

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to Executive Board

Date: 10 February 2016

Subject: Outcome of consultation to increase primary school provision in the Swarcliffe / Whinmoor planning area



Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Crossgates & Whinmoor		
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

This report contains details of proposals 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 the nature of the change and status of the school and the process followed in respect of these proposals is detailed in this report. The decision maker in these cases remains the local authority.

The schools which are the subject of this report are Fieldhead Carr Primary School and Grimes Dyke Primary School, both of which are community schools.

Good Learning Places Board agreed in September 2014 a process whereby a stakeholder consultation event using Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) methodology to inform consultation on options for an area, could be used to identify possible routes forward.

A consultation event was held on 21st October 2014 to discuss the options for increasing school places within the Swarcliffe / Whinmoor planning area. Following the event a two week online discussion process was carried out where a number of suggestions were put forward, which included the expansion other local schools or the creation of a new school.

Having considered all the options put forward, and how these may best meet the projected need for additional school places, two options emerged that could address the projected demand. These were Fieldhead Carr and Grimes Dyke Primary Schools and consultations took place at both schools between January and June 2015. The proposal at Fieldhead Carr received two representations that were supportive, and the Grimes Dyke proposal received 29 representations, with 26 of these being in support and three opposed.

This report summarises the outcome of consultation on these proposals and explains the rationale for seeking to publish a statutory notice at this stage for Fieldhead Carr Primary School only, of which the Local Authority is the proposer.

Recommendations

Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Fieldhead Carr Primary School from a capacity of 210 pupils to 420 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 30 to 60 with effect from September 2018.
- Acknowledge the consultation that took place at Grimes Dyke Primary School and that further school expansions will be required within this area as the East Leeds Extension progresses.

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 proposals brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to ensure sufficiency of school places. The report describes proposals to increase places at Fieldhead Carr Primary School from September 2018, summarises the outcome of a consultation from 7th January 2015 to 4th February 2015 and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of these proposals.
- 1.2 The report also makes reference to the consultation that took place on a proposal at Grimes Dyke Primary School, also within the Swarcliffe / Whinmoor planning area School during June 2015, and explains the reasons why Fieldhead Carr Primary is being recommended as the preferred option at this stage.

2 Background information

- 2.1 A stakeholder consultation event using Outcomes Based Accountability methodology was held on 21 October 2014 to discuss options for increasing school places in the Swarcliffe/Whinmoor areas. Those invited included local head teachers, ward members, school governors, parent representatives and local authority officers, representatives from the Church of England and Catholic diocesan education boards. Data about birth rates, housing, and parental preferences for schools were shared.
- 2.2 The event provided an opportunity to allow for discussion amongst small groups of stakeholders, and for options to be suggested. Although the focus was on primary provision, the event also provided the opportunity to discuss the need for Free Early Education places for eligible 2 and 3-4 year olds as well as specialist places for children with special educational needs. A number of different solutions were put forward to create additional school places and these are outlined in the discussion document, which is available online at:
<https://leedsschoolplaceplanning.wordpress.com/category/manston-swarcliffe-whinmoor/>
- 2.3 Following a short period of public discussion hosted on the on-line forum further work was carried out to review latest demographics as well as site investigation work that identified two schools within the planning area that could be expanded to meet the projected demand for school places. Although longer term it is envisaged that both schools may need to be expanded, the need based on current birth data identifies a shortfall of one form of entry (30 reception places) and due to mobility in this area it is vital that the timing of any expansion is carefully planned, to avoid over provision.

Following careful consideration to all these factors, consultation took place at both Fieldhead Carr and Grimes Dyke Primary Schools to allow a wider discussion with the community and ensure both options could be given equal consideration.

- 2.4 Consultation took place at Fieldhead Carr Primary School from 7 January 2015 to 4 February 2015 and a consultation took place at Grimes Dyke Primary from 1 June 2015 to 28 June 2015. Both consultations included further use of the

wordpress on-line forum and a number of drop-in sessions to discuss the proposals. The drop-in sessions were attended by parents, local residents and other stakeholders. Information was distributed widely, including through the school, early years providers, websites, local churches and playgroups. Meetings were also held with the governors, staff and school council of both schools and banners were placed at the schools to advertise the consultations.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 During the consultation that took place at Fieldhead Carr Primary School, there were two representations in support of the proposal. One respondent commented that the creation of additional school places at Fieldhead Carr would be beneficial to the community as there are insufficient places for local children. The other respondent stated that the proposed expansion is needed to provide additional school places for families moving to new housing in the area.

There were no concerns raised by respondents in relation to the proposal to expand Fieldhead Carr Primary School and the governing body of the school fully support the expansion proposals.

- 3.2 During the consultation that took place at Grimes Dyke Primary School, there were 29 representations in support of the proposal. Comments stated that the additional places were required to meet the need from all the housing planned in the east of Leeds. Other comments stated that there should be local schools for local children.

There were three concerns raised by respondents in relation to the proposal to expand Grimes Dyke Primary School. The concerns related to an increase in traffic and parking as well as a concern that the school site was not big enough. The governing body of Grimes Dyke Primary School supported the idea of expansion, but did have some concerns about the accuracy of the demographics.

- 3.3 The projected need for additional school places based on children currently living within the Swarcliffe / Whinmoor planning area, is one form of entry to manage demand between 2016 and 2019. In addition to this, the housing developments within the area and in particular the East Leeds Extension will create more demand for school places longer term. With a development of this size, a mixture of new schools plus the expansion of existing schools is planned to meet the demand that will be created year on year for both primary and secondary school places. It is vital that the timing of adding the additional places is managed alongside the housing developments, to ensure there is no over provision, which could impact negatively on existing schools.

- 3.4 There is clear support for both proposals and following the completion of both consultations, there has been a review of the latest demographics linked to the housing developments and further site investigation work has taken place at the schools. It is clear that both schools can be expanded by an additional one form

of entry, however there is a need for only one of these schools to expand at this stage, with a further expansion likely as the housing developments complete.

- 3.5 Fieldhead Carr Primary School already has more children aged under 5 living nearest to the school and is also located less than 0.5 mile from the northern quadrant development (East Leeds Extension) with construction due to start in 2018. Grimes Dyke Primary School is approx. 1 mile further south and is located less than 0.25 miles from the planned middle quadrant (East Leeds Extension) with construction planned to start in 2022 and approx. 0.5 miles from the Grimes Dyke housing development which is currently under construction and located across the A64.
- 3.6 In addition to the information above, there is a need to create additional secondary school places across the east of the city with limited options available to deliver this. There is a potential site large enough to provide up to 6 forms of secondary school places, within the Grimes Dyke area. One option could be to deliver this as part of a through school which may involve Grimes Dyke Primary, although further exploration of this as a viable option will need to take place. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the timing of expanding primary provision at Grimes Dyke, and the additional pressure this would put on the head teacher and staff.
- 3.7 Strategically, the expansion of Fieldhead Carr Primary School would appear the better option to progress at this stage, with an expansion of Grimes Dyke Primary School being held back until the additional primary demand is needed as the housing developments progress. This would then allow the school to further explore the through school option.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The process in respect of the proposals has been managed in accordance with the relevant legislation and with local good practice.
- 4.1.2 Consultation included a stakeholder event, a two week period of on-line consultation on the wordpress site on the range of options which emerged from the stakeholder event. This was followed by a four week period of on-line consultation on the preferred option supplemented by two drop-in sessions for parents/carers, residents and other stakeholders at both Fieldhead Carr and Grimes Dyke Primary Schools.
- 4.1.3 The drop-in sessions were information sharing sessions and also provided an opportunity for parents/carers, residents and other stakeholders to ask questions. Officers from Highways supported officers from Children's Services at these sessions. A drop in session was held at the school in the morning to coincide with parents dropping children off at the start of the school day, with a further drop-in session being held in the evening to allow parents/residents greater to engage with the consultation process.

- 4.1.4 Meetings were held with the school council, staff and governing body of Fieldhead Carr and Grimes Dyke Primary Schools. Other local schools were engaged in the stakeholder event and in the on-line consultation.
- 4.1.5 Ward members were formally consulted during the public consultation stage to ensure awareness of all proposals city-wide and to improve understanding of the impact of proposals in neighbouring areas. Local ward members have given their full support to the proposal.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The EDCI form for Fieldhead Carr Primary School has been completed and is attached as an appendix to this report.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The proposals are being 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 The proposal contributes to the city's aspiration to be the Best Council and the Best City in which to grow up; a Children Friendly City. The delivery of pupil places through the Basic Need Programme is one of the baseline entitlements of a Child Friendly City, by creating good quality local places. 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'. It is therefore important that when bringing any proposal forward, there is a degree of certainty that any change would not have a negative impact on the teaching and learning in the school. Fieldhead Carr Primary School was rated 'Good' by Ofsted at its most recent inspection.
- 4.3.3 Further objectives of the Best Council Plan 2015-2020 are 'Supporting communities and tackling poverty and 'Become a more efficient and enterprising council'. Choice and diversity for parents and families is promoted by responding to the needs of communities, by delivering additional school places in the areas where families need them. Meeting these expectations while demonstrating the five values underpinning all we do is key to the basic need programme.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 An indicative budget for the proposed Fieldhead Carr Primary School expansion project is estimated at £4.9m based on a high-level calculation that considers the amount of new build, external works and associated fees (subject to confirmation of associated Highways works). The indicative cost includes a budget of £50k for 'future occupation conditions' associated to any Highways adjustments should the need arise post occupation. An initial estimate will be provided at feasibility stage which will be refined during design development when a robust design freeze or pre-tender estimate can be provided. This will also include any costs for risks associated with further site investigation and survey information provided during the design phase.

A Design and Cost Report will be submitted at the end of this stage to request authority to spend based on the latest accurate cost information at that time, with all known risks priced at this juncture. The high level cost estimate is comparable with recent 1FE expansions. This figure allows for a cautious risk allocation to cover the number of unknown variables within the scheme which are yet to be quantified. Namely the Highways requirements and any asbestos issues associated with the expansion of and connection to the existing building.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The processes that have been and will be followed are in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 as set out in 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 subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The proposals to increase primary provision in the Swarcliffe / Whinmoor area have been brought forward in time to allow places to be delivered for 2018.

4.6.2 With the development of the Northern Quadrant part of the East Leeds Extension expected to commence in 2018, a decision not to proceed at this stage may mean a shortage of local school places and the authority's ability to meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of school places in the short term may also be at risk.

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 school places for the children is one of our top priorities. These proposals have been brought forward to meet that need, and following the appropriate consultation we now seek to move them to the next stage. 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 city.

5.2 This proposal offers a way of not only ensuring sufficiency of school places but allowing scope for other proposals in future should further capacity be needed.

5.3 The proposal has been supported by local ward members during the public consultation and no concerns have been raised.

5.4 The additional places are required to ensure the authority meets its legal requirement to ensure sufficiency of primary provision for September 2018. There is evidence of an increasing demand for school places locally which may escalate following commencement of the housing developments as part of the East Leeds Extension. It is therefore recommended that the proposal be approved.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Fieldhead Carr Primary School from a capacity of 210 pupils to 420 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 30 to 60 with effect from September 2018
- Acknowledge the consultation that took place at Grimes Dyke Primary School and that further school expansions will be required within this area as the East Leeds Extension progresses.
- 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.