

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to Executive Board

Date: 21st September 2016

Subject: Outcome of consultation to increase learning places at Hovingham Primary School



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Gipton & Harehills	<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? 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 demographic data, together with the unprecedented in-year pressure on places experienced in Harehills during the academic year from September 2015, has confirmed a permanent need for additional primary school places in the area. Discussions have taken place with local schools and the catholic diocese. The option to permanently expand Hovingham Primary School was agreed through these discussions as a scheme able to adequately address localised pressure for school places and public consultation on this proposal was conducted between 13th June 2016 to 8 July 2016.

Recommendations

Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand Hovingham Primary School from a capacity of 420 pupils to 630 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 60 to 90 with effect from September 2017.
- 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 Hovingham Primary School and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of these proposals.

2 **Background information**

- 2.1 The available demographic data has identified that additional primary school places are permanently required in the densely populated Harehills area to meet demand from families living locally. This can be attributed to the increase in births and children aged 0-5 now residing in this area of Leeds. There is a concentrated pressure for places in the area where Hovingham Primary School is situated and all schools in this area are full and unable to accommodate any additional demand. There is an immediate need for additional places in this area and it is very likely that without the additional places some children may not be allocated a local school.
- 2.2 The governing body at Hovingham Primary School are supportive of plans to permanently expand the school to help address the long term sufficiency issue. During the last academic year 2015/16, the school has responded to the in-year demand for school places locally by accommodating three temporary bulge cohorts across year one and year two. The school has also agreed to take additional temporary cohorts in reception and year one from September 2016.
- 2.3 Due to accommodating these additional temporary bulge cohorts the school building is now beyond its capacity. Capital work is programmed to take place during the 2016 summer break to provide sufficient accommodation to enable the existing bulge cohorts to move through the school. If approval of this expansion proposal is granted, the additional 2016 bulge cohort accommodation will form part of the overall accommodation strategy.
- 2.4 Consultation on this option took place from 13 June to 8 July 2016. This included use of the WordPress online forum and the Council's electronic survey system. A number of drop-in sessions were held for parents, 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 Hovingham Primary School, by Early Years providers, via websites and social media, and by local community groups.
- 2.5 Consultation meetings were held with the governors, staff and school council of Hovingham Primary School. A number of banners were also placed at the school to advertise the consultation and leaflets were distributed to local residents.

3 **Main issues**

- 3.1 The expansion of Hovingham Primary School is proposed as it is a popular and improving 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. The school already supports children and families who come from a diverse range of cultural, ethnic and faith backgrounds and would like to offer that support to more local children as numbers continue to rise.
- 3.2 During the consultation period there were 66 written responses received. There were no responses via the electronic survey. 63 respondents supported the proposal to increase the number of school places, two 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
- 3.3 Those respondents in support of the proposal commented that expansion of provision would ensure more local families had access to a school close to where they live. Other respondents felt that a larger school would mean more opportunities and activities would be available whilst others welcomed the proposal in terms of the potential improvements that would be made to the existing school site and the road safety measures.
- 3.4 The concerns raised by respondents are summarised as follows;
- 3.4.1 **Concern:** The expansion of the school may 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. The school benefits from strong leadership and engages well with the local authority. Support would continue to be provided by the Learning Improvement Team at Leeds City Council who would assist them in managing the process.
- 3.4.3 **Concern:** Will the expansion of the school mean that there will be additional teaching staff?
- 3.4.4 **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 across key stage one.
- 3.4.5 **Concern:** Improvements need to be made to the safety of the roads around school and crossing patrols and drop off parking should be considered.
- 3.4.6 **Response:** Planning approval requires officers from Highways to formally comment on all applications. Early discussions with the Highways Team have confirmed that there is a history of traffic and parking congestion around the school, however the positive steps that the school has undertaken to improve this

is acknowledged. There are some potential highway improvement measures that could be implemented as part of the proposed expansion which would help to mitigate any additional travel and parking impacts and would support safe access to the school. We would continue to work with highways colleagues throughout the development.

The school has made notable improvements to safety outside the school. The school has a travel plan and aims to explore further initiatives with pupils and parents/carers to increase the numbers of children walking to school.

- 3.4.7 **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.
- 3.4.8 **Response:** The school has an agreement with a nearby church for staff members to utilise church parking during the day. In addition, early design proposals indicate the existing staff carpark could be extended to create a small number of additional spaces.
- 3.4.9 **Concern:** The school hall would also need to be expanded to accommodate additional children and staff.
- 3.4.10 **Response:** As part of the design phase, all internal accommodation would be reviewed; including hall space to ensure sufficient accommodation is delivered where possible in line with current building bulletin guidance. The Headteacher and governing body would be consulted throughout the design stage.
- 3.4.11 **Concern:** Would the expansion of the school building result in the loss of external play space.
- 3.4.12 **Response:** In order to provide the accommodation needed for the school places there would be some loss of green space. This would be considered in consultation with the planning department and Sport England as part of the statutory planning process. Land owned by Leeds City Council to the rear of the existing school site could be developed, with the agreement of the current leaseholders, to support any loss of green space. Any development of this land would be to the benefit of both the school and wider community via the current lease holders.
- 3.4.13 **Concern:** During the building work, how would the safety of the children be maintained and how would disruption be managed?
- 3.4.14 **Response:** Any building work being carried out would be completely separated from the pupils and staff to ensure safety, and disruption to teaching and learning would be minimised where possible. The contractors used would have considerable experience in working on school sites.

- 3.4.15 **Concern:** Following the outcome of the EU referendum, the number of places required in the area may reduce over time and result in the additional places not being needed in the long term.
- 3.4.16 **Response:** We are unable to predict whether the referendum outcome will have any impact on the demand for school places in future years, although this will be closely monitored. The available demographic data indicates that there has been a rise in the birth rate and that the numbers of families moving to the area has also risen, this appears to be a consistent trend year on year and supports an increase in provision. It is the duty of the local authority to ensure a sufficient supply of local places to meet existing and future demand.

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 electronic survey system. A number of drop in sessions for parents/carers, residents and other stakeholders also took place at Hovingham 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/carers before and after they dropped off and picked up their children. A drop in session was also held in the evening to maximise engagement outside of working hours and at one of the sessions an officer from the Leeds City Council's Gypsy Roma Travellers' Outreach and Inclusion Team was in attendance to ensure that a wider number of attendees were able to discuss the proposals in their first language.
- 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 Hovingham 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 places helping to support good levels of school attendance.

4.3.2 This proposal offers good value for money through its capacity to support achievement of the Best Council outcome to give everyone the chance to do well at every level of learning, gaining the skills they need for life.

4.3.3 The proposal provides tangible support for 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 we also offer strong support towards achievement of the aim to improve educational achievement and the closure of 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. The Headteacher and the Governing Body is confident that the proposed change can be successfully managed without detriment to the education of current and future pupils.

4.4 **Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 An indicative budget for the proposed Hovingham Primary School expansion project is estimated at £3.1m based on a high-level calculation that considers the amount of new build and associated external works, internal remodelling accessibility, consequential improvements and associated fees. It should be noted the construction method has not been determined at this stage, however 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. The proposed scheme is subject to the granting of planning permission which would need to be sought prior to any construction work being carried out.

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 proposal to increase primary provision in the Harehills area has 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 would not be delivered in time. The authority's

ability to meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of school places in the Harehills area would 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 Hovingham 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 2017. There is evidence of local need for 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 Hovingham Primary School from a capacity of 420 pupils to 630 pupils with an increase in the admission number from 60 to 90 with effect from September 2017.
 - Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Systems.

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.