

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES		
SUBJECT:	APPROVING PUBLICATION OF SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN		
DATE OF DECISION:	17 SEPTEMBER 2013		
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF EDUCATION		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
None

BRIEF SUMMARY

This paper sets out the content of the draft School Organisation Plan for Southampton covering the period 2013-2022. The Plan sets out Childrens Services' policies and priorities regarding education throughout the City, with a particular emphasis on the current and estimated demand for school places and provision across all education sectors (mainstream, early years, SEN, post-16 and alternative provision).

While there is no statutory requirement to produce and publish a School Organisation Plan, this document is important as it will show stakeholders the challenges that the Local Authority faces with regards to school place provision throughout the City, as well as highlighting some of the key local and national education policies under which the authority is now operating.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To approve the content and publication of the School Organisation Plan.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the appropriate officers to review, update and amend the School Organisation Plan as necessary.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Southampton City Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place to all children aged 4-15 that are living in the City.
2. In the last five years the City has experienced a significant increase in the birth rate and subsequently the demand for Early Years and primary places has risen. Further to this we anticipate an increase in the number of secondary school, SEN, alternative provision and post-16 places.
3. This document will show schools and other key stakeholders the roles and responsibilities of the Local Education Authority, estimated demand for school places, the policies under which the council is working to, the Local Authority's approach to, and priorities for, capital projects. The Local

Authority's work will be guided by the content of the School Organisation Plan and it is hoped that it will aid schools in their decision making going forward.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

4. There is no statutory duty to have and publish a School Organisation Plan so the Local Authority could decide not to produce such a document. However, due the changing nature of education, particularly regarding the greater level of autonomy for schools and a rise in the demand for places, we feel it is important to publicise what the Authority's key challenges and aims are. By sharing this information with schools, specifically that on pupil forecasts, it is hoped that they will consider current policies and the challenges that they and the City Council will face when decision making.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

5. The document is broken down into several sections:
 - Introduction and Executive Summary – purpose of School Organisation Plan and brief summary of contents
 - The Local Authority's Roles and Responsibilities
 - Capital Funding
 - Pupil Forecasts – primary, secondary, SEN, early years, post-16 and alternative provision
6. A Children's Services colleagues from the following teams have contributed to and informed the document:
 - Children's Data Team
 - SEN
 - Admissions
 - Pupil Referral Unit
 - Early Years
 - Infrastructure
 - School Standards

While the Local Authority has a reliable and standardised process for forecasting the number of early years and mainstream primary & secondary school children, it is much more difficult to forecast the number of young people that may require an SEN or alternative provision place due to the specific characteristics of young people that attend that need such support. The number of young people progressing to post-16 institutions is also hard to predict as, although young people will be required to stay in education or training longer from September 2013, many will not opt for Further Education, instead choosing to progress to apprenticeships or work based training. As such, the forecast figures for SEN, alternative provision and post-16 have been formulated by calculating the proportion of children that are currently in these sectors in comparison to the total number of children attending schools in the City. This proportion has then been applied to the future numbers on roll that we are forecasting. A number of caveats to these forecasts are included within the document.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

7. The School Organisation Plan makes no specific commitments to capital or revenue expenditure, although it does provide an overview of the Local Authority's approach to capital expenditures on schools (section 6).
8. To summarise, section 6 sets out the capital funding that is available to Local Authorities (largely DfE Basic Need Funding) and what the priorities are for this, namely primary and secondary school expansion. This section also sets out the criteria upon which capital projects are based (demand, cost & site feasibility and value for money).

Property/Other

9. There is no specific commitment to altering existing buildings or constructing new buildings, but the pupil data in the Plan will necessitate the requirement for capital works across the education estate.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

10. There is no legal obligation for the Local Authority to have a School Organisation Plan, but we do retain the responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. Local Authorities must also ensure that there are sufficient schools in their area and promote diversity and parental preference.
11. The significant actions that will likely follow from the School Organisation Plan will be the expansion of schools. Alterations, changes, creation or removal of school provision across the City is subject to the statutory processes contained in the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education & Inspections Act 2006. Proposals for change are required to follow the processes set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) Regulations 2007 as amended, together with the corresponding Admissions Regulations, as appropriate. Statutory Guidance on bringing forward proposals applies, which requires a period of pre-statutory consultation (and additional rounds of pre-statutory consultation if further viable options are identified during initial consultation) followed by publications of statutory notices, representation periods and considerations of representations by Cabinet or considerations by the Admissions Forum and approval as part of the Admissions Process as required.

Other Legal Implications:

12. In bringing forward school organisation proposals the Local Authority must have regard to the need to consult the community and users, the statutory duty to improve standards and access to educational opportunities and observe the rules of natural justice and the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, article 2 of the First Protocol (right to education) and equalities legislation.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

12. This document will align with the Childrens Services vision for education (yet to be published) and Southampton's SEN Strategy.

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	School Organisation Plan 2013-2022
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	None	
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