

DECISION-MAKER: CABINET
SUBJECT: INCREASE IN PUPIL NUMBERS AT BITTERNE PARK SECONDARY SCHOOL
DATE OF DECISION: 17 FEBRUARY 2015
REPORT OF: CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND CHANGE

CONTACT DETAILS

AUTHOR: **Name:** David Cooper **Tel:** 023 8091 7501
 E-mail: david.cooper@southampton.gov.uk

Director **Name:** Alison Elliott **Tel:** 023 8083 2602
 E-mail: alison.elliott@southampton.gov.uk

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

BRIEF SUMMARY

Following a process of statutory consultation, this paper is seeking approval to expand Bitterne Park Secondary School from 1500 to 1800 pupils from 1 September 2017. The published Admission Number (PAN), the number of Year 7s admitted in each academic year, for the School would rise from 300 to 360 from the same date and in subsequent years until the new capacity is fully achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To note the outcome of statutory consultation as set out in this report;
- (ii) To authorise the increase in pupil numbers at Bitterne Park Secondary School to 1800; increasing the PAN of the School to 360 from 1 September 2017;
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Director, People, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Change, to do anything necessary to give effect to the recommendations in this report.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The number of pupils requiring a place in the City's Secondary Schools is set to increase as the current (and expected) high numbers in the City's primary sector progress to secondary. The additional places at Bitterne Park Secondary School will help the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty to provide a School place to all young people who require one. The School is also currently oversubscribed and will need to expand to take account of parental choice.
2. The buildings and infrastructure at Bitterne Park Secondary School are in need of renewal if the School is to continue to deliver the quality provision that has seen it rated as either Outstanding or Good with Outstanding features in its last three Ofsted inspections. This expansion will be funded by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) under the Priority Schools Building (PSB) Programme.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3. The Council could decide not to increase pupil numbers at Bitterne Park Secondary School but this would mean it would not be able to offer a School place to all those who require one. The Local Authority would either not meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient places or would need to fund the expansion of other Schools in the City (over and above those already planned).

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4. There are currently 2,290 places available in Southampton for Year 7 Pupils. However, pupil numbers in the City are rising and Secondary Schools are forecast to have no spare Year 7 capacity by 2018/19.
5. The Local Authority successfully bid for funding for new school buildings from the EFA under the first phase of the PSB Programme. The bid took account of future demand on the City's secondary provision.
6. Four weeks of consultation on the proposal to expand the School ran from 6 October to 10 November, 2014. This was followed by a statutory consultation from 17 November to 15 December, 2014, following the publication of a notice in the Daily Echo on 17 November, 2014 and at the School's main entrances. Key Stakeholders (Head Teachers, Local Councillors, Local MPs and Trade Union Representatives) were notified via email. A webpage with full details of the proposal, including a copy of the formal statutory notice, was published on the SCC website on 17 November, 2014
7. The full consultation documents and all responses can be found in appendix 3.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

8. It is estimated a rebuild of the School will cost £16M. Funding for the building work will come from the EFA, via the PSB Programme and will be managed directly by the EFA. The main build will not require any Capital Works to be managed through the Council's Capital Programme. However, in line with the Government stipulations for investment, the Council will be required to fund any of the planning obligations that are imposed on this scheme by way of a Unilateral Undertaking. The contents of a Unilateral Undertaking would relate specifically to any off-site works associated with the scheme. Although the full extent of these costs is unknown at present (and will only be known at the point of planning approval), previous experience on other schemes indicates that this could be anywhere in the range from £0 to £200,000. If accounts contribution is required in this respect, the requisite Capital Funds will be allowed for within the Education Capital Programme 2015/16, to be funded from the Schools Basic Need Allocation.
9. The proposed increase in pupil numbers will be funded from within the Schools' Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. Should the required additional funding per year be managed through a Secondary Growth Fund it will need to be approved by Schools Forum annually, between 2017 and 2022.

Property/Other

10. As part of the expansion, the School will be entirely rebuilt and the existing accommodation demolished (save for the Sports Hall, which is itself a recent build and in relatively good condition). This will clear all backlog maintenance issues pertaining to the current site, which are presently significant.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

11. Local Authorities have a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure that sufficient School places are available in their area.
12. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 also requires that Local Authorities secure diversity in the provision of Schools and increase opportunities for parental choice in the provision of primary and secondary education.
13. Proposals to make prescribed alterations to a Community School are published under Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and take account of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
14. Statutory Guidance on bringing forward proposals entitled “School Organisation-Maintained School. Guidance for Proposers and decision makers” applies, which requires publication of statutory notices followed by a prescribed representation period which must take part predominantly within School term time to meet the requirements of full, open, fair and accessible consultation with those most likely to be affected (pupils, parents and staff often being on vacation or otherwise unavailable during School holiday periods). Any representations made during this period must be considered by Cabinet who are responsible for determining whether or not to approve the proposals as advertised. Minor modifications and / or statutory conditions can be applied to proposals in limited prescribed circumstances but are not proposed in this case.

Other Legal Implications:

15. In bringing forward School Organisation proposals the Council must have regard to the need to consult the community and users, the statutory duty to improve standards and access to educational opportunities, the statutory special educational needs improvement test, observe the rules of natural justice, the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, Article 2 of the First Protocol (right to education) and the Equalities Act 2010. The Council is satisfied the proposals in this report fully conform to the legislative framework and are necessary to meet a pressing social need in the local authority area.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

16. This proposal is in line with Southampton's School Organisation Plan.

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: Bitterne Park; Swaythling; Harefield; Peartree; and Portswood.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. Copy of the Statutory Notice
2. Copy of the Full Consultation Document
3. Comments on / Objections to the Proposal with Responses
4. Equality Impact Assessment
5. School Organisation Guidance 2014
6. Gate Notice Displayed at School

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out?

Yes – See Appendix 4

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)

None