

Single Member Cabinet Decision

**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference**

E3516

Bath and North East Somerset Council School Organisation Plan 2023 – 2029

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Decision maker/s | Cllr Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services |
| The Issue | <p>Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a statutory duty on local authorities to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available for their area. The Act also requires authorities to secure that special educational provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs.</p> <p>The School Organisation Plan 2023 – 2029 at Appendix 1 (the Plan) outlines the current level of mainstream and Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) school provision in the Authority and projected pupil numbers up to admissions in September 2027 for primary age and 2029 for secondary age pupils. 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.</p> |
| Decision Date | 4th March 2024 |
| The decision | <p>The Cabinet Member agrees that: The proposed strategy for the provision of school places within the 2023 – 2029 Plan period is approved.</p> <p>The finalised School Organisation Plan 2023 – 2029 can be published on the Bath and North East Somerset Council website.</p> |
| Rationale for decision | <p>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.</p> <p>The Council’s School Organisation Plan is a strategic document that sets out the pupil projection figures and the Council’s strategy for ensuring the provision of sufficient places. The Council has a commitment to ensure that young people with SEND and an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are given the support they need. The Council's priorities are set out in the SEND Education Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2024.</p> <p>The Plan will serve as a useful planning tool to identify any areas of</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>need, when any investment in places may be needed and at what level and also to inform discussions with Developers concerning S106 Developer Contributions, including land.</p> <p>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. A summary of the key issues impacting on pupil place planning is set out below.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Due to the delivery of new schools and school expansions over recent years and to one further expansion at St Keyna Primary school in Keynsham currently being planned, primary school provision is expected to be sufficient within the Plan period.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Existing secondary school provision is expected to be sufficient for future pupil numbers within the Plan period.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Officers will continue to work closely with colleagues in Planning Policy to ensure that any land requirements for school expansions or for the provision of new schools are reflected in the Local Plan.</p> |
| <p>Financial and budget implications</p> | <p>The Council receives Basic Need (BN) grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE). The funding is allocated to support the provision of sufficient school places where additional need has been identified as part of the annual DfE School Capacity (SCAP) return. The annual allocation fluctuates and was £4.8m in 2021/22, £1m in 2022/23 and zero in 2023/24. Future grant payments identified by the DfE up to 2026 total £5.4m.</p> <p>The Council has received High Needs Provision Capital Allocation</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>(HNCPA) grant funding to support the provision of new places and improve existing provision for children with SEND or requiring alternative provision. The Council has received HNCPA in 2022-23 of £2.64m and £3.3m in 2023-24.</p> <p>The Council successfully bid for an additional sum of £4m HNCPA linked to the Safety Valve Programme and work which includes, as part of the commitment from Bath and North East Somerset, to increase the sufficiency of places for children and young people with an EHCP and reduce the overspend in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This additional HNCPA funding is committed to the SEND Small School with Residential Unit.</p> <p>Other sources of capital funding that are sometimes available to support new infrastructure projects include Section 106 contributions (S106) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. These sources of funding come from new housing developments to support necessary infrastructure needs.</p> <p>Revenue funding for pupil places will be provided by the DfE through the DSG. For mainstream pupils the funding is provided through the Schools Block on a per pupil basis. For SEND places the funding is provided through the High Needs Block based on population and pupil characteristics.</p> |
| <p>Issues considered</p> | <p>Sustainability; Property; Young People; Equality (age, race, disability, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation); Other Legal Considerations.</p> |
| <p>Consultation undertaken</p> | <p>Ward Councillor; Cabinet colleagues; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Other B&NES Services; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer.</p> |
| <p>How consultation was carried out</p> | <p>The draft School Organisation Plan was shared with the Corporate Management Team then sent to the consultees listed below for a month long consultation period from 17 November to 17 December 2023.</p> <p>The draft School Organisation Plan was shared with Academy Trust CEOs; primary, secondary, studio and special school and academy Headteachers; school Governing Bodies; the Diocese of Bath and Wells; the Clifton Diocese; Bath College; all Local Councillors to include the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services; neighbouring Local Authorities of Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire; Bath and North East Somerset Council Director of Education and Safeguarding, officers from SEND, Planning Policy, Admissions, Schools Capital and Organisation, Early Years and Adults, Children and Public Health Finance.</p> <p>All academy trusts and schools are consulted annually and provided with pupil projection data in September each year when Planned Admission Numbers (PANs) are discussed for the next academic year, two years ahead. Projection data is also shared with the Clifton Diocese. The total capacity figure for each school is also checked and confirmed. The last such consultation took place over</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>September - October 2023.</p> <p>Any 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.</p> <p>A report went to the Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 15 January 2023.</p> <p>This Single Cabinet Member Report was shared with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services; the Leader of the Council; the S151 Officer; the Monitoring Officer; the Director of Education and Safeguarding; the Director of Children's Services & Education; Bath and North East Somerset Council officers from SEND, Admissions, Schools Capital and Organisation and Adults, Children and Public Health Finance.</p> |
| Other options considered | None. |
| Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision: | <p>{State 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). Cabinet Members must not make any Single Member Decisions in relation to a matter affecting their own ward. 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. If there is no interest then put 'none'}</p> <p>None</p> |
| Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision: | None |

| | |
|---|---|
| Name and Signature of Decision Maker/s | Councillor Paul May Cabinet Member for Children's Services |
| Date of Signature | 4th March 2024 |

Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision