

Report of Director of Children and Families

Report to Executive Board

Date: 23 June 2021

Subject: Outcome of consultation to permanently increase learning places at Allerton High School from September 2022



Are specific electoral wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Adel & Wharfedale, Alwoodley and Moortown		
Has consultation been carried out?	<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
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary

1. Main issues

- This report contains details of a proposal brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to ensure a 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 status of the school. The process followed in respect of this proposal is detailed in this report. The decision maker in these cases remains the local authority (LA).
- A consultation on a proposal to permanently expand Allerton High School from a capacity of 1100 to 1400 students by increasing the admission number in Year 7 from 220 to 280 with effect from September 2022 took place between 31 March and 7 May 2021. The school's current 6th Form provision and specialist resource and partnership provision for young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) are unaffected by this proposal.
- A total of 385 consultation survey responses were received during the consultation period of which 83% either strongly or somewhat supported the proposal. 15% either strongly or somewhat opposed the proposal and a further 2% neither supported nor opposed. Further details about the responses and issues identified

by stakeholders and respondents during the consultation period are detailed in the main body of this report.

- There has been an increase in the population of children in local primary schools over recent years resulting in a number of primary school expansions. This is now feeding through into secondary schools and the number of children living across the Alwoodley/Moortown area, in particular those living nearest to both Allerton High School and Allerton Grange School, has increased. A number of local schools have been expanded or have offered additional places over recent years and further places are needed to help manage the number of secondary places available for families in the area. Current population and admissions data indicates that additional secondary school places will be required in this area by 2022 to ensure local demand is met.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- This proposal is being brought forward to meet the LA's statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for all the children and young people in Leeds. Providing places close to where projected demand for places is increasing allows improved and more sustainable accessibility to local and desirable school places, is an efficient use of resources, and reduces the risk of non-attendance.
- By providing new high quality school places within an established existing school, this proposal would support the LA's strategy to improve attendance, achievement, and attainment – the 3As; and the achievement of the Best City Priority to help 'young people into adulthood, to develop life skills and be ready for work'.
- This proposal would establish high quality mainstream school places, actively contributing towards achievement of the Child Friendly City aspiration to 'improve educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes'. In addition, the longstanding third 'obsession' – improve school attendance – has been expanded to improve attendance, achievement, and attainment – the 3As.
- Overall, this proposal offers good value for money through its capacity to support the achievement of the Best Council Plan outcome that states 'We want everyone in Leeds to do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life'.

3. Resource Implications

- Based on initial viability, the indicative cost for delivery of a scheme to support an expansion at Allerton High School is expected to be within the range of £7.5m and £8m. Feasibility is currently underway to identify the scope of works required to permanently expand the school and when complete should give an accurate estimate of the cost of the scheme.
- Once feasibility and detailed design works are completed, costs for the proposed scheme would be reviewed. Following design freeze the Director of Children and Families, in consultation with School Places Programme Board would be asked to approve final Authority To Spend (ATS) for the proposed scheme along with any necessary risk fund application, in line with the governance arrangements currently in place.

- The proposed scheme would be subject to planning permission which would need to be granted prior to the commencement of construction works and would be subject to relevant stakeholder consultation.

Recommendations

Executive Board is asked to:

- a) Approve the publication of a statutory notice on a proposal to permanently expand secondary provision at Allerton High School from a capacity of 1100 to 1400 pupils by increasing the admission number in Year 7 from 220 to 280 with effect from September 2022;
- b) Note that implementation of the proposal would be subject to the response of the proposed statutory notice and on the outcome of further detailed design work and planning applications as indicated at section 4.4 of this report;
- c) Note that the proposal has been brought forward in time for places to be delivered for 2022; and
- d) 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 a sufficiency of school places, which supports the achievement of the Best Council priority to improve educational attainment and close achievement gaps. This report describes the outcome of a consultation regarding a proposal to expand secondary school provision at Allerton High School and seeks approval to publish a Statutory Notice.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The Inner North secondary planning area referred to in this report includes the following secondary schools/academies: Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School, Carr Manor Community School, Roundhay School, Allerton High School, Allerton Grange School and Leeds Jewish Free School.
- 2.2 There has been an increase in the population of children in local primary schools over recent years resulting in a number of primary school expansions. This is now feeding through into secondary schools and the number of children living across the Alwoodley/Moortown area, in particular those living nearest to both Allerton High School and Allerton Grange School, has increased. A number of local schools have been expanded or have offered additional places over recent years and further places are needed to help manage the number of secondary places available for families in the area. Current population and admissions data indicates that additional secondary school places will be required in this area by 2022 to ensure local demand is met.
- 2.3 Allerton High School has admitted additional pupils above its admission number for a number of years to support the rising demand for more secondary places in the local area. Its Published Admission Number (PAN) permanently increased from 198 to 220 from September 2021, along with the introduction of 'zones' into the school's existing catchment priority area. The zones were introduced to manage the impact of an increase in the number of families who would not otherwise be able to secure a place at Allerton High School due to their geographical location of living furthest north in the catchment priority area, and who would also be unlikely to qualify for a place at any other local schools. Zone 1 covers the area primarily to the north of Allerton High School, including the school site, and has a higher priority than zone 2, which is to the south of the school. From September 2022 some families living in zone 2 will have a catchment priority for other schools as well as Allerton High, or be within a reasonable travel distance of other schools, so if they are unable to secure a place at Allerton High they could reasonably be expected to qualify for a place at a different local school. There are no plans to change the zones within the catchment priority area at this time so if the expansion were to progress the priority for places would remain the same as it is now.
- 2.4 In response to increasing local demand, thirty additional temporary Year 7 places were made available at Allerton High School for September 2021 following National Offer Day taking the total number of available places to 250. Temporary accommodation will be provided within the school site to support these additional places.

- 2.5 The proposal to permanently expand Allerton High School has been developed through discussions between Leeds City Council and the governing body and head teacher of the school. The governing body fully supports the proposal.
- 2.6 Public consultation on the proposal took place between 31 March and 7 May 2021. To maximise stakeholder engagement a variety of consultation methods were used, including email communications and an online survey. Three online consultation sessions were also held for parents, residents and other interested stakeholders which gave attendees an opportunity to discuss the proposal with representatives from the school leadership team, as well as the council's Sufficiency and Participation, Highways, and City Development teams. Leaflets advertising the consultation were delivered to residents in the local area. Details about the consultation were also sent to all local primary and secondary schools in the area and to other stakeholders. Information was available via the Leeds City Council website and through various social media platforms and accounts. A targeted Facebook advertising campaign was also undertaken to reach people living within postcode areas located within the vicinity of Allerton High School.
- 2.7 Online consultation meetings were held with the governing body and staff at Allerton High School and views on the proposal were sought from the student council. Local ward members and MPs have also been fully briefed on the proposal.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 There is an identified need for additional secondary places in the Inner North area of Leeds to meet anticipated demand over future years. Allerton High School is oversubscribed and has admitted more pupils than its PAN for a number of years to help meet higher demand in the area. Its PAN permanently increased from 198 to 220 for 2021 and following secondary national offer day in March 2021, a further 30 temporary places were made available at the school, taking the total number of available Year 7 places to 250 for September 2021. The school is located in an area of high demographic need and the proposed 60 additional permanent Year 7 places would address anticipated future local pressure in the Alwoodley/Moortown area.
- 3.2 Allerton High was rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted at its most recent inspection in December 2018. The school consistently achieves very good outcomes for its pupils, both in terms of raw attainment and progress. In 2019, the last year for which there are published exam results, the progress 8 score for the school was 0.69 – the second best score in the city. Disadvantaged pupils consistently achieve a positive progress 8 score. Allerton High had the highest percentage in Leeds of pupils achieving a grade 5 or better in English and Maths (69%). Post 16 results are currently the highest in the city in terms of the progress made from GCSE to A level. Allerton High is a very well led school, with a stable and very experienced senior leadership team and governing body. Behaviour is excellent. The school community is diverse but extremely harmonious. Learning Improvement supports the expansion of this successful school.
- 3.3 Allerton High School currently offers resource and partnership provision places for young people with SEND. The resource provision places are for speech and language communication and the partnership places are for young people who are on the roll of the North West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre. Both types of specialist provision currently on offer at the school would continue if the proposal to permanently expand the mainstream places went ahead.

3.4 The level of engagement with the consultation was very high. A total of 385 consultation survey responses were received during the consultation period of which 320 (83%) either strongly or somewhat supported the proposal. 58 (15%) either strongly or somewhat opposed the proposal and a further 7 (2%) neither supported nor opposed. Local ward members and the head teacher and governing body at Allerton High School are all supportive of the proposal and of the rationale behind it.

3.5 A summary of the views expressed by the 320 survey respondents who strongly or somewhat supported the proposal is below;

- 175 respondents supported the proposal as it would enable more children to attend a local high school. Many respondents made particular reference to children living relatively close to the school within catchment priority zone 2 who they said would be unlikely to secure a place at Allerton High School without the proposed additional places. 43 respondents also talked about the various benefits of young people living close enough to school to be able to walk there.
- 96 respondents stated that more secondary school places are needed in the area to meet future demand and some referred to their own experience of trying to secure a local school place for their child.
- 52 respondents made positive comments about Allerton High School and some went on to say that more children should be given the opportunity to benefit from securing a place there. Comments were made about how additional places are needed at the school to enable it to serve its local community.
- Comments were received from some families who live in the north of the priority catchment area for Allerton High School. They noted that without the catchment priority zones, which were implemented from 2021, and the proposed extra places from 2022, they anticipate that their children would be very unlikely to secure a place at Allerton High School and if so would be likely to be given a placement offer for a school a considerable distance away from where they live as they wouldn't be offered a place at any other local school.
- Some respondents referred to recent increases in the number of secondary school aged children in the area and said that more school places will be needed in future years to accommodate them. References were also made to increasing numbers of primary aged pupils moving through to secondary schools in the Alwoodley area following on from expansions to primary provision in the area over the past few years.

3.6 A summary of the views expressed by the student council at Allerton High School is below;

- Overall the student council was very supportive of the expansion proposal and stated that it was a "fantastic idea" and an "amazing expansion project". The students commented that additional students would benefit both the school and the local community. Students welcomed the potential change to the school and several commented that it would be exciting to have a fresh extension and additional resources/new facilities. One student also commented that there

would be “more space for focused learning and meaningful communication between teachers and students”.

- Some students expressed concern that the new accommodation would take up some of the large open green spaces surrounding the school and building work may cause temporary disruption to learning. One student commented that if the proposed expansion were to go ahead, the school could “become too big in terms of the number of students” and queried whether students would be able to receive the same level of support as they do now. One student was concerned that there may be more congestion around school at lesson changeover and another commented on how expensive the expansion would be. Several students were concerned that the potential expansion would worsen the already long queues for lunch in the cafeteria. Another student was concerned that the increase in the school population could cause issues with oversubscription of extra-curricular clubs and trips.
- The students suggested that the potential expansion would require more staff, additional class spaces and expanded facilities (such as the lunch hall) in order to cater for the additional pupils. One student suggested that it would be beneficial to the school community if the school continue providing support and information regarding the extension.

3.7 A summary of the views expressed by the survey respondents who strongly or who somewhat objected to the proposal along with a response is below.

3.8 **Concern that the proposed expansion would have a negative impact on class sizes, on standards of teaching and learning and on the school’s ethos.**

14 respondents had concerns that the current high standards at Allerton High School would not be maintained were it to expand. 17 respondents were concerned about a potential negative impact on teaching and learning and concerns were also raised about class sizes increasing. A small number of respondents commented that schools with relatively low numbers of pupils tend to achieve better outcomes and one suggested that other schools that have recently expanded have seen a decline in standards. Two respondents raised concerns about the current ethos of the school; one saying it is too focussed on exam outcomes and the other claiming that incidents of bullying are not adequately dealt with.

3.8.1 **Response.**

The school enthusiastically welcomes the opportunity to enable more students to benefit from its high standards of teaching and learning within a safe, secure and happy environment. The Governing Body and Leeds City Council’s Learning Improvement team believe that the school’s leadership team and staff would be able to successfully manage this change.

Were the school to expand, additional teaching and support staff would be required over the five year period that it would take for all year groups - Years 7 to 11 - to increase in size to 280 places. The head teacher has confirmed that there are no plans to increase class sizes as a result of the proposed expansion.

There is no evidence that smaller secondary schools in Leeds perform better than larger schools. Some of largest schools in Leeds are the ones with the best

Progress 8 scores. The head teacher and governing body at Allerton High School are committed to maintaining the current high standards and feel that due to the positive reputation of the school they would be able to continue to attract high quality staff. They would continue to have the very highest expectations of all members of the school community to enable all young people there to achieve success. The quality of teaching and learning would not be negatively impacted and the school's leadership and vision would remain the same.

Allerton High School's exam outcomes are very strong which contributes to the school being very popular with families. The most recent Ofsted report for the school (December 2018) stated "The school now has a history of outstanding outcomes for its pupils. Pupils make sustained progress across the curriculum and the standards that they reach are high". Exam outcomes are a key priority for the head teacher and leadership team at all schools, however there is an appropriate balance at Allerton High School between the focus on exam results and on the well-being of all members of the school community.

The head teacher has confirmed that all bullying incidents are dealt with effectively by the school.

3.9 Concern about potential negative impact on existing pupils.

Two respondents were concerned that the school is already overcrowded and that existing facilities are inadequate for the number of children currently on roll there. Some respondents suggested that the proposed expansion would lead to more pressure on the school infrastructure, especially on dining facilities and/or sports facilities. One respondent was concerned that unless the capacity of extracurricular opportunities are also increased in line with the additional number of pupils, some young people may miss out. One respondent also raised concerns about the proposed expansion coming too soon after the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic.

3.9.1 Response.

The leadership of the school would be responsible for ensuring that adequate staffing and support for pupils' welfare and wellbeing was in place, were the school to expand. The head teacher is confident that she and the senior leadership team could continue to maintain current high standards in all areas of pupils' experience at the school including continuing to provide good pastoral support for all. Despite the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic, pupils at Allerton High School have continued to make very good progress and the head teacher and leadership team are confident that they have the capacity to continue to manage this whilst successfully implementing a potential permanent expansion at the school.

The school has admitted more pupils than its PAN in recent years in response to growing pressure on Year 7 places in the area. This has put some strain on the existing facilities at the school, but the head teacher and leadership team have ensured that the school environment has remained safe for all pupils and that pupils have had adequate access to all of the facilities they need. There are plans in place to make changes to the school day to reduce pressure on current dining facilities at the school and additional temporary accommodation is being provided to support the increase of 30 Year 7 pupils agreed for September 2021.

Were the school to permanently expand, additional accommodation would be put in place to ensure sufficient teaching space and ancillary services for a school with a PAN of 280. Areas such as additional dining capacity, toilets, staff accommodation and outdoor/sporting provision would form part of the discussions with the school around requirements during the design development process. Any new accommodation would be designed to support and improve, where possible, the movement of staff and pupils around the school site.

If additional students wish to attend extra-curricular activities staffing levels would be increased as necessary.

3.10 Road safety, traffic and environmental concerns.

Respondents raised a number of concerns relating to potential increases in traffic congestion in the area, increased demand for parking and negative impact on road safety. 24 respondents were concerned about a potential increase in traffic levels in the area and 5 stated that the existing highways infrastructure is already unable to cope, particularly at peak times. Inconsiderate parking in the area near to the school at school drop-off/pick up times appears to be causing inconvenience and disruption to some local residents, with 7 respondents raising parking as a concern. Road safety concerns were raised by 4 respondents. 5 respondents raised environmental concerns including potential increases in pollution, litter and noise and a possible negative impact on local wildlife.

Some respondents requested that if the school were to expand, additional measures would be needed to manage traffic and parking in and around the vicinity of Allerton High School particularly at times of day when pupils are travelling to and from school. One respondent added that highways measures already put in place to mitigate against the impact of expansions at local primary schools have not been effective.

3.10.1 Response.

The potential permanent expansion of Allerton High School has been proposed to address an increase in the number of Year 7 aged young people in the Alwoodley/Moortown area and especially those living closest to the school. It is therefore anticipated that the majority of pupils allocated the additional places would live within a reasonable walking distance of the school. The proposed increase in pupil numbers would happen gradually over a 5 year period so the full impact would not be felt all at once.

If the proposed expansion were to progress the planning process would require a Transport Statement (TS) and Travel Plan (TP) to be developed to assess the impact of the proposed expansion on the highway network. All highways issues raised within the consultation process would be assessed as part of the TS. The TS would review collision data, speed surveys and an assessment of all existing traffic regulation orders and provide appropriate measures to meet any identified needs within the area surrounding the school. The TP would look to encourage sustainable travel modes to and from the school and the provision of improved cycle facilities and electric parking points to support sustainable travel would be considered in light of the Council's commitment to carbon reduction. All identified highways measures needed to help the school expand, including increasing on-site car parking facilities for staff, would be delivered as part of the proposals.

Highways work has recently been undertaken to improve pedestrian access, road safety and traffic flow in the area as part of the Allerton C of E Primary School expansion scheme. This work included;

- A new humped Zebra Crossing facility on Nursery Lane.
- A junction plateau at the main access point to the school on Lingfield Approach/Lingfield Gate to reduce vehicle speeds further in the area and provide level crossing points.
- Widening of the footpaths along Lingfield Approach.
- Introduction of a new footpath link between Allerton C of E Primary School and the Park and Ride site on King Lane.

In addition, part of the Park and Ride site has recently been reconfigured to allow better pick up and drop off facilities for Allerton High School pupils.

Allerton High School has high expectations in terms of how its students should conduct themselves both inside school and on their journey to and from school and the head teacher is confident that the proposed expansion would not lead to an increase in litter linked to its students.

3.11 Concern about delivery of potential new accommodation.

4 respondents raised concerns about the school site not being large enough to support the proposed expansion and some went on to say that playground space and/or sports facilities would be compromised. One respondent raised concerns about the lack of detail currently available about the new accommodation and its potential impact on pupils and local residents. One respondent commented on the importance of providing sufficient and suitable accommodation to support the additional 30 temporary places in 2021.

3.11.1 Response.

The current school building was originally designed so it could be expanded in the future if required. If the school were to expand, it is anticipated that a new accommodation block would be provided to support this. The new block would be attached to the existing main school building and would be set over multiple floors to minimise the footprint and make it more efficient in terms of impact on outdoor space.

Public consultation would take place as part of the planning submission to give local residents/parents and carers and other interested parties the opportunity to view plans and raise questions. In advance of work commencing on site, local residents living adjacent to the school would be advised of key aspects of the programme including the start date, when the most disruptive works would take place in terms of noise and handover of each phase (if phased). All contractor vehicles would be managed on the school site and deliveries would be timed to minimise the impact on the local community.

3.12 Concern that the proposed expansion of Allerton High School is not the best solution for meeting future demand for secondary places in the Alwoodley and wider area.

12 respondents were concerned that alternative solutions appear to not have been considered including expanding the capacity at other schools, establishing a new secondary school in the area or managing future need through temporary solutions. It was also suggested that the proposed 60 additional places at Allerton High School is too many.

One respondent claimed that secondary school place planning for the Alwoodley area has been too reactive and that Leeds City Council should have planned for increased demand for places following on from expanding primary capacity in the area.

3.12.1 Response.

When planning school places a number of options are considered before proposals are developed. A number of local schools have already expanded or admitted over their PANs and Allerton High School itself admitted additional pupils above its admission number for a number of years to support the rising demand for more secondary places in the local area.

Current demographic data supports the need for 60 additional Year 7 places in the Alwoodley area from 2022 to ensure that Leeds City Council meets its duty to ensure a sufficient number of places. As Allerton Grange School has already been expanded, Allerton High School was identified for potential expansion as it sits directly within the area of need and has the site capacity to expand.

The creation of a new free school would firstly require a large enough site and would also create too much provision in one area, potentially negatively impacting on some local schools across the Inner North of the city. This approach would not be effective in delivering the required places across the Alwoodley/Moortown area.

The alternative of addressing the need for more additional Year 7 places in Alwoodley/Moortown through making more offers at schools in other areas would result in some children having to travel an unreasonable distance to access a school place. This particularly applies to children living in the north of the Allerton High priority catchment area. This is because if these children did not receive an offer of a place at Allerton High, they would be unlikely to qualify for a place at any other Inner North secondary school due to those schools filling with children who live closer to them. They would then be offered the next nearest school that had a vacancy and this is highly likely to be at school more than 3 miles from the home address.

3.13 Concern about potential negative impact on other local secondary schools.

The governing bodies of two other secondary schools raised concerns that the proposed expansion of Allerton High School is not sustainable in the longer term, isn't backed up by future census data and will consequently lead to more surplus places in other schools, some of which have catchment areas that overlap with Allerton High School's catchment priority area. Their view is that if children living in the north of the Alwoodley area were to travel north for places instead of south, that other schools could collaborate to meet the need for places nearer their location. There was also a view that the proposed expansion may be a way for Allerton High to potentially expand their sixth form.

3.13.1 Response.

Pressure on secondary places in and around the Alwoodley/Moortown area has been monitored over the past few years, with additional places being created at Carr Manor Community School, Allerton Grange School and Roundhay School. The timing of any proposed changes is carefully considered to minimise the potential negative impact on other schools in the area, and current demographic data supports the need for additional Year 7 places in the Alwoodley area from 2022 to ensure that Leeds City Council meets its duty to ensure a sufficient number of places.

Creating additional places at other local schools instead of permanently expanding Allerton High School would be likely to lead to some local families being offered a school place an unreasonable distance away from where they live. Although families in Alwoodley may have preferenced schools to the north in the past, this trend has not been seen in recent years and unless parents/carers could be encouraged to actively preference these schools again, offers of places at them would not be considered reasonable due to the distances involved.

The proposal being consulted on is to permanently expand the number of Year 7 places offered at Allerton High School. If the proposal went ahead the new accommodation provided would support this expansion in Year 7 to 11 only. The potential expansion of sixth form provision at the school would be a matter for the governing body to consider and does not form part of this proposal.

3.14 Concern about the current catchment priority zones for Allerton High School which were introduced in 2021.

12 respondents commented that the zones should be amended to help more local children secure a place at Allerton High School, especially those living near to the school in zone 2. Some respondents went on to say that zone 2 includes a higher proportion of children from more disadvantaged backgrounds than zone 1 and it is discriminatory that these children have a lower priority for a place at the school.

3.14.1 Response.

The priority catchment zones for Allerton High School were introduced in September 2021 to give children living in the more rural area to the north of the school a more meaningful priority for a local school place. Without zones, it would be likely that the school would need to expand by more than 60 places to ensure that children living in the north of the Allerton High priority catchment area could secure a place there and this may negatively impact on schools in neighbouring areas. In previous years some families living in this area have expressed a preference for schools in North Yorkshire but more recently these preference patterns have shifted in favour of Leeds schools resulting in a number of children being at risk of not securing a local school place.

The introduction of zone 1 and 2 priority catchment areas was implemented from September 2021 following approval for the change being granted by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. The location of the boundary between zones 1 and 2 was determined through analysis of demographic data and was not linked in any way to

levels of deprivation in the respective two areas. Although some zone 2 children live relatively close to Allerton High School, because they also have priority for one or more other schools they have a very good chance of securing a local place if they cannot secure a place at Allerton High and if families preference these schools. Even with an increase of places at Allerton High, if the zones did not exist there is a chance that children living in the north of the Allerton High School priority catchment area would be at risk of not securing a local school place.

3.15 Concern about potential negative impact on SEND provision.

One respondent felt it was incorrect to say that the proposed expansion would not affect SEND provision at Allerton High School because the school appears to have recently stopped accepting new pupils in to the on-site Partnership Provision with North West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC). Another respondent was concerned about the sustainability of the Resource Provision for speech and language communication at Allerton High School.

3.15.1 Response.

Allerton High School currently offers both Resource Provision and Partnership Provision places for pupils with additional learning needs. As part of the work done to develop the current proposal to permanently expand the school, discussions took place with the school about the accommodation required to enable the Partnership Provision to continue. Whilst these discussions were ongoing no new children were placed into the Partnership Provision for September 2021. If the proposed permanent expansion were to go ahead the associated build scheme would include sufficient accommodation for both types of specialist provision to be able to operate effectively, however if the permanent expansion did not go ahead, further work would need to be done to understand the future accommodation requirements associated with the SEND provision. In either scenario, it is intended that both the Resource Provision and Partnership Provision places currently on offer at Allerton High School would continue to be available in future years.

In future if additional need was identified for speech and language communication provision, either locally or city-wide, proposals would be brought forward as required to address the need.

3.16 Concern about the consultation process.

One respondent was concerned that consultation activities were too focused on seeking views from people who are likely to benefit from the extra places and one respondent was concerned that a decision has already been made in respect of the proposal.

3.16.1 Response.

Public consultation on a proposal to permanently expand Allerton High School took place between 31 March and 7 May 2021. A range of activities were undertaken to raise awareness of the consultation and these were not confined to families of primary-aged children. Approximately 1650 leaflets were delivered to households in the vicinity of Allerton High School and a social media campaign took place targeting local postcode areas. Information about the consultation was posted on the Leeds City Council website. Ward members in the Alwoodley and neighbouring

wards were informed about the process and information about it was sent to the parish council. Primary schools in the local area were asked to send information out about the consultation to their parents/carers and local secondary schools and all SILCs were informed about it. As part of the consultation process three public online sessions were held which were open to anyone to attend. LCC officers and representatives from the school were in attendance at these sessions to share information about the proposal and answer questions. 309 respondents stated that they had found the information provided as part of the consultation useful.

If the proposal were to progress, the next stage in the process would be the publication of a statutory notice. Only following a statutory notice period could Leeds City Council's Executive Board make a final decision on the proposal. However, in order for the scheme to be implemented in time for September 2022, were it to be approved, some feasibility work related to the potential accommodation solution is currently being done at risk.

3.17 Concern about the cost of the proposed expansion.

One respondent was concerned that the funding required to expand Allerton High School would lead to less funding being available for other schools. Other schools in the wider area are undersubscribed and 4 respondents commented that it would be more cost-efficient to invest money in improving standards at these schools so that more young people want to go to them rather than expanding Allerton High School. One respondent was concerned about how the proposed expansion would be funded and another raised a concern that funding could run out before new accommodation is built.

3.17.1 Response.

If the proposal went ahead it would be funded primarily through the Basic Need grant which is used to deliver additional learning places in areas of identified need. The funding for this scheme would not negatively impact on the funding for any potential future expansion schemes at other schools/academies. This report includes a request for provisional Authority To Spend to fund the proposed scheme, were it to go ahead.

The popularity of schools/academies as seen through the number of parental preferences they receive is linked to a range of factors and investment alone cannot guarantee that a particular provider would become more popular, particularly to families living in other areas. The council has a legal obligation to provide sufficient school places and, should this proposal go ahead, would use a combination of available resources including government grants provided specifically for this purpose to fund expansion plans. The potential expansion of Allerton High School would not negatively impact on potential future expansions of other schools or academies in Leeds.

3.18 Concern about house prices in the area.

One respondent was concerned that the proposed increase in places at Allerton High School would lead to an inflation in house prices in the area.

3.18.1 Response.

The factors affecting house prices in a particular area are complex and variable. Leeds City Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient learning places available and this proposal has been brought forward to address an identified need for additional secondary school places in the Alwoodley area.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The process in respect of this proposal has been managed in accordance with the relevant legislation and with local good practice.
- 4.1.2 Public consultation on the proposal took place between 31 March and 7 May 2021. To maximise stakeholder engagement a variety of consultation methods were used, including email communications and an online survey. Three public online consultation sessions were also held for parents, residents and other interested stakeholders which gave attendees an opportunity to discuss the proposal with representatives from the school leadership team, as well as the council's Sufficiency and Participation, Highways, and City Development teams. Leaflets advertising the consultation were delivered to residents in the local area. Details about the consultation were also sent to all local primary and secondary schools in the area and to other stakeholders. Information was available via the Leeds City Council website and through various social media platforms and accounts. A targeted Facebook advertising campaign was also undertaken to reach people living within postcode areas located within the vicinity of Allerton High School.
- 4.1.3 Online consultation meetings were held with the governing body and staff at Allerton High School and views on the proposal were sought from the student council. Local ward members and MPs have also been fully briefed on the proposal.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 The EDCI screening form for this proposal is attached to this report.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 This proposal offers good value for money through its capacity to support achievement of the Best Council Plan outcome that states 'we want everyone in Leeds to do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life'.
- 4.3.2 This proposal is being brought forward to meet the local authority's statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places 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.
- 4.3.3 This proposal contributes to the aspiration for Leeds City Council to be the best council and for Leeds to be 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. By creating good quality local school places we can support the priority aims of improving educational attainment

and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes. In turn, by helping young people into adulthood, to develop life skills, this proposal provides underlying support for the council's ambition to produce a strong economy and a compassionate city. A good quality school place also contributes towards delivery of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to improve achievement, attainment and attendance at school.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.4 There is an identified need for additional secondary school provision in the Alwoodley/Moortown area of Leeds. This proposal would meet some of this increased demand and offer increased choice so that local families are able to access local places and reduce journey times to and from school. Allerton High School's close proximity to residential areas which have experienced population growth means that walking to school would be a viable option for many of the extra students who may choose to attend the school.
- 4.3.5 If the proposal is approved Allerton High School would need to produce an updated 'Travel Plan' which would contain a package of agreed measures to mitigate the potential impact on the highways. Leeds City Council's 'Influencing Travel Behaviour Team' would support these measures and seek to ensure safe routes to and from school by promoting walking, cycling and scooting. Progress on these matters would be monitored and support offered where appropriate.
- 4.3.6 Existing planning policies seek to address the issue of climate change by ensuring that development proposals incorporate measures to reduce the impact on non-renewable resources. The council's Executive Board has also mandated that the authority should be carbon neutral by 2030. This will result in sustainable/green infrastructure being required of all future projects in order for planning permission to be granted. To this end if the proposal progresses, any build scheme would explore the potential use of renewable energy and energy saving technologies, with the aim of increasing sustainability and minimising energy consumption. In parallel with this, the Energy Unit would support the design team to identify energy saving measures that could help achieve energy savings comparable to a 47% reduction in average energy consumption levels, in line with the 2025 requirements. The proposed energy efficiency standards are likely to increase the capital costs for any build scheme required, however, there is as yet insufficient benchmark data available to provide a reliable estimate of how much these additional measures would be likely to add to the cost of the scheme. Leeds City Council promotes an 'Invest to Save' strategy that allows access to funding in order to offset the enhanced capital costs. The improved energy efficiency would also reduce the school's overall running costs, as the building will be more economical to run long-term, eventually paying for the measures put in place.
- 4.3.7 Any contractors tendering for the proposed development would need to demonstrate a robust Waste Management Plan, be registered with The Considerate Constructors Scheme, of which, the main consideration of the scheme falls into three categories: the general public, the workforce and the environment. Contractors would also need to be sympathetic to the Leeds Talent and Skills Plan by striving to employ local trades thus reducing the impact of extended travel.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 Based on initial viability, the indicative cost for delivery of a scheme to support an expansion at Allerton High School is expected to be within the range of £7.5m and £8m. The proposed works would include the construction of new accommodation to provide additional classroom and ancillary facilities to support the proposed expansion. The proposed build scheme would enable the school to continue to operate the existing partnership and resource provisions for young people with SEND.
- 4.4.2 The proposed expansion would be funded from the Learning Places Programme, primarily through Basic Need Allocations. Once the viability/feasibility stage was complete and the scheme proceeded to the detailed design phase, budgets would be aligned to reflect that all parties have agreed the final design and cost estimate, which would take account of site investigations and survey information, in accordance with standard project and risk management principles. Once design freeze was reached, the precise funding packages would be detailed in the relevant Design and Cost Reports (DCRs) and the Director of Children and Families, in consultation with School Places Programme Board would be asked to approve final Authority To Spend for the proposed scheme along with any necessary risk fund application, in line with the governance arrangements currently in place.
- 4.4.3 The proposed scheme would be subject to planning permission which would need to be granted prior to the commencement of construction works and would be subject to relevant stakeholder consultation.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 The changes that are proposed to Allerton High School 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.
- 4.5.2 This report is subject to call in.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 These proposals have been brought forward in time to allow secondary places to be delivered for 2022. A decision not to proceed at this stage may result in fresh consultations on new proposals, and places may not be delivered in time. It may also result in further temporary cohorts being delivered in other local schools which would be more costly in the longer term. The LA's ability to meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of school places in the short term may be at risk.
- 4.6.2 In response to growing demand for Year 7 places, Allerton High School has already been admitting over its PAN in recent years. Allerton Grange School was also permanently expanded in 2021, increasing its capacity by 300 pupils across Years 7 to 11. As the number of secondary-aged students living in the Inner North is anticipated to increase further in future years, additional permanent places are required to address the growing need. A decision not to proceed with the proposed expansion of Allerton High School could result in insufficient school places being available to meet local demand.

- 4.6.3 If the proposal does not proceed there is a risk that increased demand for places in the local area would have to be met further away from the area of need, reducing the opportunity for more children and young people to walk to their local school, and potentially increasing journey times and car use.
- 4.6.4 There is also a corporate risk associated with failing to provide sufficient school/learning 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/learning places, is one of our top priorities. This proposal has been brought forward to support learners in Leeds to benefit from being able to access a local secondary place and so delivering our vision of Leeds as a child friendly city.
- 5.2 The vast majority of respondents support the proposal to expand Allerton High School, provided that the additional teaching accommodation and other facilities required to manage the increase in students is addressed. 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 In response to growing demand for Year 7 places, Allerton High School has admitted additional pupils above its admission number for a number of years and its PAN permanently increased from 198 to 220 from September 2021. A further 30 temporary Year 7 places have also been established at the school for September 2021. Allerton Grange School was also permanently expanded from 2021, increasing its capacity by 300 pupils across Years 7 to 11. As the number of secondary-aged students continues to increase this proposal would allow more children and young people to attend a local secondary school.
- 5.4 The additional places are required to ensure the authority meets its legal requirement to ensure sufficiency of secondary provision for September 2022. There is evidence of local need for places in the area and it is therefore recommended that the proposal be approved.

6 Recommendations

Executive Board is asked to:

- a) Approve the publication of a statutory notice on a proposal to permanently expand secondary provision at Allerton High School from a capacity of 1100 to 1400 pupils by increasing the admission number in year 7 from 220 to 280 with effect from September 2022;
- b) Note that implementation of the proposal would be subject to the response of the proposed statutory notice and on the outcome of further detailed design work and planning applications as indicated at section 4.4 of this report;

- c) Note that the proposal has been brought forward in time for places to be delivered for 2022; and
- d) 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.