

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Decision making session**      **Portfolio Holder (Children, Young People and Families) Decision Making Session**

**Date of Decision**                      **25 March 2010**

**Report Title**                              **Expansion of Bridgetown Primary School in Stratford-on-Avon**

**Summary**                                      This report gives details of the response to consultation on the proposal to provide additional primary school places in Stratford-on-Avon.

**For further information please contact:**      Phil Astle  
Assistant Head of Service – Service Planning  
Tel 01926 742166  
philastle@warwickshire.gov.uk

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?**      No

**Background papers**

- School Organisation Framework Document 2005/10
- Portfolio Holder Report 4.12.09
- Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee – 17.03.10
- Formal Consultation Paper

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**                      Details to be specified

- Other Committees                       Portfolio Holder Report 4.12.09  
Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee – 17.03.10
- Local Member(s)                       Cllr Kate Rolfe “*comments incorporated into the report*”  
Cllr Ron Cockings
- Other Elected Members               CYP&F O&S Chair and Vice-Chair for information:  
Cllr John Ross  
Cllr Carolyn Robbins  
  
CYP&F O&S Spokespersons for information:  
Cllr Jerry Roodhouse (on behalf of Cllr Balaam)  
Cllr Carolyn Robbins
- Cabinet Member                       Cllr Izzi Seccombe (Decision Maker)  
Cllr Heatley
- Chief Executive
- Legal                                       Fay Ford “no comments”  
Barry Juckes
- Finance                                     David Clarke, Strategic Director, Resources

Directorate *"no comments"*  
Vicki Barnard, Corporate Capital Accountant  
*"comments incorporated into the report"*

- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

**FINAL DECISION**    **No**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:**

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

**Portfolio Holder (Children, Young People and Families)  
Decision Making Session**

**25 March 2010**

**Expansion of Bridgetown Primary School in  
Stratford-on-Avon**

**Report of Strategic Director for Children,  
Young People and Families**

**Recommendations**

That the Portfolio Holder:

- i) considers the response to formal consultation on proposals to increase the capacity of Bridgetown Primary School from 45 to 60 places per year with effect from 1 September 2011;
- ii) approves the proposal;
- iii) approves the publication of statutory notices.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 On 4 December 2009 the Portfolio Holder agreed to the Strategic Director carrying out formal consultation with stakeholders on proposals to expand Bridgetown Primary School.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The town of Stratford-on-Avon is served by eight primary schools, including a Catholic Primary School, three Church of England Voluntary Controlled schools and four Community primary schools.
- 2.2 Stratford-on-Avon has attracted significant numbers of new houses as the only town in South Warwickshire to be designated for large-scale housing developments. A large number of new houses have been built over the last 10 years and the number of additional children living in the town has resulted in some schools being full while others have year groups or some classes that are full.
- 2.3 Table 1 below sets out the number of pupils on roll in each primary school in Stratford in September 2009:

*Table 1*  
*Number of primary school pupils on roll and school capacities as at September 2009*  
 (source: September 2009 School Census)

School	Capacity	Number on roll Sep.2009	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	* PAN
Bishopton	210	140	23	25	24	18	13	16	21	30
Alveston	140	166	29	28	25	21	16	21	26	20
Thomas Jolyffe	420	384	51	58	52	57	63	48	55	60
The Willows	280	290	45	43	45	33	42	45	37	40
Bridgetown	315	310	46	44	46	43	37	48	46	45
Stratford	210	213	30	30	31	31	30	28	33	30
St. Gregorys	210	220	31	30	28	31	32	35	33	30
Shottery	70	75	13	9	11	9	12	7	14	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>1855</b>	<b>1798</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>265</b>

2.4 Three primary schools are currently operating above their physical capacity: Stratford Primary School, Shottery St Andrew's Church of England (Controlled) Primary School and St Gregory's Catholic (Aided) Primary School. From 2009 Bishopton Primary School was expanded, increasing its capacity from 22 to 30 pupils per year. With effect from 2010 admissions, the capacity of The Willows Church of England (Controlled) School will increase from 40 to 45 places per year and the capacity of Alveston Church of England (Controlled) School from 20 to 30 places per year.

2.5 Table 2 below shows that on the basis of demographic changes and new housing information available, it is estimated that the number of primary school pupils seeking Reception year places in the town will exceed current total places available in schools in the town by 2011.

*Table 2*

Forecast numbers of reception aged pupils up to 2013, including expected rise in pupil numbers resulting from housing development\* and building in the recommended margin of 5% contingency to allow for variations in the forecast.

	Actual	Actual	Forecast			
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Demographic	267	268	239	291	235	255
Housing (per year group)*	n/a	n/a	2	4	11	18
5% Surplus required	n/a	n/a	14	14	14	14
Total Planned Demand	n/a	n/a	255	309	260	287
Capacity*	258	265	280	280	280	280
Surplus	-9	-3	25	-29	20	-7

- o Based on existing expansions at Bishopton from 2009 and The Willows and Alveston from 2010.
- o Housing developments include – minor developments on Birmingham Road and the Cattlemarket Site and major sites from 2012 include – the Egg Packing Station, Kipling Road and Shottery Fields.
- o A surplus capacity of 5% is recommended for areas of potential growth e.g. for new housing to provide some flexibility.

- 2.6 In September 2008, the current Reception year capacity of Stratford Town schools was exceeded and was managed mainly by Bishopton, The Willows and Alveston schools admitting above their published admission limits. In 2009, the situation was much the same although Bishopton Primary School had been expanded. Although 2010 is forecast to be a smaller cohort than the previous two a large Reception cohort is forecast for 2011.
- 2.7 As well as ensuring that there are enough school places across the town, there is also an issue about whether the current school places are located where they are needed. Families should be able to secure a school place in a local school within a reasonable distance from their home. In the town of Stratford-on-Avon there is a degree of 'cross over' of pupils, with pupils living in one priority area attending a school in another area. Whilst most of this is due to parental preference, it can also happen if a school is unable to provide places for all of the children in its priority area. There is a particular problem in relation to Bridge Town Primary School where, due to new housing developments close to the school, it was unable to admit all of the applicants from its priority area for admission to the Reception Year Group in September 2008 and September 2009.

### 3. Reasons for the Proposal

- 3.1 Bridgetown Primary School is a popular and successful one and a half form (45 places per year) primary school serving a large geographical area comprised of Stratford-on-Avon east of the river to the Tiddington Road, Loxley Road and the parishes of Atherstone-on-Stour, Clifford Chambers and Preston-on-Stour (excluding Sweet Knowle). Earlier in 2009 it was agreed that the Parish of Clifford Chambers would transfer to Welford Primary School with effect from September 2010. The population of the priority area has increased significantly as a result of a large new housing development very close to the school. A further phase of the development with some 100 dwellings is likely to come forward shortly, further exacerbating the demand for school places at Bridgetown Primary.
- 3.2 The school currently has 310 pupils on roll, an admission limit of 45 pupils per year, and a capacity of 315 pupils. Table 3 below sets out the number of pupils in each year group and shows the school to be above its admission number in four out of seven year groups. The school has a private early years provider on site.
- 3.3 In 2008 there were 61 applications from pupils living in the school's priority area for 45 reception places and therefore 16 'in area' pupils were refused admission including pupils living in Clifford Chambers. In 2009 there were 83 applications from pupils living in the school's priority area for 45 reception places and therefore 38 'in area' pupils were refused admission. The September 2010 reception cohort is much smaller than in 2009 but Bridgetown Primary is full to its admission limit. A larger Reception cohort of 295 pupils is forecast for 2011, some 15 above the agreed Reception year capacity.
- 3.4 In order to address the need for school places within its priority area it is proposed to expand Bridgetown Primary School from 45 places per year to 60 places per year as the need for places with effect from September 2011 admissions.
- 3.5 The tables below show current and past numbers on roll at this school:

**Table 3**  
**Number of pupils on roll at Bridgetown Primary School – November 2009**

	School year							Total	Capacity
	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6		
Pupils on roll	46	44	46	43	37	48	46	310	45

**Table 4**  
**Total number of pupils on roll at Bridgetown Primary School**

Year	Jan 2005	Jan 2006	Jan 2007	Jan 2008	Jan 2009	Autumn 2009
Pupils on roll	280	301	306	307	309	310

#### **4. What will be the Impact of the Change?**

- 4.1 An increase in the admission number of Bridgetown Primary would enable the school to provide more school places for pupils living in its priority area and also increase the number of pupils obtaining their first preference school and help to meet the demand for places in the town. A two form entry school would, over time, assist the school in organising its classes into single age groups. From 2011 the additional places would provide valuable capacity in the town. Other schools in the town are also benefiting from higher pupil numbers and although there may be impact on admissions to local schools in some years, in the long term, all schools in the town should have sufficient pupil numbers.

#### **5. Building and Finance Issues**

- 5.1 A feasibility study carried out earlier this year indicates that Bridgetown 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 2011.
- 5.2 The total cost of the project is estimated at approximately £2,000,000. It is intended that the cost of the project would be funded from the 2010/2011 capital programme.
- 5.3 The Children, Young People & Families Directorate's proposed Capital Programme will be considered by Cabinet on 11 March 2010 and will then need full Council approval before funding is confirmed. If the proposed capital programme is not approved the financing of this scheme will need to be reconsidered.

#### **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Formal consultations with stakeholders took place between 4 January and 28 February 2010. A consultation paper was sent to all parents, to prospective parents, staff, the Governing Body and the Pupil School Council of Bridgetown Primary School, schools, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Parish Councils in Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Diocesan Education Authorities, admission authorities and neighbouring Local Education Authorities and the local Member of Parliament.
- 6.2 A summary of responses received with comments is set out below received to date. Copies of all responses have been placed in the Members' Group Rooms.

##### The Headteacher of Alveston Primary School

The Headteacher states that she has no objection in principle to the proposal but feels that priority areas in the town need to be reviewed to reduce the amount of pupil movement across the town. The admission number of Alveston has been increased and perhaps its priority should be expanded accordingly.

##### **Comment**

*It may be appropriate to conduct a review of priority areas in Stratford-on-Avon when further births data is available and when further details of the District Council's plans for new housing in the town are established.*

## Parents of Bridgetown Primary School

Five sets of parents made points including:

- Is there a long term pupil place planning strategy in place?
- Will the proposal meet any increased demand for places from the adjacent planned Kipling Road housing development?
- Should a new school be provided instead of extending Bridgetown in order to provide enough places for the long term?
- What physical changes will be made to the school?
- Will school traffic be a problem if the school is expanded.
- Will there be an impact on the amount of outdoor space at the school?
- Concern that a larger school will impact on the surrounding houses.
- What about disruption to the education of pupils and health and safety risks?
- Will being larger have a negative affect on the school's character and reputation?
- Will the internal facilities be extended and improved enough to take the additional pupil?

### **Comments**

*The additional 105 places proposed would be a significant increase in the supply of places south of the river in the town and would take Bridgetown to a total of 420 places, which is generally considered to be an optimum size for a primary school. It is unlikely that there would be sufficient demand for a new school which would need to have a capacity of at least 210 places. It is also unlikely that a new and suitable site could be identified at this stage. If the additional places do not prove sufficient it would almost certainly have to be addressed by considering the priority areas in the town. The physical changes to the building are under discussion with the school but will include some remodelling as well as additional classrooms so that the building offers quality accommodation. Outdoor space may need some re-organisation but the size of outdoor play areas and fields are prescribed by regulation. Traffic should not be a major issue given that the vast majority of pupils live in the area but a traffic impact assessment will be required together with a green travel plan. The County Council has considerable expertise in managing projects so that the disruption to pupils is minimised and the highest safety standards are required of all contractors. The County Council 's current policy is to plan on the basis that primary school size will not exceed 420 pupils.*

### Cllr Rolfe – Local Member

Cllr Rolfe supports the proposals as more pupils will be able to attend their local school. However, the housing development at Kipling Road and the slight rise in the birth rate will mean that the proposal will not solve the problem of over-development south of the river. A major concern is the increase in traffic outside the school which would result from higher pupil numbers. Road safety issues should be addressed before anything is decided.

### **Comment**

*Please see previous comments.*

### Chair of Governors of Bridgetown Primary School

Governors of Bridgetown Primary School support the principle of the proposal and believe it could benefit the school and its pupils, but that support is conditional upon the production of satisfactory design plans.

### **Comment**

*It is intended to meet again with the Governing body with the latest set of detailed plans as soon as possible.*

The Town Council made a detailed response, the main points being:

- The proposal is not a long term solution to the need for school places in the Town.
- Is there an overall strategy to manage the impact of the high levels of new housing.
- Developer contributions through Section 106 contributions should be used to provide additional school places.
- It accepts that the opportunity for improved class organisation is a potential benefit to Bridgetown School.
- A new school should have been provided instead of expanding Bridgetown.
- How will outdoor space for play and recreation be protected?

### **Comment**

*The strategic position of primary school place provision in Stratford was spelled out in the 2008 consultation. This has resulted in the expansion of three local primary schools and the proposal for Bridgetown will represent a very significant improvement in the provision of school places south of the river, even taking into account the new houses planned for Kipling Road. The County Council does secure Section 106 contributions from developers and does use these to assist in funding new school places. There are legal requirements for the size of outdoor play areas and playing fields and all developments, particularly this one, are mindful of the need to ensure proper provision is retained.*

- 6.3 Any comments forwarded from Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee, which is due to consider this matter at its meeting on 17 March 2010, will be reported verbally to the Portfolio Holder.

## **7. Planned timescale**

- 7.1 As the proposal represents a significant increase in the admission number and includes building work, the proposal would be subject to statutory proposals.

- 7.2 The key milestones, subject to responses at each stage, are as follows:

Statutory consultation	– April - June 2010
Final report to Portfolio Holder	– July 2010
Implementation of proposals	– September 2011

## **8. Summary**

- 8.1 The report gives details of the response to consultation on the proposal to provide additional primary school places at Bridgetown Primary School. The proposal is supported in principle by the Governing Body of Bridgetown Primary School subject to it being satisfied as to the design details of the enlarged school. Respondents have raised a number of concerns some of which relate to matters of details and others which relate to whether the proposal will provide sufficient additional school places south of the river. The report attempts to address those points of detail which can be addressed at this point. None of the respondents have dismissed the need for additional school places and the judgement is that this proposal to add 105 places will make a significant difference particularly in concert with measures already taken. The report does not preclude the need for a further review when the District Council's plans for new housing are clearer. The potential benefits for the school of moving over time to a full two form entry school should not be underestimated. Given this and the demonstrated need for primary school places in the town, the Portfolio Holder is asked to consider approving the proposal to expand Bridgetown Primary School so that the necessary statutory notices can be issued.

MARION DAVIS  
Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families

Saltisford Office Park  
Ansell Way  
Warwick

11 March 2010