

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Children, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	14 July 2020	
TITLE:	Bath and North East Somerset Council School Organisation Plan 2019 – 2025	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1		
Bath and North East Somerset Council School Organisation Plan 2019 – 2025		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient schools are available for their area to provide primary and secondary education. The School Organisation Plan 2019 – 2025 at Appendix 1 (the Plan) covers the current level of primary and secondary school provision in the Authority and projected pupil numbers up to admissions in September 2023 for primary and 2025 for secondary, based on births and resident population data.
- 1.2 Estimated pupil numbers and places likely to be required as a consequence of future planned housing development expected to be delivered within the Adopted Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan period up to 2029 are also outlined.
- 1.3 The Local Authority (LA) has also undertaken significant planning around providing educational provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), both in Special Schools and in Mainstream schools and in Alternative Education Provision. This population of pupils has also grown in recent years but is not included in this iteration of the Plan due to different methodology around school place planning.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to;

- 2.1 Note the proposed strategy for the provision of school places within the 2019 – 2025 Plan period.
- 2.2 Note the proposed strategy for the provision of school places within the Core Strategy period.
- 2.3 Note that the LA has undertaken significant planning and investment for increasing capacity for children with SEND. These developments can be viewed via links in the Plan document.
- 2.4 Future iterations of the LA's Plan will include planning for children with SEND, but the Panel is reassured that significant planning and delivery for children with SEND in Bath and North East Somerset has been undertaken.
- 2.5 Give feedback on the content of the Plan and future proposals.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Local Authority retains 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 and 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 Section 106 (S106) Developer Contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as a result of new housing developments.
- 3.2 There is projected to be a future shortfall in school places in some areas 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 concerning S106 Developer Contributions, including land.
- 3.3 The Plan Appendix 1 to this report contains all the information that the Panel should require in order to be able to assess the proposed strategy. As pupil projection figures are reviewed regularly, the figures contained in the Plan may be updated when a report goes to Cabinet in 2020. A summary of the key issues impacting on pupil place planning is set out below.
- 3.4 Despite significant changes to the educational landscape with the majority of schools becoming Academies and free schools being established, the Local Authority still retains the responsibility for pupil place planning in its area and for ensuring there are sufficient schools available.
- 3.5 Due to the delivery of new schools and school expansions over recent years and to further expansions and new schools under construction and planned, primary school provision is expected to be sufficient for future pupil numbers arising from underlying population growth up to 2023 and housing development allocated in the Core Strategy period.
- 3.6 Should future proposed new housing development identified in the Local Plan in a particular area be projected to result in a shortfall of primary school places, the Authority will apply CIL funding or seek S106 Developer Contributions to provide additional school places. These places are likely to be delivered via the expansion of existing schools.

- 3.7 In those areas where options for delivery of additional places via the expansion of existing schools is limited because the schools cannot be expanded as the sites they occupy are not large enough, any future housing allocation in these areas would require whole new schools to be provided.
- 3.8 In most areas, existing secondary school provision is expected to be sufficient for future pupil numbers arising from underlying population growth up to 2025 and housing development allocated in the Core Strategy period. Additional capacity is expected to be required in the Greater Bath Consortium Planning area and the Norton Hill Planning area.
- 3.9 Should a shortfall of secondary school places be projected as a result of future proposed new housing development identified in the Local Plan, the Authority will apply CIL funding or seek S106 Developer Contributions to provide additional school places. These places are likely to be delivered via the expansion of existing schools.
- 3.10 Officers will continue to work closely with colleagues in Planning Policy to ensure that any land requirements for school expansions or the provision of new schools are reflected in the Local Plan.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Relevant considerations: The Council's statutory duty to secure sufficient schools are available for their area to provide primary and secondary education; Children; Equalities; Planning.
- 4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 Where pupils generated by Strategic Development Sites and Locations cannot be accommodated within existing provision, S106 Developer 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 S106 Developer Contributions with further contributions currently pending.
- 5.3 CIL would be considered for the provision of other school places arising from new housing development outside of Strategic Development Sites and Locations where S106 Developer Contributions are not available.
- 5.4 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 S106 Developer Contributions or CIL. 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 S106 Developer Contributions or CIL.

- 5.5 The DfE has confirmed the Council's future Basic Need allocations as £6,578,665.00 for 2020/21 and £4,852,297.00 for 2021/22. A number of future Basic Need schemes have been identified for mainstream and Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision. Beyond 2021/22 the Council has no indication of what capital grant might be received for Basic Need.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 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:
- 6.2 *The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient schools are available for their area to provide primary and secondary education 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.
- 6.3 *The actual eventual need for places is greater than projected.* Use of Primary and Secondary School Planning Areas allows a good understanding of where places are likely to be required as a result of population growth. Where there are opportunities and within the limitations of the space and funding available, some additional extra places may be provided to give flexibility.
- 6.4 *Insufficient land available in the right area to provide new school accommodation if existing school sites cannot be expanded and where new sites will need to be provided.* Officers will identify where land will be required for new school provision and feed these requirements into the Council's infrastructure delivery planning via the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan and emerging Local Plan to secure S106 Developer Contributions in the form of appropriate site allocations.
- 6.5 *New house building spread over a long period of time and therefore S106 Developer Contributions/CIL received over an extended period could make the timing of the delivery of new school places challenging.* Plan the delivery of new school accommodation via stages and through phasing and via the pooling of S106 Developer Contributions/CIL. Explore the possibility of combining Basic Need Funding with S106 Developer Contributions/CIL where possible.
- 6.6 *Available capital either through Basic Need funding or S106 Developer Contributions/CIL not sufficient to cover cost total of building work to provide the 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. Liaise with Planning Policy to secure CIL allocations. Ensure any potential shortfalls that may require Council funding are identified at an early stage and included in the Council's financial planning if sufficient additional funding cannot be secured.

- 6.7 *Schools or academies not agreeing to expansion to create additional places where they are required.* Work with schools and academies to explain the need for places and to agree deliverable schemes.
- 6.8 *As the delivery and timescales of new Free Schools are not within the Council's control, delays in opening new Free Schools could result in the need for the Council to provide additional places elsewhere.* Work with the DfE and Free School promoters to support the delivery of Free Schools where and when required by the Council.

7 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 7.1 Providing sufficient school places in the right area located close to where families live will enable pupils to travel to school sustainably via walking or cycling, reduce the need to make individual journeys by private car and reduce the need to make longer journeys to get to schools further away.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 None.

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Cabinet Member for Children's Services; Children, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel Chair; Ward Councillors; School Standards Board; Corporate Management Team; Strategic Director for People and Communities; Director of Education, Inclusion and Childrens Safeguarding; Catholic Diocese; Church of England Diocese; Primary, Secondary, Studio and SEND School Headteachers and Governing Body Chairs; Multi Academy Trust CEOs; Neighbouring Local Authorities; School Advisers; Admissions and Transport; Education Finance; SEND; Schools Capital; Early Years; Planning Policy.
- 9.2 All schools are consulted annually and provided with pupil projection data when Published 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 over September and October 2019 for 2021 PANs.
- 9.3 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 will be consulted at greater length. Some specific discussions have taken place with Headteachers and Governing Body and Multi Academy Trust 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.

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Background papers	None.
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