

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cabinet	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	12 April 2017	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2943
TITLE:	Determination of Statutory Notices to Enlarge Three Primary Schools in Bath, Radstock and Whitchurch	
WARD:	Abbey, Bathavon North, Bathwick, Lambridge, Publow & Whitchurch, Radstock, Walcot, Westfield	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 Summary of Representation Responses Report		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Following the publication of the statutory notices proposing the enlargement of Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary School, St. Nicholas' C of E Primary School and Whitchurch Primary School to create additional pupil places, Cabinet to consider the responses submitted during the representation period and to determine the statutory notices for these enlargements.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to;

- 2.1 Reject the proposed enlargement of Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary School at this time to allow further discussion around school site issues to take place with the Governing Body.
- 2.2 Approve the enlargement of St. Nicholas' C of E Primary School from 270 to 420 places.
- 2.3 Approve the enlargement of Whitchurch Primary School from 206 to 315 places.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 The capital budgets for the building work required were provisionally agreed by Council on 14 February 2017 as part of the 2017/18 capital programme. The capital cost of the building work at Bathwick St Mary C of E Primary is estimated to be approximately £3m and at Whitchurch Primary £1.3m. Both will be partly

funded from Section 106 Developer Contributions (S106) and partly from the Department for Education (DfE) Education Capital Grant. The capital cost of the building work at St. Nicholas' C of E Primary is estimated to be approximately £2.5m and will be partly funded from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions and partly from the Education Capital Grant.

- 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 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Equalities. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.
- 4.2 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places available in their area to meet demand.

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 in order to increase parental choice, contribute to raising educational standards and attainment and to facilitate sustainable methods of travel to school.

5.2 Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary School

- Pupil numbers in Bath as a whole are projected to increase in the future, mostly due to population growth generated by new housing development. As a result more primary school places are projected to be required, particularly in this area of the city in order to meet projected future demand generated by new housing development located immediately adjacent to Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary School and towards the centre of the city.
- The proposal is for the school to expand from its current size of 210 places with a Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 30 to a school with a PAN of 60 offering a total of 420 places. The first of these additional places are projected to be required in September 2019.
- Financial contributions to expand existing primary school provision in this area of Bath are being secured from local housing developments via Section 106 agreements and this together with Education Capital Grant will be used to add permanent build accommodation to the school to enable this expansion to take place. An additional area of land has also been secured via S106 which will be added to the school to enlarge the site.
- Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary School has an OFSTED rating of Outstanding. For Reception admissions in September 2016 there were a total of 101 on time 1st, 2nd and 3rd preferences for 30 places. The school is a Voluntary Aided school and amended its admissions criteria in September 2014 in order to facilitate access to the school for local children.

5.3 St. Nicholas' C of E Primary School

- Pupil numbers in Radstock are projected to continue to be high into the future due to population growth generated by new housing development. As a result, more primary school places are projected to be required in order to meet this projected future demand, particularly that generated by new housing development located immediately adjacent to St. Nicholas' C of E Primary School.
- The proposal is for the school to expand from its current size of 270 places with a PAN of 40 to a school with a PAN of 60 offering a total of 420 places. The first of these additional places are projected to be required in September 2019.
- A financial contribution to expand existing primary school provision in Radstock is available via CIL and this together with Education Capital Grant will be used to add permanent build accommodation to the school to enable this expansion to take place.
- St. Nicholas' C of E Primary School has an OFSTED rating of Good. For Reception admissions in September 2016 there were a total of 60 on time 1st, 2nd and 3rd preferences for 40 places. As the school is a Voluntary Controlled school it applies universal admissions criteria, facilitating access to the school for local children.

5.4 Whitchurch Primary School

- Pupil numbers in Whitchurch are projected to increase in the future due to population growth generated by new housing development. As a result more primary school places are projected to be required in order to meet projected future demand generated by new housing development located in Whitchurch in Bath and North East Somerset.
- The proposal is for the school to expand from its current size of 206 places with a PAN of 30 to a school with a PAN of 45 offering a total of 315 places. The first of these additional places are projected to be required in September 2019.
- Financial contributions to expand existing primary school provision in Whitchurch are being secured from local housing developments via Section 106 agreements and this together with Education Capital Grant will be used to add permanent build accommodation to the school to enable this expansion to take place. Also an additional area of land is being secured via S106 which will be added to the school to enlarge the site.
- Whitchurch Primary School has an overall OFSTED rating of Requires Improvement. In the latest OFSTED report published on 27 February 2017, leadership and management, early years provision and personal development, behaviour and welfare were all judged as Good and outcomes for pupils and the quality of teaching were both judged to be improving rapidly across the school. The school continues to be popular with parents and for Reception admissions in September 2016 there were a total of 80 on time 1st, 2nd and 3rd preferences for 30 places. As the school is a Community school, it applies universal admissions criteria, facilitating access to the school for local children.

- 5.5 Appendix 1 contains a detailed summary of the representation responses received for each of the proposals during the statutory notice period. Full copies of the representation responses received minus any personal or identifying details were made available to the Cabinet.
- 5.6 Representations in the form of support for the proposals, objections and comments were received. Most of the concerns and objections received were around planning issues concerning the school sites and accommodation and traffic management and parking. Also with the size of the schools, the impact on learning and care and operational issues associated with the enlargements.
- 5.7 For Bathwick St Mary C of E Primary, concerns and objections centred on traffic congestion issues, the outside play and learning space, access to playing fields, the size of the school and site for a 210 place expansion, the school accommodation being on two areas of land linked by a walk way, the movement of pupils and access between the two areas, lack of consultation and information, staff car parking, the school hall, pressure on school accommodation, the ethos of the school and impact on education and on pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities, impact on staff working, space for safe emergency evacuation, ability to mix Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
- 5.8 For St. Nicholas' C of E Primary, concerns and objections centred on parking and traffic congestion issues, the size of the school, pressure on school accommodation and outside space, the flood plain, impact on learning and care, noise pollution.
- 5.9 For Whitchurch Primary, concerns and objections centred on parking and traffic congestion issues, the quality and safety of walking routes, the size of the school, the outside play space, lunchtime arrangements, building work causing disruption and the impact on learning, school standards issues, class size and organisation with a PAN of 45.
- 5.10 *School sites and accommodation concerns:* Plans for the additional accommodation and facilities required as a result of the enlargement proposals would be developed in conjunction with the Governing Bodies of each of the schools and would be taken forward as eventual submitted planning applications. Plans would include additional classrooms and associated infrastructure and outside space, making reference to Building Bulletin 103, which outlines DfE area guidelines for mainstream school accommodation.
- 5.11 *Traffic management and parking concerns:* A planning application for each of the enlargement proposals would be submitted as part of the public planning application process, which allows for comments to be submitted and to be considered when determining the planning application. The applications would outline the likely impact of traffic and possible traffic management solutions. This may include assisting the schools in developing their travel plans which would 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.
- 5.12 *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.

- 5.13 *Operational issues concerns:* The Governing Bodies of the schools proposed for enlargement would be responsible for determining issues within their schools such as the organisation of pupils across the whole school accommodation, classroom organisation and lunchtime arrangements.

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 There is a need for additional primary school places to be provided to meet projected future demand from the local population in these areas due to population growth from new housing development either currently under construction or due to commence shortly. This is needed to ensure 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 where the pupils will be living.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Expansion to create more places will help to increase parental choice in these areas of the Authority where the local population is growing and where a new family may move into the area and require a school place.
- 6.4 The three schools proposed for expansion are all popular with parents. Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary has an OFSTED rating of Outstanding and St. Nicholas' C of E Primary has an OFSTED rating of Good. Although the latest OFSTED report for Whitchurch states that the school has an overall rating of Requires Improvement, leadership and management, early years provision and personal development, behaviour and welfare were all judged as Good, with outcomes for pupils and the quality of teaching improving rapidly across the school. Making additional places available in these popular schools where there is a demand for places will make it possible for more parents to access a place for their children.
- 6.5 As set out in the School Organisation Plan 2015-2019 it is the Council's policy to expand existing local schools wherever this is possible. The schools proposed for expansion are located close to the areas of new housing development and the projected increased population growth. Together with additional land acquired and to be added to the school sites in the case of Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary and Whitchurch Primary, the school sites have sufficient space to allow the expansions to take place.
- 6.6 Rejecting the proposed enlargement of Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary School at this time will allow for further discussion to take place with the Governing Body regarding school site issues, building expansion plans and what is achievable.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 *To not enlarge any of the schools and not create any additional places.* This option was rejected at this time as the Council has a statutory duty to ensure the

provision of sufficient school places to meet demand. These places should be located in the area of need and will help to promote diversity and increase parental choice. Pupil projections based on future pupil numbers generated from new housing development and on parental preference, indicate a future shortfall of primary school places in these areas of the Authority if action is not taken to add more places.

7.2 To enlarge other schools rather than the ones named. This option was rejected at this time as the schools chosen represent the most appropriate options for expansion as 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 development, thus enabling the maximum number of children possible to attend their local school and be able to travel to school sustainably.

7.3 To build new schools rather than enlarge the existing schools. This option was rejected as none of the areas of new housing development in each of the three areas of Bath, Radstock and Whitchurch generate sufficient pupils to justify a whole new school, including land, being provided by the developer. Sufficient capital proportionate to the need generated by the developments has been secured where possible to invest in the expansion of local school infrastructure.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Local MPs, Local Ward Councillors; Leader of the Council; Cabinet Member for Children's Services; Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel Chair; Cabinet Assistant for Children's Services; Village Council; Town Council; Trades Unions; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Stakeholders/Partners; Neighbouring Local Authorities; Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer.

8.2 The statutory notice and full proposal were published on the Council's website and also on the consultation section of the Council's website. The statutory notices were also published in a local newspaper serving the area.

8.3 A copy of the statutory notice and full proposal was emailed to each school proposed for expansion for the attention of the Headteacher and the Governing Body. The schools were asked to place an item in their School Newsletter telling parents and carers of all children at each school that the statutory notice was published and where it could be accessed. The schools were also asked to inform all staff members.

8.4 The information was emailed to the local MPs for Bath and for North East Somerset, the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, the Cabinet Assistant for Children's Services, the Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel Chair, Local Ward Councillors for Abbey, Bathavon North, Bathwick, Lambridge, Walcot, Radstock, Westfield and Publow & Whitchurch wards, Trades Unions representing all staff at the schools, the Roman Catholic Diocese, the Church of England Diocese, neighbouring Local Authorities, Radstock Town Council and Whitchurch Village Council, St. Nicholas' Pre-School, The Learning Community Nursery Radstock, other neighbouring primary schools and other Council officers.

8.5 The full proposals explained how comments could be submitted by letter or by email to the Council. A four week representation period gave interested stakeholders an opportunity to comment on the proposals.

8.6 The eventual planning applications for the building works required for the enlargements to the premises will follow the usual statutory planning process, allowing for the normal public consultation on issues around the buildings, traffic management, car parking etc.

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.

9.2 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:

9.3 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.

9.4 If sufficient places are not created close to where they are needed this will lead to unsustainable travel to school arrangements for families having to travel longer distances or go outside of the area in which they live to access a school place for their children. In some areas this could lead to increased costs to the Council as a result of having to fund home to school transport due to the distance being excessive or the route exceptionally hazardous.

9.5 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 future.

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Background papers	<p>Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan 2015 – 2019. Available on the Bath & North East Somerset Council website at www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/schools-colleges-and-learning/school-strategies-policies-planning</p> <p>Statutory Notice and Full Proposal to Enlarge Bathwick St. Mary C of E Primary School, Bath.</p> <p>Statutory Notice and Full Proposal to Enlarge St. Nicholas' C of E Primary School, Radstock.</p> <p>Statutory Notice and Full Proposal to Enlarge Whitchurch Primary School, Whitchurch.</p> <p>Available on the Bath & North East Somerset Council website at</p>

	www.bathnes.gov.uk/schoolexpansions
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