

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 16TH JANUARY, 2019

PRESENT: Angela Cox in the Chair

Jackie Ward – Governor Group

5 Election of a Chair

RESOLVED – That Mrs Angela Cox be elected Chair for the duration of the meeting.

6 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Noake (Church of England representative)

7 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest made at the meeting.

8 Outcome of Statutory Notice on proposal to increase places at Benton Park School

The School Organisation Advisory Board considered a report by the Sufficiency and Participation Team regarding the outcome of a statutory notice on proposals to expand Benton Park Secondary School from a capacity of 1225 to 1500 students by increasing the admission number from 245 to 300 with effect from September 2021. The schools current SEN and 6th Form provision would remain unaffected by the proposal.

The report described the proposal brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to ensure sufficiency of school places and the representations received during the four week formal consultation period: 19th November to 16th December 2018.

The Board considered the proposals having regard to the following documents:

- The report of the Legal Adviser to the Board
- The report of the Sufficiency and Participation Team, Children and Families Service
- The consultation booklet entitled "School Places Public Consultation – Proposal to permanently expand Benton Park School from September 2021"

- Report of the Director of Children and Families to Executive Board 17th October 2018 entitled “Outcome of consultation to permanently increase learning places at Benton Park School from 2021”.
- An equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening document associated with the proposals
- The Notice publicising the consultation published 19th November 2018 “A proposal to permanently expand Benton Park School, Harrogate Road, Rawdon, Leeds, LS19 6LX to create an additional 275 secondary school places with effect from 1st September 2021
- Written representations were received from two members of the public who were objecting to the proposal, with one further response being received containing comments on the proposal.

Mr D Crawley, Acting Lead for Sufficiency and Participation Team, Children & Families, attended the meeting together: Tim Pouncey (Chief Officer Resources and Strategy), Paul McGrath (Planning Manager), Ed Staveley (Project Officer – City Development) and Dave Stainsby (Site Development Group Engineer – City Development)

Also in attendance were School representatives:

Delia Martin (Head teacher), Claire Scaife (Director of HR, Safeguarding & Facilities) and Julian Clough (School Governor)

Mr Crawley addressed the proposals and highlighted the following matters in particular:

- There continues to be an increasing need for secondary school places in the North West Leeds area with 6 forms of entry projected to be needed by 2023. .
- The draft Site Allocation Plan indicates that there is a significant new house building planned across Leeds and within the Guiseley/ Rawdon area itself over the coming years which will increase school place demand even further.
- Benton Park School is well located within this area to help support the projected increase and an increase of 55 places per year would contribute towards meeting the increasing level of demand for places in the wider North West area.
- There are limited options available to expand other schools across the Aireborough area and previous expansions of several primary schools in this area required the authority to act now to ensure it met the statutory duty for providing sufficient school places.
- The creation of 55 additional places each year at Benton Park School would provide more choice for local families and ease the ongoing increase in demand for places. This would also address significant condition issues at the school as the proposal would require a rebuild of the school.

- The proposed scheme for Benton Park School was to demolish some or all of the existing school building and rebuild a new larger school on the cleared site. Building work would be phased in agreement with the school to minimise disruption for pupils and staff
- Benton Park School's Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team were supportive of the planned expansion of the school
- Two objections were received together with one response containing comments on the proposal

In response to questions from the Board, the following information was provided:

- A full transport assessment would be undertaken to understand the traffic generation to and from the site, with mitigation measures been introduced as required
- There were currently no traffic congestion problems associate with the school but local residents would complain if vehicles were parked in wrong location
- The school had developed a good relationship with the local community with updates being provided on issues that affected the local area
- The Board were informed that there were no proposals to build any Secondary Free Schools in the area
- It was noted that the schools current SEN and 6th Form provision would be unaffected by the proposal but following a request by the Board an assurance was provided that post-16 provision capacity would be reviewed in a timely manner to ensure sufficiency does not become an issue as pupil numbers increase in future years
- The provision of a new school was an opportunity to increase the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) and would provide a modern community asset for the area
- The Board were informed that the vast majority of the 223 representations received were addressed at the Consultation Stage, only 2 objections were received following the Statutory Notice.

The Board heard from the Head teacher and the Governing Body of Benton Park School who were supportive of the proposals. The Head teacher informed the Board that the school were confident that with the necessary planning and resources they could manage the expansion of the school whilst maintaining the existing high standards.

The Board gave due consideration to the written representations which were included in the agenda documentation.

The Chair requested all parties to leave the room in order to discuss the proposals. The Board considered the comments raised during the statutory notice period, the contents of the report, the contents of the representations

submitted by members of the public during the consultation and the responses to the questions put to Mr Crawley and other officers.

The groups entitled to vote and in attendance i.e. Roman Catholic Church Diocese and the Governors Group, were unanimous in their decision to recommend approval of the proposal to permanently expand Benton Park School.

The Board recognised the need for further school places in the area and welcomed that the proposals would aid parental preference. The School's Governing Body were supportive of the proposals and were confident that with the necessary planning and resources they could manage the expansion of the school whilst maintaining the existing high standards. The Board advised that further examination of Benton Park's 6th form capacity and the schools ability to manage a potential increase in 6th Form numbers in future years was required. Some concern was also expressed about the potential highway implications as a result of the expansion but the Board were satisfied that any such implications could be addressed at as part of the planning process.

RESOLVED – It was the unanimous view of the School Organisation Advisory Board that the Executive Board be recommended to approve the proposals to permanently expand Benton Park Secondary School from a capacity of 1225 to 1500 students by increasing the admission number from 245 to 300 with effect from September 2021.