

**Report of Capacity Planning and Sufficiency**

**Report to Inner West Area Committee**

**Date: 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**Subject: Report on the need for early years and primary school places for 2015**



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|--|---|--|
| Are specific electoral Wards affected?<br>If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):<br>Armley, Bramley and Stanningley                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No            |
| Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes            | <input checked="" 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?<br>If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:<br>Appendix number: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

**Summary of main issues**

This report describes the latest position for 2 year old and primary school places in the inner west area of Leeds, in the wards of Armley and Bramley and Stanningley. It describes options for additional capacity and seeks Members views on these options and a preferred route forward.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that in order to deliver additional capacity for 2015, Executive Board be asked for permission to consult on the preferred options for expansion.

## Purpose of this report

### 1 Background information

- 1.1 There has been a rising birth rate in the city necessitating the expansion of primary provision to meet demand for places. This includes a need for more places in the inner west.
- 1.2 The area contains 14 Primary schools, Armley, Caslteton, Christ Church Upper Armley, Christ The King Catholic, Holy Family Catholic, Raynville and St Bartholomew's CE in Armley Ward, and Bramley, Bramley St Peter's CE, Hollybush, Stanningley, Summerfield, Valley View and Whitecote in Bramley and Stanningley Ward.
- 1.3 The inner west has seen a significant and steady increase in births, although with some volatility in numbers year on year. There is also significant population mobility. Expansions have already been delivered at Valley View (30 places), Bramley St Peter's CE (15 places) and St Bartholomew's (15 places), creating a combined capacity of 625 places.
- 1.4 Projections suggest a further 2 forms of entry in each ward would be ideal, and would allow a 10% surplus so that admissions can operate effectively and school places are readily available locally for children moving into the area. This would allow for house building currently with planning permission.

| Births by year of entry to school | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Armley / Wortley Planning Area    | 466  | 424  | 483  | 453  | 462  |
| Bramley Planning Area             | 412  | 390  | 407  | 417  | 414  |
| Stanningley Planning Area         | 123  | 133  | 169  | 133  | 131  |

### 2 Main issues

- 2.1 In Bramley and Stanningley ward, many of the schools are too constrained to allow expansion. Options for expansion are considered potentially feasible at Whitecote, Hollybush and Bramley Primary. Valley View has some potential for further expansion, but there are currently proposals for changes in Farsley which would impact on demand for this school, and the outcome of these need to be understood prior to bringing forward any proposal for that school.

- 2.2 Whitecote is consistently oversubscribed, whereas although Hollybush is rapidly increasing in popularity it is not yet oversubscribed. Expansion of Bramley Primary would allow an unusual admission limit of 40 to be rounded up to 60 offering organisational advantages for the school, and it would also be well placed for new housing planned very close by, but it is not currently oversubscribed.
- 2.3 Options to manage bulge cohorts, ie one off increases in admission numbers, have also been considered. Raynville offers an opportunity to deliver such capacity at short notice and represents a value for money solution with only minor modifications to a temporary building needed.
- 2.4 Discussions have been held with the family of schools to explore ideas, and the schools at the centre of these options are all happy to work with us on primary expansion projects.
- 2.5 There is a need for more Early Years places in the area, specifically for 2 year old places. The Hollybush Children's Centre reach area requires 184 more places, and Bramley 87. The Whitecote site could only take either primary or early years, but not both. Hollybush could possibly take both, and there is further early years potential at the adjacent Copper Beech site. It is believed that Bramley Primary could also accommodate both primary and 2 year old places. Expansion of primary provision as well as addition of 2 year old places at the same time at any one school would be a considerable challenge.
- 2.6 Although the birth rate suggests a need for two additional forms of entry, the data for 2013 entry also showed an increase in births, and it was possible to manage this year without additional capacity due to population mobility. However we are also seeing rises in the adjacent areas that will begin to limit the pupil movement between areas, and impact on the availability of places in the ward.
- 2.7 Balancing these issues and needs, and allowing for further future growth, it would seem prudent to prioritise early years spaces at Hollybush, and take a cautious approach to primary places and prioritise single form of entry at Whitecote. This would allow consideration of further primary expansion at Hollybush and Bramley Primary at a later date, timed to meet housing needs, and reflecting the latest preference data. Members' views are sought on these options or any others they may like to propose.
- 2.8 In Armley ward there are again a number of constrained sites, and options potentially exist to at St Bartholomew's, Castleton and Armley Primary. There is an opportunity to further expand St Bartholomew's to a full 3FE which offers organisational benefits for the school, and could be delivered relatively quickly with a small project to remodel some of the accommodation. There may be a significantly more complex and challenging and therefore costly option to expand Castleton which requires further evaluation. A project here would ideally utilise a small piece of council owned land opposite the school and look at reorganisation provision to provide a foundation unit, offering benefits for the school and children. An option at Armley Primary has been suggested whereby the adjacent tennis courts could be moved to allow expansion onto their existing site, however this is not the centre of demographic pressure and the school is undersubscribed.

- 2.9 A search for council owned sites with potential for school use did not identify anything in the area itself but did identify the former Family Learning Centre at Whingate. The school does serve the Armley community where the pressure exists, and it is a large site with significant potential. This site has been considered favourably as part of the housing allocation consultation, but the process does not create an obligation to use it for housing, and does allow for the site to now be reserved for school use. The school are aware of the potential and are currently looking at the options with us.
- 2.10 There is also a need for more 2 year old places, with Castleton Children's Centre reach area requiring 82 places and Whingate 119 places. Options at Castleton would as discussed above be complex and expensive, but further evaluation work is being undertaken. It would seem to offer a longer term option but be difficult to deliver quickly. Chapel Lane has the opportunity to offer 80 more places, and the overall site at Whingate is big enough to offer 80 places, however other options could also be explored in the area.
- 2.11 This is also an area with significant population mobility, where a cautious approach to additional capacity seems appropriate. Member's views are sought on these options or other suggestions they may wish to see explored.

### **3 Corporate Considerations**

#### **3.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 3.1.1 Any proposal would be subject to full statutory consultation process

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

- 3.2.1 No equality considerations have been identified, and any proposals would be subject to a full EDCI screening.

#### **3.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

- 3.3.1 The proposals contribute to the Children's Services obsession of improving attendance by ensuring all children have a good quality accessible school place.

#### **3.4 Resources and value for money**

- 3.4.1 The places would be funded from the council's basic need capital allocation.

#### **3.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 3.5.1 The requirement to ensure sufficiency of school places and 2 year old provision is a statutory duty of the authority.

#### **3.6 Risk Management**

- 3.6.1 All projects would be assigned to a project manager and would be subject to a full risk register should they proceed.

## **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1 There is a rising birth rate in the area, and a need to appraise options for expansion to meet the rising demand. Options have been identified for permanent expansion; however given the population mobility in the area a cautious approach would seem appropriate at this time.

## **5 Recommendations**

- 5.1 Area Committee is asked to comment on the options. It is recommended that in order to deliver additional capacity for 2015, Executive Board be asked for permission to consult on the preferred options for expansion.

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

- 6.1 There are no background documents

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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.