

Decision Record – Proposal to Increase the Admission Number of The Willows C of E Primary School

Cabinet Portfolio Holder taking decision

Councillor Heather Timms, Portfolio Holder for Child Safeguarding, Early Intervention and Schools

Date of Decision: (NOT BEFORE 26 AUGUST 2011)

30 August 2011

Decision taken

Having considered the responses to formal consultation, I approve the proposal to increase the capacity of The Willows C of E Primary School from 45 to 60 places per year and approve the publication of statutory notices and authorise officers to seek approval of the Schools Adjudicator to formally apply the new admission number with effect from September 2012.

Reasons for Decisions

The decision follows that taken by Cabinet on 16 December 2010 to undertake consultation on proposals to increase provision in primary schools to ensure the Local Authority would be able to fulfil its statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places.

One of the locations identified as requiring additional spaces was Stratford Town. After initial formative discussions with a number of schools, formal consultations with stakeholders on a proposal to expand the Willows C of E Primary School took place between 6 June and 15 July 2011.

Pupil numbers in the area are forecast to continue to rise. Although we have taken steps to increase the capacity at a number of schools in the area, it is likely that if we do nothing, there will be insufficient places in reception from September 2012. This would result in children having to travel to a school outside the area to secure a place.

Background Information/ factors considered in arriving at these decisions - (summarised below. See officer report for full detail and comments made in consultation):

Background

- 1 The Willows C E Primary School is a Church of England controlled primary school serving the western area of Stratford-upon-Avon from the town centre

along the Alcester Road and north of Evesham Road around Bordon Hill, but excluding Shottery and the area served by Bishopton Primary School. The northern boundary is formed by the canal and the eastern boundary by the railway line from where it crosses the canal, and includes Station Road, Grove Road and Evesham Road to the junction with Brookvale Road. Brookvale Road is included.

- 2 The school currently has 317 pupils on roll, an admission limit of 45 pupils per year, and a capacity of 315 pupils.
- 3 Pupil numbers in the area are forecast to continue to rise. Although we have taken steps to increase the capacity at a number of schools in the area, it is likely that if we do nothing, there will be insufficient places in reception from September 2012. This would result in children having to travel to a school outside the area to secure a place.
4. The proposal is to increase the admission number of The Willows C of E Primary School from 45 to 60 pupils per year with effect from September 2012 admissions. It is proposed that additional accommodation is provided from September 2012. Two forms of entry would in time assist the school in organising into single age classes.
- 5 A feasibility study carried out earlier this year indicates that The Willows C of E Primary School could be extended to accommodate the additional pupils. The new accommodation will be designed in consultation with representatives of the school with a view to having the provision in place from September 2012 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Consultation

- 6 Three responses were received. Two were supportive, one expressed concern about the impact on other schools in the area,(will there be too many places?) and concern about the loss of outside space at the school.
7. In answer to this a great deal of work has taken place to assess the impact of the increase in the birth rate across the county. We have looked at data provided by the PCT showing numbers of pre school children by school priority area. When considered in conjunction with the most up to date pupil forecasts, we are able to identify potential hot spots where demand for spaces is likely to exceed availability.

Data supports an expansion in provision within Stratford Town. Thought has been given to the site size of the schools within the town and the suitability of the schools for expansion. We also looked in some detail at where we thought the children requiring places were. The most appropriate location for the additional places appears to be at the Willows C of E Primary School. The Headteacher and the Governors are supportive of the proposal.

The size of the school site is not being increased but care will be taken to ensure that the redesign of the school will continue to provide adequate space

for play areas.

We do not envisage an increase in the PAN, which will be introduced one year group at a time with effect from September 2012, will have a detrimental effect on the other schools in the area.

Financial and Legal Implications

The total cost of the project to provide new accommodation is estimated at approximately £2,600,000 and provision has been made within the 2011/2012 capital programme.

Report Author:	Janet Neale
Head of Service:	Mark Gore
Strategic Director:	Marion Davis
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Heather Timms

Checklist

Urgent matter: yes/no*

No

Confidential or Exempt (state category of exempt information)

No

Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework

No

List of Reports considered [please attach or forward a copy]

Full report of officer provided.

List of Background Papers [please include directorate contact names and numbers for access to background papers]

School Organisation Framework Document 2005/10
Cabinet Report 16.12.2010
Formal Consultation Paper
Responses to consultation

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Any members and officers consulted or informed and any comments given.

Consulted:

Local Members :

Councillor Rolfe
Councillor Cockings
Councillor Appleton
Councillor Balaam
Councillor Barnes
Councillor Gittus
Councillor Hobbs
Councillor Johnston
Councillor Perry
Councillor Rickhards
Councillor Saint
Councillor Seccombe
Councillor Stevens
Councillor Williams

Stratford on Avon District Council

Nadhim Zahawi, MP

Legal: Fay Ford *"comments incorporated into the report"*
Barry Jukes

Finance: John Betts, Head of Finance, Chris Blundell, John Harmon

For information:

Children and Young People O&S Spokespersons:

Cllr June Tandy
Cllr John Ross
Cllr Peter Balaam
Cllr Carolyn Robbins