

Single Member Cabinet Decision

**Executive  
Forward Plan  
Reference**

**E2967**

Determination of the Statutory Notice to Enlarge Whitchurch Primary School

<b>Decision maker/s</b>	Cllr Michael Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
<b>The Issue</b>	Following the publication of the statutory notice proposing the enlargement of Whitchurch Primary School to create additional pupil places, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to consider the responses received during the representation period and the consultation session and to determine the statutory notice.
<b>Decision Date</b>	15 May 2017
<b>The decision</b>	The Cabinet Member agrees that Whitchurch Primary School should be enlarged from 206 to 315 places from 1 September 2019.
<b>Rationale for decision</b>	<p>Pupil projections based on population growth from new housing developments in Whitchurch in Bath and North East Somerset and on parental preference, indicate a future shortfall of primary school places in Whitchurch.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory to duty provide sufficient school places to meet demand. In order to ensure that the Council can meet its statutory duty and for the places to be in the area in which they are needed where the pupils will be living, there is a need to create additional school places at Whitchurch Primary School.</p> <p>Provision of additional places in this school will facilitate both existing and future 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.</p> <p>Expansion to create more places will help to increase parental choice in this area of the Authority where the local population is growing.</p> <p>The school is popular with parents. 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. The Local Authority will continue to work with the school to support them in raising standards and to secure Good overall in its next inspection.</p> <p>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. Whitchurch Primary School is located close to the areas of new housing development and the projected increased population</p>

	<p>growth. Together with additional land acquired and to be added to the school site, the site will have sufficient space to allow the expansion to take place.</p> <p>The Decision Maker has considered all stakeholder contributions from the consultation process, attended the drop-in session for further consultation at the school and listened to the concerns expressed and read the written submissions from that session.</p>
<b>Financial and budget implications</b>	<p>The capital budget for the building work required was provisionally agreed by Council on 14 February 2017 as part of the 2017/18 capital programme. The capital cost of the building work at Whitchurch Primary School is £1.3m. This will be partly funded from Section 106 Developer Contributions (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) (S106) and partly from the Department for Education (DfE) Education Capital Grant.</p> <p>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.</p>
<b>Issues considered (these are covered in more detail in the report)</b>	<p>Young People; Equality (age, race, disability, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation); Other Legal Considerations.</p>
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	<p>Ward Councillor; Cabinet colleagues; Parish Council; Trades Unions; Staff; Other B&amp;NES Services; Service Users; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer.</p>
<b>How consultation was carried out</b>	<p>The statutory notice and full proposal was published on the Council's website and the statutory notice was also published in a local newspaper serving the area. It was also included in the consultations section of the Council's website.</p> <p>A copy of the statutory notice and full proposal was emailed to the school for the attention of the Headteacher and the Governing Body. The school was asked to let parents and carers of all children at the school know that the statutory notice and full proposal was published and where it could be accessed. The school sent a paper copy of the full proposal home with every child, placed an item on their school website and sent all parents a text message informing them that the letter was coming home and that an item was on the school website. The school also sent a second follow up letter home. The school was also asked to inform all staff members.</p> <p>The information was emailed to the local MP for North East Somerset, the Local Ward Councillor for Publow &amp; Whitchurch ward, 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, Whitchurch Village Council, the local Church of England Diocese, the local Catholic Diocese, Trades Unions representing all staff at the schools, the neighbouring Local Authorities of Bristol and North</p>

	<p>Somerset, and other Council officers.</p> <p>The full proposal explained how comments could be submitted to the Council and the deadline for receipt of comments. This gave interested stakeholders an opportunity to comment on the proposal and for these comments to be taken into account by the Decision Maker when determining the proposal.</p> <p>A Consultation Drop-in Session for parents was also held at the school. Officers and Councillors including the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services were present to answer questions, provide information and hear parent’s views at first hand. Consultation comments could also be record in writing at the session or submitted by email, to be taken into account by the Cabinet Member when determining the proposal.</p>
<p><b>Other options considered</b></p>	<p><i>To not enlarge the school and not create any additional places.</i> This option was rejected as 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 this area of the Authority if action is not taken to add more places. 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.</p> <p><i>To enlarge other schools rather than Whitchurch Primary.</i> This option was rejected as Whitchurch represents the most appropriate option for expansion as it is the only school in Whitchurch, it is popular with parents and the school is located in the area 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.</p> <p><i>To build a new school rather than enlarge the existing school.</i> This option was rejected as the new housing developments in Whitchurch do not generate sufficient pupils to justify a whole new school, including land, being provided by a developer and where there is an existing school that can be expanded. Sufficient capital proportionate to the need generated by each development is being secured to invest in the expansion of local school infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision, including any dispensation granted:</b></p>	<p><i>The nature of interest and whether interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an-other interest, including any conflict of interest, (as defined in Part 2, A and B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests). Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council’s Monitoring Officer or a member of their staff before taking the decision.</i></p>
<p><b>Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the</b></p>	

<b>decision:</b>	
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<b>Signatures of Decision Makers</b>	
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<b>Date of Signature</b>	
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<b>Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision</b>
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