

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Warwick Area Committee
Date of Committee 11th March 2008
Report Title Change to the Admission Number of St. John's Primary School, Kenilworth

Summary This paper seeks to inform Members of the response to the consultation with stakeholders on proposals to reduce the admission number of St. John's 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 6.12.07

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s) Cllr Alan Cockburn – Kenilworth St. John's – “I would like to align my views with that of the Town Council”
- Other Elected Members Spokespersons for information:
Cllr Heather Timms
Cllr Richard Grant
Cllr John Whitehouse

- Cabinet Member Cllr John Burton – “noted”
- Other Cabinet Members consulted Cllr Izzi Seccombe
- Chief Executive
- Legal Diane Nation – “fine”
- 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

Warwick Area Committee – 11th March 2008

**Change to the Admission Number of
St. John's Primary School, Kenilworth**

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

Recommendation:

That the Area Committee considers:

- (1) the proposal to reduce the admission number of St. John's 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 6th December 2007, Cabinet agreed to carry out formal consultation on proposals to reduce the admission number of St. John's Primary School from 45 to 30 pupils per year with effect from September 2009.
- 1.2 Formal consultations with stakeholders were conducted from 1st to 29th February 2008.

2. Background

- 2.1 School capacities and admission numbers take account of both the size of the school buildings and the use made of accommodation, through the 'net capacity' assessment regulations of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). In 2005 Cabinet agreed to promote the use of surplus school accommodation to support other community and educational initiatives such as children's centres and extended services. Any change in the use of accommodation can reduce the number of pupil places and a school's capacity and Cabinet agreed that such reductions in school places should be considered as a contribution to reducing surplus places.
- 2.2 Although the DCSF originally stated that it would not expect Admission Authorities to re-assess the capacity of schools on a regular basis, any

significant changes in school capacities and therefore admission numbers should be updated as part of the annual admission cycle. Any change to the admission number involving a school's capacity is subject to formal consultation with stakeholders including local schools, parents, the pupil school council, staff and governors.

- 2.3 St. John's Primary School currently serves the east area of Kenilworth. Pupil numbers have fallen in the area and the school requires fewer rooms for teaching purposes. The school has proposals to make alternative use of its spare accommodation that would enable its capacity to be reduced.
- 2.4 It is proposed to reduce the admission number of the school from 45 to 30 pupils per year. The school would be able to meet all forecast demand from within its priority area.
- 2.5 The table below shows previous current numbers on roll at this school and the forecast pupil numbers up to the year 2011:

Year group	Numbers on roll				Forecast			
	Jan 2005	Jan 2006	Jan 2007	Sep 2007	Sep 2008	Sep 2009	Sep 2010	Sep 2011
Reception	37	19	20	24	24	25	19	23
1	28	41	21	19	25	24	25	19
2	32	29	41	20	20	25	24	25
3	30	29	29	40	21	20	25	24
4	32	29	32	29	41	21	20	25
5	32	34	29	31	29	41	21	20
6	44	33	33	26	32	29	41	21
Total	235	214	205	189	192	185	175	157
Capacity	315	315	315	315	315	315	315	315
Surplus	80	101	110	126	123	130	140	158

3. The proposal

- 3.1 An admission number of 30 pupils year would enable the school to plan future intake groups into classes of not more than 30. This greater certainty about pupil numbers would help with the long-term planning of school finances and resources.
- 3.2 The new admission number will reflect the existing use of school rooms and its new capacity.
- 3.3 It is considered that even with the lower admission number of 30 pupils per year, there would be enough places at St. John's Primary School for all of the pupils in its priority area who wish to obtain a place at the school. Forecast pupil numbers for the Kenilworth area up to September 2012 indicate that there

would be more than sufficient school places in the area to meet parental demand.

- 3.4 Parents living outside the priority area of St. John's Primary School would still be able to apply for places but under the admissions policy of the County Council would have a lower priority for admission than pupils living in the priority area. Anyone refused a place at a preferred school would have the right of appeal to an independent appeals committee.
- 3.5 If the admission number for the school is reduced to 30 pupils per year, one less classroom will be used as teaching base in 2009. It is intended that any surplus classrooms will be available for community use. Under the DCSF 'Net Capacity' regulations, changes in the use of rooms will reduce the school's capacity to 210 pupils.
- 3.6 If approved, an admission number of 30 pupils will apply to admissions to St. John's Primary School from September 2009 onwards.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 A consultation paper setting out the proposals was sent to all parents/carers and prospective parents/carers of pupils, staff, governors, the pupil school council of St. John's Primary School, Warwick District Council, Parish Councils in Warwick District, Diocesan Education Authorities, admission authorities and neighbouring Local Authorities.
- 4.2 The responses received at the time of drafting the report are summarised below:

4.2.1 The Governing Body of St. John's Primary School

The Governing Body supports the proposal and makes the following points:

- The existing admission number of 45 was adopted to meet an anticipated "bulge" in total Kenilworth primary pupil numbers at a time when all other Kenilworth primary schools were full to capacity. In the event the 'bulge' was smaller than anticipated and of a shorter duration. The higher admission number had created significant difficulties for the school in terms of managing class size planning and financial budget management.
- Reducing the IAN to 30 from September 2009 will simplify the school's long-range planning of school finances and resources.
- Support for the proposal is also based on the clear understanding that the Local Authority has no plans to increase primary school admission numbers or capacity elsewhere in the Kenilworth area, and that St. John's will be considered first should it become necessary in future to increase the number of primary places in the town.

Comment

There are no plans to increase admission numbers in other schools in Kenilworth. Should further capacity be needed in Kenilworth it makes value for money sense to consider bringing rooms at St. John's back into use as class bases as a first option.

4.2.2 Kenilworth Town Council

Kenilworth Town Council supports the proposal in order to secure the efficient running of the school. However, it wishes to be assured that if further school places are required in the town in future, St. John's would be considered first.

The Town Council also asks that any loss of posts as a result of this proposal be handled sympathetically and that staff would be given priority for redeployment within the Authority.

Comment

The issue of future considerations is set out in response to the Governing Body. The proposal itself will not result in any loss of posts within the school as forecasts suggest the admission number of 30 will not prevent the school admitting all of the pupils it would have planned to had the proposal not been made.

- 4.3 Any further responses received will be reported verbally to Members at the meeting. Copies of responses received will also be placed in the Members' Group Rooms.

5. Summary

The proposed changes to the admission number of St. John's Primary School reflects the current number of classrooms being used for teaching and the intended future use of accommodation. The lower admission limits should help the school to plan future intakes into Reception in classes and still meet the forecast demand for places from its own priority area and will reduce surplus places at the school by 105.

6. 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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28th February 2008