

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee **Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee**
Date of Committee **19th March 2008**
Report Title **Increase in the Admission Number of Bishopton Primary School, Stratford-upon-Avon**

Summary This paper seeks to inform Members of the response to the consultation with stakeholders on proposals to increase the admission number of Bishopton Primary School. It also asks for any comments that the Area Committee wishes to make to Cabinet.

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision] No

Background papers

- School Organisation Framework Document 2005/10
- Cabinet report 20.12.07

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s) Cllrs Mike Perry & Richard Hyde – Stratford South
- Other Elected Members Spokespersons for information:
Cllr Heather Timms
Cllr Richard Grant
Cllr John Whitehouse

- Cabinet Member Cllr John Burton
- Other Cabinet Members consulted Cllr Izzi Seccombe
- Chief Executive
- Legal Diane Nation
- Finance
- Other Strategic Directors
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals All stakeholders

FINAL DECISION **NO**

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet Cabinet 3.4.08 for final decision
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee – 19th March 2008

**Increase in the Admission Number of
Bishopton Primary School, Stratford-upon-Avon**

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

Recommendation:

That the Area Committee consider:

- (1) the proposal to increase the admission number of Bishopton Primary School and the responses to the consultation received from stakeholders, and
- (2) any comments it wishes to make to Cabinet.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 20th December 2007, Cabinet agreed to carry out formal consultation on proposals to increase the admission number of Bishopton Primary School from 22 to 30 pupils per year with effect from September 2009.
- 1.2 The formal consultation with stakeholders took place between 1st and 29th February 2008, and the purpose of this report is to feedback to Members the response to that consultation.

2. Background

- 2.1 Bishopton Primary School is one of eight primary schools serving the town of Stratford-upon-Avon. The school currently has an admission limit of 22 pupils per year and a capacity of 154 pupils. The population of Stratford has grown significantly in recent years as a result of significant numbers of new houses. Several schools in the town have been enlarged to accommodate increased pupil numbers, most recently Thomas Jolyffe Primary School, and pupil numbers have continued to grow.
- 2.2 The demand for places at Bishopton Primary School has recently increased, and for the first time in recent years the school has reached its published admission number in three year groups. The school has increased in

popularity over the last few years and is seeing a positive trend in its overall numbers and in the number of parents making it their first preferences. With over 500 houses still to be built in the town up to 2011, it is forecast that pupil numbers will continue to increase for the foreseeable future.

2.3 The tables below show current and past numbers on roll at this school:

Table 1
Number of pupils on roll at Bishopton Primary School –January 2008

	School Year								Total	Capacity
	Rec	Year1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6			
Pupils on roll	24	21	16	22	19	22	15	139	154	

Source : PLACS January 2008

Table 2
Total number of pupils on roll at Bishopton Primary School

Year	Jan 2003	Jan 2004	Jan 2005	Jan 2006	Jan 2007	Jan 2008
Pupils on roll	126	120	131	133	120	139

3. The proposal

- 3.1 The school currently operates with five classrooms. It is proposed that one additional class base be provided from September 2009 and that a further classroom, recently vacated by the County's Early Years and Childcare team, be brought into use. With seven classrooms the school's capacity would increase from 154 to 210 pupils and enable an admission number of 30 pupils to be set.
- 3.2 An increase in the admission number of Bishopton Primary would provide an additional 56 school places for pupils living in Stratford. In the last two years numbers of pupils at the school have been growing and an increase in its admission limit is required to meet the demand for places in the town. Other schools in the town are also benefiting from higher pupil numbers and this proposal is unlikely to have a negative effect on them. However, it is highly likely that some further primary school places will be required in the town and a larger review and feasibility study of school places in the area is in hand and will be reported to Members shortly.
- 3.3 If approved, a Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 30 pupils will apply to admissions to Bishopton Primary School from September 2009 onwards.

4. Funding

The total cost of constructing one permanent class base, plus related changes to the external hard play areas and some minimal internal re-modelling, is estimated at approximately £300,000. It is intended that the cost of the project would be funded from the 2009/10 capital programme. The provision of one additional classroom, together with the proposed increase in the school's admission number, will provide an additional 56 pupil places.

5. Consultation

5.1 A consultation paper setting out the proposals was sent to all parents/carers of pupils and prospective parents/carers of pupils, the governing body, all staff and the School Council of Bishopton Primary School, the governing bodies of schools in South Warwickshire, local Diocesan Education Authorities, Parish Councils in Stratford District Council, Stratford District Council, neighbouring Local Authorities and the Local Member of Parliament.

5.2 Copies of all the responses received have been placed in the Members' Group Rooms and a summary of all the responses, with comments, is set out below:

5.2.1 Alveston C of E (Controlled) Primary School

The headteacher confirms that the school has no objections to the proposal.

5.2.2 Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council

The Town Council states that it agrees with the proposed increase in admission limit which it says would bring the school in line with other primary schools in Stratford and create more primary places.

5.2.3 Clifford Chambers and Milcote Parish Council

The Parish Council fully supports the proposed increase in admission limit.

5.2.4 Parent of a pupil at Bishopton Primary School

A parent expressed the view that the school's increase in popularity is due to the "strong and enthusiastic headteacher (who knows all the pupils by name) and reliable, responsible class teachers who take pride in their job, which in turn encourages the pupils to take pride in the school".

The parent is concerned that:

- One of the reasons for choosing the school was its small pupil intake and the proposal would mean the school becoming larger.
- The additional classroom should be in place before the school increases its pupil intake.
- The rooms being utilised for other purposes should not be included as classrooms.

Comment

There are major organisational advantages for the school in having an admission number of 30 pupils. As the new admission number feeds through the school, this will enable it to organise in single aged classes. A maximum capacity of 210 pupils would not generally be regarded as a large school. It is proposed that the new admission number would not come into effect until September 2009 and it is planned that the additional new classroom would be in place at that time. However, while the school would be unable to admit 30 pupils in every year group before 2009, it will need to plan the growth of pupil numbers over a period of time and if, as is the case, there is additional demand for school places within the town and the school is able to admit further pupils, into Reception for example, officers would consider any approach. The school does now have surplus room which would be entirely suitable for use as a class base and it would be considered an inefficient use of resources not to utilise this space.

5.2.5 Prospective parents of a pupil at Bishopton Primary School

The mother and father of a prospective pupil of the school state that having visited the school they were very impressed with the spacious building. The headteacher and staff are praised for their hard work, and their enthusiasm for pupil achievements. The increase in admission number is supported because it would allow more pupils to enjoy the “excellent learning environment”.

5.2.6 Shottery C of E Primary School

The governing body objects to the proposal because:

- Shottery Primary School is located on a restricted site and cannot easily be expanded.
- Thomas Jolyffe and Bridge Town schools have already been expanded.
- In low birth years, up to eight pupils per year could be lost from Shottery Primary School as a result.

Comment

It is important not to increase the supply of places too much. However, with the level of new housing in the town there is a need for additional school places. Shottery Primary School is full and forecast to remain so. It is on a restricted site and there are plans to enlarge and re-locate the school should the housing development at Shottery Fields be realised.

6. Summary

The demand for school places within Stratford has grown as the town has expanded. Additional capacity is needed to meet forecast demand from within the town and the funding is available to provide the additional accommodation for September 2009. The consultation has also indicated support for the

proposal and it also has the support of the governing body of Bishopton Primary School.

7. Recommendation

The Area Committee is asked to consider the proposal and the responses to the consultation and any comments it wishes to make to Cabinet.

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6th March 2008