

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	10 April 2013	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2548
TITLE:	Determination of Statutory Notices to Expand Six Primary Schools in Keynsham, Bath, Peasedown St. John and Paulton	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>		
Appendix 1 Summary of Statutory Notice Representations Report		

### 1 THE ISSUE

1.1 Following the decision by Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> February to publish statutory notices proposing the expansion of Bathampton Primary, Castle Primary, Paulton Infant, Paulton Junior, Peasedown St. John Primary and Weston All Saints C of E Primary schools to create additional pupil places, to consider the responses submitted during the statutory notice representation period and to determine the statutory notices for these expansions.

### 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet agrees that:

- 2.1 The proposal to expand Bathampton Primary school be approved.
- 2.2 The proposal to expand Castle Primary school be approved.
- 2.3 The proposal to expand Peasedown St. John Primary school be approved.
- 2.4 The proposal to expand Weston All Saints C of E Primary school be approved.
- 2.5 The proposal to expand Paulton Infant school and Paulton Junior school be approved.

### 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The capital budgets for the building work required at Paulton Infant, Weston All Saints C of E Primary and Castle Primary Phase 1 were agreed by Cabinet in December 2012 as part of the 2012/13 capital programme. Funding for a feasibility study to assess the capital costs of adding accommodation at Paulton Junior by 2016 has also been approved by Cabinet but further approval of the full capital budget will be required in the future. The building work at Paulton Junior

and Castle Primary Phase 2 will be funded from future S106 developer contributions which have been agreed. There are no capital implications for Bathampton Primary and Peasedown St. John Primary as no building work is required at these schools.

- 3.2 Revenue funding will be provided by the government through the Direct Schools Grant on a per pupil basis. The increased pupils will create additional funding for schools direct costs and also provide additional resources for support functions that support all schools.

#### **4 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1 Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live.

#### **5 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 The Local Authority is under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area. These places should where possible be provided in popular and successful schools serving the area of need to increase parental choice, contribute to raising standards and attainment and to facilitate sustainable travel to school. Following an initial consultation process Cabinet decided to publish statutory notices proposing the expansion of six primary schools.

##### **5.2 Bathampton Primary School**

- Pupil numbers in Bath, particularly in the north of the city, have risen in recent years due mainly to increased birth rates. Due to higher numbers of pupils in the area, the school took in additional Reception pupils above its Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 22 in 2012. Numbers are projected to continue to be high in the future and as a result, more primary school places are required in this area of the city in order to meet demand.
- The proposal is for the school to expand in stages over the next few years from its current size of 146 places with 5 classes and a PAN of 22 to a school with a PAN of 30 organised over 7 classes of 30 offering a total of 210 places. The first of these additional places will be required in 2013. There is sufficient existing accommodation at the school to enable this expansion to take place and no further building work will be required.
- Bathampton Primary School has an OFSTED rating of Outstanding and for Reception admissions in September 2012 there were a total of 73 on time 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences for 22 places. The school occupies a good sized site which together with the layout of the existing buildings on the site lends itself to expansion. As the school is a Community school it uses universal admissions criteria, facilitating access to the local school for local children.

##### **5.3 Castle Primary School**

- Pupil numbers in Keynsham have risen in recent years due to increased birth rates and to families with children moving into the area to live and additional places were required for Reception admissions in Keynsham in September 2011 and 2012. Pupil numbers are projected to continue to be high into the future in Keynsham and in this area of the town due to the new 'K2' housing development located close to the school, which is due to commence shortly. As a result, more

primary school places are required on a permanent basis from 2013 onwards to meet projected future demand.

- The proposal is for Castle Primary School to expand over a number of years as new pupils are generated, growing from a 210 place school with a PAN of 30 to a PAN of 60 organised in classes of 30 offering a total of 420 places. As a first step the school will have a PAN of 45 for September 2013 which will be increased to 60 for September 2015 onwards. A financial contribution has been secured from the Taylor Wimpey part of the 'K2' development via a Section 106 agreement, to extend the school, which together with other future developer contributions will enable additional accommodation to be added to the school in stages for this expansion to take place. An additional area of land has also been secured from the developer which will be added to the school to enlarge it to the recommended size for a 420 place school.
- Castle Primary School has an OFSTED rating of Good and for Reception admissions in September 2012 there were a total of 56 on time 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences for 30 places. As the school is a Community school it uses universal admissions criteria, facilitating access to the local school for local children.

#### 5.4 Paulton Infant and Paulton Junior Schools

- Pupil numbers in Paulton have risen in recent years due to increased birth rates and to recently completed new housing development in the village and additional primary school places are projected to be required for Reception admissions in September 2013 and for Year 3 admissions in September 2016 onwards. Pupil numbers are projected to continue to be high into the future and will include additional pupils due to the Bovis Homes housing development that has recently commenced. As a result, more primary school places are required to meet this projected future demand in Paulton.
- The proposal is for the Infant school to expand over the next few years from a 179 place school with a PAN of 60 to become a school with a PAN of 90 organised over 9 classes of 30 offering a total of 270 places. The first of the additional places will be required for September 2013. Also for the Junior school to expand in stages as new pupils are generated, from a 240 place school with a PAN of 60 to a school with a PAN of 90 organised over 12 classes of 30 offering a total of 360 places. The first places are expected to be required in the Junior school for September 2016.
- A financial contribution has been secured from the Bovis Homes development via a Section 106 agreement to expand existing primary school provision in Paulton and additional permanent build accommodation will be added to the schools to enable this expansion to take place.
- Paulton Infant School has an OFSTED rating of Good and for Reception admissions in September 2012 there were a total of 61 on time 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences for 60 places. Paulton Junior School has an OFSTED rating of Outstanding and for Year 3 admissions in September 2012 there were a total of 60 on time 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences for 60 places. The schools share a good sized site which lends itself to expansion. As the schools are both Community schools, they use universal admissions criteria, facilitating access to the local school for local children.

## 5.5 Peasedown St John Primary School

- Pupil numbers at Peasedown St. John Primary have risen in recent years mainly due to increased local demand for places at the school and higher numbers of children resident in the village. Due to higher numbers of local pupils and to this increased demand, the school took in an additional 'bulge' class of Reception children in 2010 up to 75 places and also in 2011 up to 70 places and in 2012 had a higher PAN of 75.
- Pupil numbers are projected to continue to be high into the future. Numbers of Reception children at the school are projected to be approximately 67 in 2013, 75 in 2014, 72 in 2015 and 75 in 2016. Approximately 3-4 additional pupils per year group are calculated to be generated in the future by the new housing development currently under construction at Wellow Lane. Therefore as a result, more primary school places are required on a permanent basis in Peasedown St. John in order to meet the local demand from children resident in the village.
- The proposal is for the school to expand permanently from a 420 place school with a PAN of 60 to be a 525 place school with a PAN of 75 in all year groups. The school site and accommodation was increased in 2012 through the acquisition of the former Adult Learning Centre next to the school and therefore in line with the school's Capacity Schedule there is now sufficient accommodation at the school to allow this expansion to take place.
- Peasedown St. John Primary School has an OFSTED rating of Good and for Reception admissions in September 2012 there were a total of 78 on time 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences for 75 places. In 2011 the school admitted 70 pupils, 67 of whom lived in the village or had Peasedown St. John as their closest school. In 2012 the figures were 72 pupils, 67 of whom were local to the school as above. As the school is a Community school it uses universal admissions criteria, facilitating access to the local school for local children.

## 5.6 Weston All Saints C of E Primary School

- Pupil numbers in Bath, particularly in the north of the city, have risen in recent years mainly due to increased birth rates and to families with children moving into the area to live. Due to higher numbers of pupils in the area, the school took in an additional 'bulge' class of Reception children in 2011 and in 2012 had a higher PAN of 90. Numbers are projected to continue to be high in the future and as a result, more primary school places are required in this area of the city in order to meet demand.
- The proposal is for the school to expand in stages over the next few years from a 480 place school with a PAN of 90 in two year groups as it is at present to a 630 place school with a PAN of 90 in all year groups. Additional permanent build accommodation will be added to the school to allow this expansion to take place and the existing temporary classrooms on the school site will be vacated and children will be able to move into permanent accommodation. The first of the additional places will be required for September 2014.
- Weston All Saints C of E Primary School has an OFSTED rating of Outstanding and for Reception admissions in September 2012 there were a total of 144 on time 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences for 90 places. The school occupies a good sized

site which together with the layout of the existing buildings lends itself to expansion. As the school is a Voluntary Controlled school it uses universal admissions criteria, facilitating access to the local school for local children.

- 5.7 Appendix 1 contains a summary of the representation responses received for each of the proposals during the statutory notice period and some officer comments on the main issues raised. Full copies of all representation responses were made available to the Cabinet.
- 5.8 An E-petition concerning the expansion of the Paulton schools has been submitted and details of this are included in the Appendix. A leaflet was also circulated by a local action group in Paulton. Copies of the leaflets received have been made available to the Cabinet together with a summary of the comments made.
- 5.9 Representations covered some concerns and objections as set out in Appendix 1, mostly concerning planning, traffic management and school accommodation and operational issues associated with the expansions. These chiefly concerned the Paulton proposal and to a lesser extent Weston All Saints.
- 5.10 *School size concerns:* The size of a school in itself does not automatically have a direct bearing on the quality of education and care available to children at that school. Good leadership, management and teaching can be found in both large and small schools and are the factors that are most likely to result in high standards in educational achievement, behaviour and children's general well-being and care. Larger schools can bring specific benefits due to their scale and increased revenue, for instance to fund specialist teaching staff and to pay for a specialist SENCO (Special Needs coordinator) with more non-teaching time. All of the schools proposed for expansion are either Good or Outstanding, meaning they are well placed to become bigger schools enabling a larger number of local children to benefit from quality of education provided.
- 5.11 *Traffic management concerns in Paulton:* Following the withdrawal of the original planning application to which Highways objected, joint working has been taking place with Highways to consider possible traffic management solutions for the two Paulton schools. This includes assisting the Infant school in developing its travel plan which will explore opportunities to support parents in choosing alternative home to school travel options to enable a greater number of pupils to walk or cycle to school and ways of reducing the impact of journeys made by car. Also considering whether parking areas further from the schools can be identified to enable parents to park and then walk a final short distance to the schools, reducing traffic congestion outside the schools. This has been successfully introduced in other local authorities under the heading 'Park and Stride'. This information will form part of the planning applications for the two schools when submitted.
- 5.12 *School accommodation and facilities concerns at Paulton:* Additional accommodation and facilities required as a result of the expansion are being developed and agreed in conjunction with Paulton Infant school Governing Body and management team and are being taken forward as part of the planning application. Facilities include additional classrooms and an extension to the hall. This process will also take place with Paulton Junior school in due course.
- 5.13 *Concerns about traffic and the proposed location of the new school buildings at Weston All Saints:* These will be issues to be considered as part of the planning

process and information sessions will be held for parents and local residents to ensure they have an opportunity to view and comment on the proposed plans prior to submission of the planning application.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance. Significant risks identified are:
- 6.2 If action is not taken to create more primary school places in the areas identified, there is projected to be a future shortfall of places in these areas and insufficient places available in other areas, to meet this demand, resulting in the Council being unable to meet its statutory duty to provide a school places for every child that requires one.
- 6.3 If sufficient places are not created where they are needed this will lead to unsustainable travel to school arrangements for families having to travel outside of the area in which they live to access a school place for their children and in some areas lead to increased costs to the Council as a result of having to fund home to school travel due to distance or hazardous routes.
- 6.4 If additional places are not created in the areas where new housing development is taking place, there will be insufficient places available to accommodate the children generated from the new housing in the near future.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.
- 7.2 Age – need to provide sufficient places so that younger children who are currently below school age can obtain a local school place, as the older school age children have largely been able to up to date.
- 7.3 Religion/belief – additional places created in Voluntary Controlled (VC) or Community schools so that places are universally accessible to all local families, regardless of faith or belief. Some places created in VC school to help maintain the balance of denominational and non-denominational places to aid diversity and provide parents with choice.
- 7.4 Socio-economically disadvantaged – need to create places in local schools as close as possible to where families are living so that families do not have to transport their children to school by car or pay for home to school transport and children can travel sustainably by walking or cycling to school to contribute to healthier lifestyles. Places created in Good or Outstanding schools, ensuring that children have access to good quality primary school education that can lead to higher attainment and enhanced life chances.
- 7.5 Rural communities – provide sufficient places at schools that serve a specific rural community and where the next nearest school would be a distance away, helping to aid community cohesion by local children being able to access their local school and without the need to travel to school by car.

## 8 RATIONALE

- 8.1 There is a need for additional school places to be provided to meet existing and projected demand from the local population in these areas due to underlying population growth in general and to new housing development currently under construction so that the Council can meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places and for these to be in the area in which they are needed and where the pupils are living.
- 8.2 Provision of additional places in these schools will facilitate local families being able to obtain a place for their children at their local school, which will help to strengthen community cohesion and make it viable for as many children as possible to be able to walk or cycle to school from wherever they live in Paulton due to the central location of the schools in the village.
- 8.3 Expansion to create more places will help to increase parental choice in these areas of the Authority where the local population is growing and a new family might move into the area and require a school place in year.
- 8.4 The schools proposed for expansion have good educational standards with OFSTED ratings of Good or Outstanding and are popular with parents. Creating additional places in these schools with proven good standards will make it possible for more parents to access this high quality education for their children.
- 8.5 The schools proposed for expansion are located close to the areas of projected increased population growth and the school sites have sufficient space to allow the expansions to take place. As set out in the agreed School Organisation Plan 2011-2015 it is the Council's policy to expand existing schools where this is possible.
- 8.6 The Governing Bodies of the schools proposed for expansion are fully engaged with the Local Authority with the expansion proposals process for their school.

## 9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 *To not expand any of the schools and not create any additional places.* This option was rejected as the Council has a statutory duty to ensure the provision of sufficient school places in the right area to meet demand and to promote diversity and increase parental choice. Projections of future pupil numbers based on underlying population growth and pupils generated from new housing development and parental preference indicate a future shortfall of primary school places in these areas of the Authority and at these schools if action is not taken to add more places.
- 9.2 *To continue to use temporary short term solutions to the provision of additional school places.* This option was rejected as although temporary classrooms and one-off 'bulge' classes have been utilised to good effect in the past to create places in the short term, these are only temporary solutions and do not represent a workable strategy for the provision of additional places in the longer term where permanent solutions are required.
- 9.3 *To expand other schools rather than the ones named.* This option which was suggested by some respondents was rejected as the schools chosen represent the most appropriate options for expansion as they have good educational

standards, they are popular with parents, the school sites are of a sufficient size to accommodate the expansion and they are located in the areas of projected future demand from new housing and/or underlying population growth, thus enabling the maximum number of children possible to attend their local school and be able to travel to school sustainably. In Paulton, any other schools expanded elsewhere would mean a significant number of families living in the village would have to travel out of the village, taking journeys by car due to the distance, increasing traffic in and around Paulton.

9.4 *To build a new school in Paulton on the Polestar site rather than expand the existing schools.* This option which was suggested by some respondents and is referred to in the leaflet circulated by the local action group. It was rejected as it would require a new area of land which is not available as the planning application for the development has been determined and the land uses on the site allocated. Sufficient capital has been secured to invest in local services proportionate to the need generated i.e. to expand existing schools but not to build a whole new school which cannot be justified.

9.5 The children generated by the Barratts development are calculated to gradually displace pupils at the point of first admission to the schools who would have in the past gained a place at Paulton but who do not live in Paulton and who live closer to another school. The children generated by the Bovis Homes development are calculated to generate approximately 88 primary age pupils - less than half of a 210 place school - and therefore a new 210 school on the Polestar site could not be justified or financed.

9.6 Building a school smaller than 210 places would not be proposed as it is Council policy that a new school should be a minimum of 210 places to avoid issues such as the school having to organise on mixed age teaching and managing on a smaller revenue budget.

9.7 Moving the existing schools off the current site and opening a new 630 place school on the Polestar site has also been suggested, however this would result in families living in some parts of the village, particularly to the south of Paulton, having to travel further to get to school and the likelihood of increased traffic through the centre of the village as a result. The location of the current schools towards the centre of the village represents the most accessible location for the majority of Paulton. This would also mean that a new all through primary school would be provided, not the existing separate Infant and Junior schools.

9.8 It is Council policy to expand existing schools where possible in the first instance. The proposed expansion of the Infant and Junior schools will allow sufficient space for pupils generated from the new housing in Paulton to be accommodated plus some additional places to allow for future growth in Paulton and for any additional pupils generated by underlying population growth in the village. No further significant new housing development is planned for Paulton in the future. If the proposed new housing development at Monger Lane on the edge of Midsomer Norton to the south of Paulton was to go ahead, the pupils generated from this development would be accommodated within Midsomer Norton as this development would serve to expand Midsomer Norton to the north rather than Paulton as some have suggested. The proposed development site is closer to schools in Midsomer Norton than to Paulton Infant and Junior schools.



- 9.9 *To relocate either Paulton Infant school or Paulton Junior school onto a new site.*  
This option was rejected as it would require a new area of land which is not available to the Council and would result in difficulties for parents who might have children in both schools who would need to be in two places at the same time when dropping off or picking up their children from school. It would add to traffic movements at peak times in Paulton and could impact negatively on joint working between the two schools.

## **10 CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 Ward Councillor; Cabinet members; Parish Council; Town Council; Trades Unions; Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Stakeholders/Partners; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer.
- 10.2 Paper copies of the consultation document were sent to each of the six schools for distribution to all parents and carers of all children at each school, including parents of pre-school age children at the two schools with on-site Early Years provision run by the school, all staff members and all Governing Body members. A hard copy of the Paulton Infant document was given to all Paulton Junior parents, staff and Governing Body members and vice versa.
- 10.3 The document was emailed to other Council officers, all ward councillors, the local MPs for North East Somerset and for Bath, Trade Unions representing all staff at the schools, the Roman Catholic Diocese, the Church of England Diocese, other neighbouring primary and secondary schools, the Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel Chair, Bathampton, Paulton and Peasedown St. John Parish Councils, Keynsham Town Council and to five organisations who have contracts to use the various school premises.
- 10.4 The consultation document was published on the Council website and all consultees who received the document by email were sent a link to the document. Neighbouring primary and secondary schools who might be affected by the proposals were sent a copy by email and also the link and asked to pass the information on to their Governing Body and to the staff at their school and to bring it to the attention of their parents via an item in their school newsletter or by publicising the link to the Council website.
- 10.5 The document explained how comments could be submitted by letter or by email to the Council.
- 10.6 Open drop-in sessions were held at the four schools where significant building work and significant expansion of 30 places per year group was being proposed – at Castle Primary, Paulton Infant school, Paulton Junior school and Weston All Saints C of E Primary school.
- 10.7 Each school carried out some consultation with pupils at the school to seek their views on the proposal.
- 10.8 Notice of consultation was placed on the Council's consultation calendar.
- 10.9 Following on from the first consultation, the statutory notices were each published in a local paper serving the area, posted in a public place locally and posted outside all entrances to each of the schools. A copy of the statutory notice and

complete proposal was sent to each school proposed for expansion for the attention of the Headteacher and the Governing Body. The statutory notices and complete proposals were placed on the Council website and statutory consultees were informed that the notices had been published and given the link to the page on the Council website. This allowed a further four week representation period, giving interested stakeholders a further opportunity to comment on the proposals.

10.10 196 paper copies of the statutory notice proposing the expansion of Paulton Infant and Paulton Junior schools were delivered to four pre-schools in Paulton to be given to the parents of Early Years age children who attended each of these settings.

10.11 The planning applications for the proposals requiring building work will follow the usual statutory planning process, allowing for the normal public consultation on issues around the buildings, traffic management, car parking etc.

## 11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Resources; Property; Young People; Corporate; Impact on Staff; Other Legal Considerations.

## 12 ADVICE SOUGHT

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

<b>Contact person</b>	Helen Hoynes 01225 395169
<b>Sponsoring Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Dine Romero
<b>Background papers</b>	<p>Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan 2011-2015</p> <p>Cabinet Report E2514 Proposals to Expand Six Primary Schools in Keynsham, Bath, Peasedown St John and Paulton</p> <p>Statutory Notices and Complete Proposals</p> <p><a href="http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/expansionproposals">http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/expansionproposals</a></p>
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