of updated GP data from year to year is important, not only to include the most recent birth year but also to follow trends in numbers from previous birth years. Whilst the population trend has undoubtedly been upwards across the City, micro planning at a postal area basis is much less reliable. In committing scarce capital resources the Council must be satisfied that it is using those resources where they will be needed in the future, and not simply satisfying a short term local blip in numbers.

- 3.8 The availability of complete academic birth years of GP data means that in terms of actual population located in any area, the Council only has a 3½ year planning window. For example, when the September 2009 to August 2010 birth year data becomes available late this autumn, it refers to a group starting school in September 2014.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The required legal public consultation and planning processes have or will be taken forward for all the proposed school extensions and new building described in the report “*Proposed Additional Primary Places in Hove*” (Appendix 1 to this report). Further consultation with Brighton & Hove schools is planned with regard to the governance options for the proposed new Hove school and the need for adjustments in Portslade that would accompany the possible transition of Benfield Junior to an all through primary school.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 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.

The revenue funding implications will be that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2011/12 onwards will include the funding for 3-16 year old pupils, therefore when planning the 2011/12 and future schools budgets, the funding for any expansion to a particular school or new school will have to be calculated.

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore

Date: 3rd August 2010

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Council has a general duty to secure that there are sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in its area (section 14 of the Education Act 1996), and the power to establish new schools, and increase numbers at existing schools to enable them to fulfil this duty. However newly established schools must be open to competition in terms of who can run them, so whilst the City may plan for new places the governance model of the school may be something other than a Community School. It is also the case that new proposals for Free Schools could be made in response to parental demand, which would clearly impact on place planning for the City.

Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston

Date: 25/08/2010

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Planning and provision of school places must be conducted in such a way as to avoid potentially discriminatory admissions priorities or planning processes. The city council, voluntary aided school governing bodies and other school providers must be mindful of avoiding bad practice as described in the Admissions Code.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 All new school buildings and 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. So far as is consistent with the availability of capital resources for providing new places the Council should seek to reduce the need for primary age pupils to travel across the City to attend school.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 It is anticipated that by including the community in the consultation process on the development and use of the facilities at 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 The Council has a duty to secure the provision of sufficient school places in the City. In doing so it is seeking to ensure that the use of scarce capital resources is directed to those parts of the City where the need for places is clearly identified through reliable data and data projection. This is limited by the relatively short planning horizon through the use of GP data and the potential for future housing developments which may change the demand pattern for school places.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 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. The permanent conversion of Benfield Junior to an all through primary school will also be required to meet local demand for places.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

**Appendices: Appendix 1: Report to CYPT CMM meeting 12th July 2010
Proposed Additional Primary Places in Hove
Appendix 2: GP Registration data up to birth year September
2008/August 2009**

Documents in Members' Rooms: None

Background Documents: None

