

**Report of Director of Children’s Services / Deputy Chief Executive / Director of City Development**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

**Subject: Outcome of consultations to increase primary school places in Hunslet and Beeston**



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): City and Hunslet, Beeston and Holbeck	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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 the 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.

**Part A**

**Expansion proposal for Hunslet – Outcome of consultation on proposal to expand Low Road Primary School**

Detailed analysis of available demographic data has been carried out to establish the scope for existing primary school provision in Hunslet to meet expected future demand for school places in this area. This analysis has drawn attention to a need for additional school places and discussions have since followed with; Hunslet Carr Primary School,

Hunslet St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Low Road Primary School and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. These discussions were structured around the OBA methodology in order to reach agreement on the level of additional need required and the possible solutions available. A preferred option to permanently expand Low Road Primary School was determined through these discussions as a scheme able to adequately address localised pressure for school places and, therefore, public consultation on this proposal was conducted from 11th January until 5th February 2016.

Part A of this report summarises the outcome of consultation on this proposal and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of Low Road Primary School for which the Local Authority is the proposer.

## **Part B**

### **Expansion proposal for Beeston – Outcome of consultation on proposal to expand Cottingley Primary Academy**

Detailed analysis of available demographic data has been carried out to establish the scope for existing primary school provision in Beeston to meet expected future demand for school places in Beeston. This analysis has drawn attention to a need for additional school places localised to the Cottingley Hall Estate area. Discussions have since followed with; Cottingley Primary Academy, Beeston Primary School, Hugh Gaitskell Primary School, and St Anthony's Catholic Primary school. These discussions were structured around the OBA methodology in order to reach agreement on the level of additional need required and the possible solutions available. It was agreed that the only available solution able to adequately address this pressure and meet the needs of local Cottingley children is to expand Cottingley Primary Academy. A public consultation has since been conducted on this proposal from 11th January until 5th February 2016.

Part B of this report summarises the outcome of consultation on this proposal and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of Cottingley Primary Academy for which the Local Authority is the proposer.

## **Recommendations**

Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Low Road Primary School from a capacity of 140 pupils to 210 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 20 to 30 with effect from September 2017.
- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Cottingley Primary Academy from a capacity of 315 pupils to 420 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 45 to 60 with effect from September 2017.

- 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. This report is divided into two sections. Part A describes the outcome of consultation regarding the proposal to expand primary school provision at Low Road Primary School and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of this proposal. Part B describes the outcome of consultation regarding the proposal to expand primary school provision at Cottingley Primary Academy and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of this proposal.

## 2 **Background information**

### **Part A: Expansion proposal for Hunslet – outcome of consultation on a proposal to expand Low Road Primary School**

- 2.1 The available demographic data has identified that additional school places are required in the Hunslet area to meet demand from families living locally. This is due to a continuous rise in the number of 0-5 year olds residing in this area of Leeds, the interaction with schools across the Hunslet, Belle Isle and Holbeck planning areas, and an extensive programme of house building both planned and already underway in the Hunslet area. There is a particular pressure for places in the area where Low Road Primary School is situated and schools across the Hunslet area are full and unable to accommodate any additional demand.
- 2.2 A scheme to expand Low Road Primary School from 20 places up to 30 places in reception from September 2017 can be achieved within the school's existing boundary.
- 2.3 The governing body at Low Road Primary School have recognised that there is increased demand for school places locally and are supportive of plans to expand the school to help address this sufficiency issue.
- 2.4 In addition to the need for more school places, there are also inadequate Early Years places for 2 year olds and out-of-school childcare provision within the Hunslet area. Therefore, the possibility of increasing the existing childcare provision at Low Road Primary School will be explored further and, if proven to be feasible, will be incorporated into any agreed expansion plan.
- 2.5 Consultation on this option took place from 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016. This included use of the WordPress online forum and a number of drop-in sessions. The drop in sessions offered an opportunity to discuss the proposal with Leeds City Council representatives and to complete a consultation response form. Drop-in sessions were attended by parents, local residents and other interested stakeholders. An online Talking Point survey was also available during the

consultation period offering another method by which to express support or raise objections to the proposal. Information regarding the consultation was distributed widely to parents, local residents and other interested parties by Low Road School, through early years providers, via websites and social media, and by local community groups. Consultation meetings were held with the governors, staff and school council of Low Road Primary School. A number of banners were also placed at the school to advertise the consultation and leaflets were distributed to local residents.

### **Part B: Expansion proposal for Beeston – outcome of consultation on a proposal to expand Cottingley Primary Academy**

- 2.6 The available demographic data has identified that additional school places are required in the Cottingley Hall Estate area to meet demand from families living locally. This is due to a sustained increase in the number of 0-5 year olds living in this area. Cottingley Hall Estate sits in a geographically isolated location with Cottingley Primary Academy the only school situated directly in the area and it therefore experiences particular pressure for additional school places.
- 2.7 A scheme to expand Cottingley Primary Academy from 45 places up to 60 places in reception from 2017 can be achieved within the school's existing boundary with a relatively simple phased scheme. The Academy sponsor (AET) have indicated they would wish to deliver the build project themselves with the Local Authority providing a financial contribution to the overall cost of the works, in line with basic need funding rules. AET will be required to agree to Leeds City Council's terms and conditions in regard to any capital funding provided.
- 2.8 The governing body and the Academy sponsor (AET) at Cottingley Primary Academy have recognised that there is increased demanded for school places locally and are supportive of plans to expand the school to help address this sufficiency issue.
- 2.9 A review of early years provision in the area has indicated that there are sufficient early years places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds within the Cottingley area and that Cottingley Primary Academy currently offers adequate levels of out-of-school provision.
- 2.10 Consultation on this option took place from 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016. This included use of the WordPress online forum and a number of drop-in sessions. The drop in sessions offered an opportunity to discuss the proposal with Leeds City Council representatives and to complete a consultation response form. Drop-in sessions were attended by parents, local residents and other interested stakeholders. An online Talking Point survey was also available during the consultation period offering another method by which to express support or raise objections to the proposal. Information regarding the consultation was distributed

widely to parents, local residents and other interested parties by Cottingley Primary Academy, through early years providers, via websites and social media, and by local community groups. Consultation meetings were held with the governors, staff and school council of Cottingley Primary Academy. A number of banners were also placed at the school to advertise the consultation and leaflets were distributed to local residents.

### 3 **Main issues**

#### **Part A: Expansion proposal for Hunslet – outcome of consultation on a proposal to expand Low Road Primary School**

- 3.1 The expansion of Low Road Primary School is proposed as it is a good school in an area of high demographic need. The school has agreed to take a temporary additional cohort of 10 children for 2016 to meet the growing need for primary school places in the area and its governing body fully supports a proposal for permanent expansion from 2017.
- 3.2 During the consultation period there were 20 written responses received and 1 response submitted via Talking Point. 20 respondents supported the proposal to increase the number of school places and one respondent neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal. There were no objections to proposal. A summary of comments made and any concerns raised follows. A copy of the responses received can be requested from the Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Team at [educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk).
- 3.3 Those respondents in support of the proposal commented that expansion of provision would extend the opportunity for local families to preference a school close to where they live. They also commented that they are aware of high demand for school places in this area. Another commented on the good progress their children had made at Low Road Primary School. Comments were also made regarding the excellent activities offered by the school for children, and that the proposal will allow more children to benefit from these. They also commented that the proposal will help to maintain community cohesion by ensuring children attend school in their local community.
- 3.4 A concern raised by respondents is listed as follows;
- 3.4.1 **Concern:** The expansion should be limited to 10 extra pupils per year group as any number beyond this would negatively impact on this school where teachers know the children well and by name.
- 3.4.2 **Response:** The proposal is to increase the school's current admission limit in each year group from 20 to 30. The site is sufficiently large to accommodate a one form entry primary school and additional accommodation would be

established by building new classrooms and other required facilities. In addition, the head teachers and governing body are keen to ensure that the schools existing ethos and high standards are maintained and are confident that the proposed changes would be effectively managed by the school's leadership team.

### **Part B: Expansion proposal for Beeston – outcome of consultation on a proposal to expand Cottingley Primary Academy**

- 3.5 The expansion of Cottingley Primary Academy is proposed as it is the only school situated within an area of high demographic need which could provide additional local places for local children. The school has agreed to take a temporary additional cohort of 15 children for 2016 to meet the growing need for primary school places in the area and its governing body fully supports a proposal for permanent expansion from 2017.
- 3.6 During the consultation period there were 24 written responses received and 1 response submitted via Talking Point. 23 respondents supported the proposal to increase the number of school places and 2 respondents objected to proposal. A summary of comments made and concerns raised follows. A copy of the responses received can be requested from the Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Team at [educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk).
- 3.7 Those respondents in support of the proposal commented that the expansion of provision would help prepare children for high school by giving them opportunities to mix with more children. They also commented that the proposal would help ensure more local children were able to attend their local primary school. Some commented in favour of the proposal as it may lead to the creation of new jobs at the school.
- 3.8 The concerns raised by respondents are listed as follows;
- 3.8.1 **Concern:** Concerned that a bigger school will lead to lower educational standards and a more challenging environment for teaching staff.
- 3.8.2 **Response:** The head teacher, academy leadership team and governing body are keen to retain the ethos and existing high standards of the school and are confident that the proposed change can be successfully managed without detriment to the education of current and future pupils. Support could also be provided on request by the Learning Improvement Team at Leeds City Council to assist them in managing the process.
- 3.8.3 **Concern:** Classes will become crowded and facilities would need to be improved to accommodate more children, including children with disabilities.
- 3.8.4 **Response:** Additional classrooms, internal facilities (toilets, cloakrooms etc.) and outdoor play spaces would need to conform to minimum building regulations and

standards and, therefore, would be appropriately sized and fit for purpose. Staffing levels and classes would continue to be based on class sizes of 30 pupils.

- 3.8.5 **Concern:** To ensure every child's individual needs are met, more teaching staff would be needed so that none are neglected.
- 3.8.6 **Response:** The school would ensure that staffing would increase in line with the increase in pupil numbers to ensure a ratio of one teacher to every thirty children is maintained as prescribed by current class size legislation.
- 3.8.7 **Concern:** There will not be enough time for the children to eat their lunch if there are more children.
- 3.8.8 **Response:** The school leadership team would ensure that the operational running of the school is adapted to maintain the provision of breaks and lunch periods. This may be achieved by the introduction of phased lunch times across year groups. If required, additional staffing resources would be provided by the school to ensure that adequate supervision of children during break times is also maintained.
- 3.8.9 **Concern:** The road should be closed outside the school at the beginning and end of the school day as there is no footpath and, consequently, it is dangerous for children to negotiate traffic at these busy periods.
- 3.8.10 **Response:** Planning approval requires officers from Highways to formally comment on all applications. Any measures identified by highways colleagues as required for approval would be incorporated into any final proposal.

Highways colleagues have commented that a high proportion of children attending this school already travel to school on foot and it is anticipated that this would continue to be the case if the school were to expand, especially given the number of children aged 0 – 5 who live within a reasonable walking distance of the school.

- 3.8.11 **Concern:** Is it possible to build a new school instead?
- 3.8.12 **Response:** The identified level of additional need required is 0.5FE (15 places in reception) and, therefore, a new school in the area would not be a cost effective solution. Where possible, we would look to build upon the standards and management of an existing school instead.
- 3.8.13 **Concern:** Would the school be provided with improved and additional learning resources and equipment?
- 3.8.14 **Response:** Additional pupils would generate increased pupil funding to purchase the additional resources required. An assessment will be made of all internal and



external facilities such as toilets, library, ICT suite, kitchen requirements, and outdoor play equipment, and, where required, improvements or additions made.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 The process in respect of all the proposals has been managed in accordance with the relevant legislation and with local good practice.

4.1.2 The consultations carried out included a four week period of on-line consultation on the preferred options supported by use of the council's Talking Point system. Both consultations included drop in sessions for parents/carers, residents and other stakeholders at Low Road Primary School and Cottingley Primary Academy respectively.

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. Drop in sessions were held at the beginning and end of the school day to talk to parents before and after they dropped off and picked up their children.

4.1.4 Meetings were also held with the school council, staff and governing body of Low Road Primary School and Cottingley Primary Academy respectively.

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

4.2.1 The EDCI forms for Low Road Primary School and Cottingley Primary Academy have been completed and are attached as an appendix to this report.

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 These proposals are being brought forward to meet the Council's statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school for all the children in Leeds. Providing places close to where children live allows improved accessibility to local and desirable school places is an efficient use of resources and reduces the risk of non-attendance, supporting the Council's priority aim to 'Improve educational achievement and close achievement gaps'.

4.3.2 The proposal contributes to the city's aspiration to be the Best Council, the best city in which to grow up and a Child Friendly City. The delivery of pupil places through the Learning Places Programme is one of the baseline entitlements of a Child Friendly City and, by creating good quality local places that support children and young people to do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life, we can support the priority aim of 'Improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps', in turn helping to provide the skills needed to deliver

on the Council's ambition to produce a strong economy by compassionate means. A good quality school place also 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. Low Road Primary School was rated 'Good' by Ofsted at its most recent inspection. Although Cottingley Primary Academy was rated 'Requires Improvement' at its most recent Ofsted inspection the LCC Learning Improvement team are supportive of this proposal and in the school's most recent Ofsted monitoring inspection visit, which took place on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015, the attending Ofsted inspector noted that the senior leaders, governors and the academy sponsor are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement..

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 An indicative budget for the proposed Low Road Primary School expansion project is estimated at £1.7 million based on a high-level calculation that considers the amount of new build, external/internal works and associated fees. An indicative budget for the Cottingley Primary Academy project is estimated at £750,000 based on the same criteria. Once the feasibility stage is complete for both projects, and they move towards the detailed design phase, the budgets will be realigned to reflect the design freeze or pre-tender estimates which will take account of site investigations and survey information.

#### **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 Beeston and Hunslet areas have been brought forward in time to allow places to be delivered for 2017.

4.6.2 A decision not to proceed at this stage would mean fresh consultation on new proposals, and would mean places may not be delivered in time. The authority's ability to meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of school places in the short term may also be at risk.

4.6.3 There is a corporate risk associated with failing to provide sufficient school places in good quality buildings that meet the needs of local communities.

## 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 The majority of the respondents support the expansion of Low Road Primary School and Cottingley Primary Academy. Concerns and objections raised during consultation have been considered, and on balance, both proposals remain strong as they address the need for school places in the area.

5.3 The additional places are required to ensure the authority meets its legal requirement to ensure sufficiency of primary provision for September 2017. There is evidence of local need for places in both areas and it is therefore recommended that the proposals be approved.

## 6 **Recommendations**

6.1 Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Low Road Primary School from a capacity of 140 pupils to 210 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 20 to 30 with effect from September 2017.
- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Cottingley Primary Academy from a capacity of 315 pupils to 420 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 45 to 60 with effect from September 2017.
- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Lead.

## 7 **Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> 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.