

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cabinet	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	9 April 2014	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2636
TITLE:	Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan 2013 – 2017	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan 2013 – 2017 Including Longer Term Place Planning within the Core Strategy Plan Period		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places for every child resident in the Local Authority who requires a place. The Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan 2013 – 2017 at Appendix 1 outlines the current level of primary and secondary provision in the Authority, detailed projected pupil numbers over the next four years up to admissions in September 2017 based on births and resident population data and outline pupil numbers up to 2029 as a consequence of the future planned housing development in the Authority. Estimates for the number of school places likely to be required as a result and how and where these might be provided are also included.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1 Approve the proposed strategy for the provision of school places within the 2013 – 2017 plan period.
- 2.2 Approve the proposed strategy for the provision of school places over the longer term within the Core Strategy plan period.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

3.1 Revenue funding for pupil places will be provided by the Department for Education (DfE) through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) on a per pupil basis.

- 3.2 Where pupils generated from new housing developments cannot be accommodated within existing provision, contributions in the form of capital and where appropriate land, will be sought from developers in order to provide the necessary school places. To date, the Council is in receipt of some Developer Contributions with further contributions currently pending.
- 3.3 The DfE currently allocate Basic Need capital funding to local authorities in order to provide additional school places where pupils are projected to exceed the number of places available and where the increase is occurring as a result of population growth other than from housing developments supported by Developer Contributions. The level of Basic Need Funding provided is calculated on the basis of the Local Authority pupil forecast data submitted to the DfE, which outlines the number of existing places in the Authority, the current number of pupils on roll and a projection of future pupil numbers expected, excluding any pupils supported by Developer Contributions.
- 3.4 Basic Need funding of £2.6m for years 2013-14 and 2014-15 is committed against the Basic Need schemes that we are currently developing to ensure that the places projected to be required for 2015/16 can be provided.
- 3.5 The DfE has recently announced Basic Need funding for 2015/16 and 2016/17 and this has seen a significant increase in funding to £13m approximately. This reflects the projected growth in pupil numbers shown in the Council's pupil place return to the DfE. Officers are assessing options and priorities for this funding and these will be brought forward as part of capital programme proposals.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Relevant considerations: The Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient school places, Children and Young People, Equalities, Planning, Social Inclusion, Property, Impact on Staff.
- 4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed using corporate guidelines. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 Appendix 1 to this report contains all the information that The Panel should require in order to be able to assess the proposed strategy. A summary of the key issues impacting on pupil place planning is set out below.
- 5.2 Despite significant recent changes to the educational landscape with some schools becoming Academies and the possibility of free schools being established the Local Authority still retains the legal responsibility for pupil place planning in its area and ensuring there are sufficient school places in the right areas.
- 5.3 In general, existing secondary school provision is expected to be sufficient for future pupil numbers arising from underlying population growth and future house building. Secondary pupil numbers are expected to be lower over the next few years as the smaller numbers of pupils in the older year groups of primary school reach secondary school age and then to pick up again with

admissions into Year 7 in 2018 onwards when the current younger primary age pupils who entered Reception in 2011 reach secondary school age.

- 5.4 However, should a future proposed new housing development in a particular area be projected to result in a shortfall of secondary school places, the Authority will seek contributions from developers to provide additional places. This is highly likely to be delivered via the expansion of existing schools rather than by building new schools.
- 5.5 The future need for primary school places is expected to be affected by levels of underlying population growth coupled with pupils generated from new housing developments in line with the Revised Core Strategy and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The impact of this will vary from area to area across the Authority depending on where the population growth is taking place.
- 5.6 In some areas the impact is likely to be less severe and be felt more gradually as the number of places required will be fewer in number and will build up gradually and there will be more options available for delivery of any additional places that might be required, possibly via the expansion of existing local schools.
- 5.7 In other areas where growth is expected to be greater and faster and options for delivery of additional places is limited as existing local schools cannot be expanded because the sites they occupy are not large enough, the impact is likely to be much more pronounced and immediate, requiring additional places to be created early on and most likely via the provision of whole new schools which will require land to be provided. Officers are working closely with colleagues in Planning Policy to ensure that land requirements are reflected in the Council's revised Core Strategy.
- 5.8 We cannot say what will happen to the population beyond the latest 2012-2013 births data – numbers could level off, fall dramatically or gradually or continue to rise steeply or gradually and therefore it is difficult to forecast how many places will be required beyond admissions into Reception in 2017 and into Year 7 in 2024. This is particularly challenging for primary school place planning, as one can only plan four years ahead with any degree of certainty.

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 The Local Authority still retains the legal responsibility for pupil place planning in its area. In order to do this effectively the Local Authority must identify where new school places will be required as a result of underlying population growth or pupils generated from new housing development, how much additional provision is required and when. This additional provision might be provided via Basic Need funding from the Government or Developer Contributions as a result of new housing developments or sometimes a combination of the two.
- 6.2 There is currently already pressure on primary school places in some parts of the Authority and also projected to be a shortfall in places in some areas in the future and the Authority must plan for the additional provision that is needed. The Plan will serve as a useful planning tool to identify areas and levels of need, when investment in places will be needed and also to inform discussions with Developers.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth; Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel; Ward Councillors; Planning Policy; Catholic Diocese; Church of England Diocese; Primary and Secondary School Headteachers and Governing Bodies; School Advisers; Admissions and Transport Team; Neighbouring Local Authorities.

8.2 All schools are consulted annually when Planned Admission Numbers (PANs) are discussed for the next academic year two years ahead, providing an opportunity to discuss any future projected impact on the school prior to setting the PAN. The last consultation took place from September to November 2013 for PANs in 2015.

8.3 Those schools that are expected to be most affected by increases in child population as a result of underlying population growth in the short term or proposed new housing developments have been consulted at greater length. Some specific discussions have taken place with Headteachers and Governing Body representatives at a number of schools to discuss additional places being added to their school and to identify the possible schools to be expanded in the longer term.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance. Significant risks identified are:

9.2 *The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places and failure to ensure this will result in the Council being at risk of breaching its responsibility.* This Plan sets out a strategy for delivery of sufficient school places in the right areas across the Authority.

9.3 *The actual eventual need for places is less or greater than projected.* Use of Primary and Secondary Planning Areas allows a good understanding of where places are likely to be required as a result of population growth. An independent assessment of the place planning process has been undertaken to ensure forecasting is as accurate as possible. Where there are opportunities and within the limitations of the space and funding available, some additional extra places may be provided to give flexibility.

9.4 *Insufficient land available in the right area on which to build new school accommodation where existing school sites cannot sustain any further expansion and where new sites will need to be provided.* Work to identify where sites will be required for new school provision and feed these requirements into Council's major infrastructure delivery plans to secure Developer Contributions.

9.5 *New house building spread over a long period of time and therefore Developer Contributions received over an extended period will make the timing of the delivery of new school places challenging, particularly where land is also required.* Need to plan the delivery of new school accommodation via stages

and through phasing and via the pooling of Developer Contributions. Explore the possibility of combining Basic Need Funding with Developer Contributions where possible.

9.6 *Available capital either through Basic Need funding or Developer Contributions not sufficient to cover cost of building work to provide additional accommodation.* Planned building work delivered as cost effectively as possible through effective project planning including utilising existing accommodation where possible to make best use of available resources. Ensure any potential shortfalls which may require Council funding are identified at an early stage and included in the Council's financial planning.

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Background papers	B&NES Council website – Planning and Building Control, Planning Policy: <i>Core Strategy History</i> <i>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)</i>
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