

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to Executive Board

Date: 17 December 2014

Subject: Outcomes of statutory notices to increase primary school provision in Roundhay



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Roundhay and Moortown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

This report contains details of a proposal brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to ensure sufficiency of school places. The changes that are proposed form prescribed alterations under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and accompanying statutory guidance set out the process which must be followed when making such changes. The statutory process to make these changes varies according to the nature of the change and status of the school.

In this case the school, Gledhow Primary School is a community school, the proposer is the local authority. At its meeting in September 2014 the Executive Board gave permission for the local authority, as proposer, to publish a statutory notice. The notice was published on 26 September 2014 and expired on 24 October 2014. It provides the opportunity to make representations regarding the proposals. One representation was received during the statutory notice.

As the representation objected, the School Organisation Advisory Board (SOAB) was convened to consider the matter and make a recommendation to Executive Board. SOAB met on 13 November, the notes of their meeting are attached at Appendix 1.

The report details the representation received in response to the statutory notice and seeks a final decision from Executive Board.

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 a final decision must be made within two months of expiry of this notice, therefore by 23 December 2014, or be referred to the School's Adjudicator for a decision. Any significant change to the proposal at this stage would require the proposal to be rejected, and fresh consultation to begin, precluding the delivery of places for 2016.

Recommendations

Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve expansion of Gledhow Primary School by increasing its capacity from 420 pupils to 630 pupils, increasing the admission limit in reception from 60 to 90 from September 2016
- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Lead

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report contains details of a proposal brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to ensure sufficiency of school places. The report describes the outcome of a statutory notice in relation to the expansion of primary provision in Roundhay for September 2016, and seeks a final decision on the proposal.

2 Background information

- 2.1 At its meeting in September 2014 the Executive Board considered the outcome of consultation on a proposal to expand Gledhow Primary School from a capacity of 420 pupils to 630 pupils, increasing the admission number from 60 to 90 pupils with effect from September 2016.
- 2.2 Executive Board gave permission to publish a statutory notice on this proposal, which was brought forward under Education and Inspections Act 2006 and in accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. The notice was published on 26 September 2014 and expired on 24 October 2014. A final decision must be made within 2 months of the expiry of the notice, therefore by 23 December 2014. The Executive Board is the decision maker for this proposal.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 One representation was received, which objected to the proposal. Where objections are received School Organisation Advisory Board (SOAB) is convened to consider the matter and make a recommendation to Executive Board. SOAB met on 13 November, the notes of their meeting are attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The governing body confirmed that they support the expansion of the school to 3FE in principle and are closely engaged with the consultation and design process for the new school accommodation. Their guiding principles in terms of design for the new build are that the design provides the environment in which to maintain the delivery of the full curriculum and their status as an "outstanding" school, allows for safe and effective movement throughout the new school, has sufficient hard play area and the full range of facilities to ensure that ethos of the school will not be detrimentally affected.
- 3.3 The issues raised in the objection are outlined in the following paragraphs.
- 3.4 **Concern:** The school has a friendly and close atmosphere which is commented on by Ofsted, and the children feel cared for. This might be eroded with a larger school.
- 3.5 **Response:** The headteacher and governing body are very keen to retain the ethos of the school and are confident that they would manage any changes successfully without losing the close personal relationship with all pupils.
- 3.6 Support would be provided by the Learning Improvement Team at Leeds City Council to assist them in managing the change process. They would also be able to draw upon the experience of other schools that have expanded from 2 to 3 form entry. Contact has already been made with the Headteacher and leadership team

of Westerton Primary School which also expanded from two to three forms of entry and is an outstanding school.

- 3.7 Research indicates that size is not the determining factor as regards to those schools which are successful. The quality of teaching and learning and of leadership and management are the key drivers for success. Gledhow Primary School benefits from both of these. There is no evidence to suggest that the expansion would have a negative impact upon the education of the pupils.
- 3.8 **Concern:** There are concerns over the disruption and health and safety issues from the required construction work.
- 3.9 **Response:** The building project would be carefully managed to ensure the health and safety of children. Whilst it is not always possible to do all building work during school holidays, any works that are likely to be very noisy or disruptive would be carried out as far as possible whilst pupils and staff are away, whilst also minimising disruption for residents. Any building work carried out while the school is open would be completely segregated from the pupils and staff to ensure safety, and minimise disruption to teaching and learning.
- 3.10 **Concern:** More traffic would mean that the chances of someone being injured or even killed would be increased. It is also likely to increase the issues with roads and drives being blocked and confrontation between drivers such as fighting over parking spaces.
- 3.11 **Response:** It is acknowledged that there are some traffic issues in the vicinity of the school and particularly at peak times e.g. the beginning and end of the school day, and that expansion may increase traffic to the school. However this proposal is designed for local children, minimising this impact as far as possible.
- 3.12 Highways and Planning departments have been engaged in the initial design work for the new accommodation. If the proposal progresses any building work would be subject to the normal planning permission process. The Highways Department is a statutory consultee on all planning applications and therefore officers would formally comment on this application. Any measures identified as a requirement for approval would be incorporated in the scheme of works. In addition a green travel plan would need to be developed by the school focusing on encouraging journeys on foot to school.
- 3.13 **Concern:** Dog fouling on streets and near the school is already an issue, especially as there is a field at the back of the school used predominantly by dog walkers. The current plans are to bring this field back into school use, which may mean that there is less dog fouling close to the school. However it will probably mean that there is more fouling in the street surrounding the school, as the field will no longer be able to be used.
- 3.14 **Response:** The space in question is land which is already part of the school site and it is maintained by the school but not currently fenced in as part of the school site. Any issues on the land or surrounding areas relating to dog fouling should be reported to the Local Authority as dog fouling is not permissible and is a fineable offence.

- 3.15 **Concern:** The current plan is to build new classrooms etc. on part of the school playground. Although this loss would be compensated by bringing the field back into school use, this could not be used when wet. I understand that there are plans for some of the current field to be converted to an all-weather play area.
- 3.16 **Response:** The land lends itself to sports usage by the school and it would provide additional green space for school use. Some outdoor hard play area would be lost due the construction of additional school accommodation, however any play space used to accommodate new buildings would be re-provided elsewhere on the site. The school have been keen to ensure the plans for the new school accommodation include sufficient and appropriate play space for the children. The site is sufficiently large to accommodate the additional buildings and there is sufficient hard and soft play space for a 3FE school, in line with Department of Education guidelines.
- 3.17 **Concern:** Do not agree with increasing the number of primary school places available in the Roundhay area, if there are then also no plans to increase the numbers of secondary school places available. The demographic data clearly shows that the area of most need is around North Roundhay/Street Lane where Talbot Primary School is the nearest primary school. This will expand the catchment area and just seems to be the cheapest and easiest option, but not the best one for the longer term.
- 3.18 **Response:** Although it is acknowledged that there is a particular issue for children for whom Talbot Primary School is their nearest school, it is not currently possible to expand that school. The expansion of any provision will impact on the patterns of distribution of pupils, but the expansion of Gledhow Primary School would address the need for additional places in the immediate area they live in.
- 3.19 As larger cohorts move through the primary schools, there will be a need to expand secondary provision across the area and plans will be brought forward.

4 **Corporate Considerations**

4.1 **Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Consultation was managed in accordance with all relevant legislation and local good practice. The notice was publicised in the Yorkshire Evening Post and copies were placed on all the school entrances. The full proposal was placed on the school and council website.
- 4.1.2 A banner was placed on the school gates/fence to raise awareness of this phase in the statutory process. A survey was set up using Leeds City Council's Talking Point to enable stakeholders to make comments about the proposals. Stakeholders also had the opportunity to make comments in writing, by letter or by email.
- 4.1.3 Ward members were formally consulted during the public consultation stage and were offered the opportunity to comment at statutory notice phase. No concerns were raised.

4.2 **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 The EDCI screening form has been completed and was attached as an Appendix to the Executive Board report of 17 September 2014. It is therefore not attached to this report.

4.3 **Council policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The proposal has been brought forward to meet the Council's statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places for all the children in Leeds. Providing places close to where children live allows improved accessibility to local and desirable school places, and thus reduces the risk of non-attendance.

4.3.2 A key objective within the Best Council Plan 2013-2017 is to build a child friendly city with a priority, 'Ensure sufficiency of school places'. The delivery of pupil places through Basic Need is one of the most basic entitlements of a Child Friendly City. A good quality school place contributes to the achievement of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to 'improve behaviour, attendance and achievement'. Gledhow Primary School was rated as 'Outstanding by Ofsted at its most recent inspection.

4.3.3 In addition, "Narrowing the Gap" and the "Going up a League" agenda are fundamental to the Leeds Education Challenge. A key area of monitoring in primary schools is the key stage 1 to 2 value added scores. The score relevant to the schools contained in this report is

- Gledhow Primary School 100.6 (Top 40% nationally)

4.4 **Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 The budget for this proposal is £3.91m. The project is intended to meet the local authority's sufficiency duty and the build costs would therefore be met by the local authority. Should the proposal be approved a planning application and request for authority to spend would be put in place.

4.5 **Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 The processes that have been followed are in accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007, and amended by School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

4.5.2 This report is not subject to call in due the critical nature of the date by which an Executive Board decision must be made. Executive Board must make a decision within two months of the expiry of the statutory notice period, otherwise the proposal must be referred to the School Adjudicator for a final decision. The statutory notice period closed on 24 October and therefore a final decision must be made by 23 December 2014. If a decision is not made, then the additional school places required for 2016 will not be secured.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The statutory time limit for a final decision on each of the proposals detailed in this report is 23 December 2014. The proposal to increase primary provision in Roundhay has been brought forward in time to allow places to be delivered for 2016. Any significant change to the proposal at this stage would preclude the delivery of places for 2016, and the authority's ability to meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of school places in the short term may also be at risk. It should be also be noted that sufficiency of school places features within the council's corporate risk register.

4.6.2 A detailed risk register would be established and would be maintained for each project if approved. It is necessary to progress feasibility design work at risk during the statutory notice phase; however the decision to proceed to detailed design stages would not commence until a final decision has been made. Any delay to the statutory process would increase the risk of delayed delivery of the building solution or financial risk of abortive fees being incurred.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Our ambition is to be the best city in the country. As a vibrant and successful city we will attract new families to Leeds, and making sure that we have enough good school places for the children is one of our top priorities. These proposals have been brought forward to meet that need and our statutory duty regarding sufficiency. They would ensure that children in Leeds would have the best possible start to their learning, and so deliver our vision of a child friendly

5.2 The proposal to expand Gledhow Primary School is a strong one. It would provide additional school places for local children. The governing body support expansion of this outstanding school. Whilst an objection was received at statutory notice phase, there is confidence that the issues raised can be overcome.

5.3 School Organisation Advisory Board (SOAB) met on 13th November to consider the Gledhow proposal, the notes of its meeting are attached as Appendix 1.

5.4 It is therefore recommended that the proposal be approved.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve expansion of Gledhow Primary School by increasing its capacity from 420 pupils to 630 pupils, increasing the admission limit in reception from 60 to 90 from September 2016
- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Lead

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.