

**Report of Director of Children’s Services**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016**

**Subject: Outcome of consultation to increase primary school places in Hunslet**



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): City and Hunslet	<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 the proposal is detailed in this report. The decision maker in these cases remains the Local Authority.

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 the following schools located within the area of need; Beeston Hill St. Luke’s CoE Primary School, Park View Primary Academy, Greenmount Primary School, Hunslet Moor Primary School, Ingram Road Primary School, New Bewerley Community School, and St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School. A preferred option to permanently expand Hunslet Moor Primary School was agreed 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 29th February until 25th March 2016.

## **Recommendations**

Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Hunslet Moor Primary School from a capacity of 315 pupils to 420 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 45 to 60 with effect from September 2018.
- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Systems.

## 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. This report describes the outcome of consultation regarding a proposal to expand primary school provision at Hunslet Moor Primary School and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of these proposals.

## 2 **Background information**

- 2.1 Analysis of available demographic data has identified that additional school places are required in the densely populated Hunslet and Holbeck areas to meet demand from families living locally. This is due to a number of factors including: the increase in 0-5 year old children residing in these areas of Leeds and in-year pressure for places in some school year groups; the high level of interaction amongst schools across the Hunslet, Beeston and Holbeck planning areas; and an extensive programme of house building, both planned and already underway in the Holbeck area. There is a particular pressure for places in the area where Hunslet Moor Primary School is situated and schools in this area are full and unable to accommodate any additional demand. Without adding any additional places in this area it is likely that in future years some children may not be allocated a local school place.
- 2.2 The current Hunslet Moor Primary School building is situated on a constrained site which cannot be expanded. However, following reports submitted to AMB and SIB, approval has been granted to include the vacant and council owned Burton Road Centre site as part of a proposal to enable expansion of the school.
- 2.3 The governing body at Hunslet Moor 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, sufficiency officers have determined that there is a need for additional Early Years places for two year old children within the vicinity of this school. Therefore, the possibility of including new childcare provision for two year olds at Hunslet Moor 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 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016 to 25<sup>th</sup> March 2016. This included use of the WordPress online forum and the Council's Talking Point survey system. A number of drop in sessions were held for parents, local residents and other interested stakeholders, offering an opportunity to discuss the proposal with Leeds City Council representatives and to complete a consultation response form. Information regarding the consultation was distributed widely to parents, local residents and other interested parties, including through Hunslet Moor Primary School, by Early Years providers, via the Leeds City Council and School's websites, through social media, and by local community groups.
- 2.6 Consultation meetings were held with the governors, staff and school council of Hunslet Moor Primary School. A number of banners were also placed around the

school to advertise the consultation and leaflets were distributed to local residents.

### 3 **Main issues**

3.1 The expansion of Hunslet Moor Primary School is proposed as it is a good school in an area of high demographic need. The school benefits from strong leadership and management, is very positive about the potential permanent expansion and the pupils there are making good progress.

3.2 During the consultation period there were thirty six written responses received and three responses submitted via Talking Point. Thirty seven respondents supported the proposal to increase the number of school places, one objected and one respondent neither agreed nor disagreed with the 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. Others commented that the proposal offers a good opportunity to create more school places whilst also bringing the vacant Burton Road Centre site back into use. Comments were also made stating that the proposal would allow existing infrastructure to be improved which would support the educational needs of pupils.

3.4 The concerns raised by respondents are listed as follows;

3.4.1 **Concern:** The school is operating well at its current size; expansion may be disruptive, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, and threaten existing good standards.

3.4.2 **Response:** The head teacher 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.

3.4.3 **Concern:** Existing classrooms, cloakrooms and the school hall are all too small and would need to be improved to accommodate more children. The school also has insufficient nursery and reception soft surface playground space for an increased number of children

3.4.4 **Response:** The school's existing classrooms and any newly built accommodation would need to be appropriately sized and fit for purpose. Any agreed scheme would take consideration of this and, along with a review of other internal and external facilities (toilets, cloakrooms, playground space, parking etc.), any proposal would be required to conform to current building regulations and standards.

- 3.4.5 **Concern:** If the proposal to expand the school goes ahead, additional support staff would be needed to ensure every child's individual needs continue to be met.
- 3.4.6 **Response:** The school would ensure that staffing would increase in line with the increase in pupil numbers to maintain a ratio of one teacher to every thirty children, as prescribed by current class size legislation.
- 3.4.7 **Concern:** Any scheme design would need to avoid litter traps, allow for easy litter clearing and ensure the adequate provision of bins.
- 3.4.8 **Response:** The school would ensure that adequate measures are in place to address possible litter problems arising from any agreed increase in pupil numbers.
- 3.4.9 **Concern:** The roads around the school at the beginning and end of the school day are congested and can be dangerous for children to negotiate at these busy periods.
- 3.4.10 **Response:** Planning approval requires officers from Highways to formally comment on all applications. A complete reassessment of traffic management measures would be carried out as part of the proposal, the School Travel Plan would be updated, and measures identified by highways colleagues as required for approval would be incorporated into any final scheme.

Highways colleagues have commented that existing patterns of pupils travelling to this school show that a high percentage of pupils are walked to the site (around 80%). It is anticipated that this would continue to be the case if the school were to expand due to the high number of children aged 0 – 5 who live within a reasonable walking distance of the school.

- 3.4.11 **Concern:** There are already insufficient car parking spaces for staff. Additional on-site parking would be required to accommodate an increase in staffing levels should the proposal go ahead.
- 3.4.12 **Response:** Children's Services would liaise with highways colleagues throughout the design phase to ensure that requirements arising from it, such as the need for additional car parking, are incorporated into the final proposals.
- 3.4.13 **Concern:** Interpretation services should be provided at consultation drop in meetings.
- 3.4.14 **Response:** It is acknowledged that some stakeholders may require an interpreter in order to read the consultation booklet and provide a response. The consultation booklet states in 14 languages that interpretation services are available by prior arrangement and includes details of how to request this. We were not aware of any specific need for language support prior to the consultation drop ins and would ask for schools to advise us ahead of drop-in sessions if additional support is required.

## **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 consultation carried out included a four week period of on-line consultation on the preferred option supported by use of the council's Talking Point system. A number of drop in sessions for parents/carers, residents and other stakeholders also took place at Hunslet Moor Primary School.
- 4.1.3 The drop in sessions were information sharing events that 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. A drop in session was also held during the school's parent consultation day.
- 4.1.4 Meetings were also held with the school council, staff and governing body of the school.

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

- 4.2.1 The EDCI form for Hunslet Moor 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 This proposal is 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 and is an efficient use of resources. It also reduces the risk of non-attendance, supporting the 2016/17 Best Council Plan priority to 'Improve educational achievement and close achievement gaps' and contributing to the wider Best Council Plan outcome for everyone in Leeds to 'Do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life'.
- 4.3.2 The proposal contributes to the council's ambitions for Leeds to be the Best City, including being 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. By creating good quality local places that support children and young people to do well at every level of learning and to gain the skills they need for life, we can support the priority aim of improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps. In turn, this proposal provides underlying support for 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. Hunslet Moor Primary School was rated 'Good' by Ofsted at its most recent inspection.

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

4.4.1 A cautious indicative budget for the proposed Hunslet Moor Primary School expansion project is estimated at £4.5 million based on a high-level calculation that considers the amount of new build, significant internal remodelling works to create standard size classrooms, accessibility improvements, and associated fees. Once the feasibility stage is complete and the project moves to the detailed design phase, the budget would be realigned to reflect the design freeze or pre-tender estimate 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 that 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 proposal to increase primary provision in the Hunslet area has been brought forward in time to allow places to be delivered for 2018.

4.6.2 A decision not to proceed at this stage would mean fresh consultation on new proposals would need to take place, and would mean places may not be delivered in time to meet demand. 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 for Leeds to be the best city in the country and for Leeds City Council to be the Best Council. 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. This proposal has been brought forward to meet that need, and following the appropriate consultation, we now seek to move it to the next stage. This would ensure that children in Leeds 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 Hunslet Moor Primary School. Concerns raised during consultation have been considered, and on balance, the proposal remains strong and addresses 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 2018. There is evidence of need for additional primary places in the area and 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 Hunslet Moor Primary School from a capacity of 315 pupils to 420 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 45 to 60 with effect from September 2018.
- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Systems.

## 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.