

# Portfolio Holder Decision

## Consultation on the expansion of Lighthorne Heath Primary School

<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder for Education</b>
<b>Date of decision</b>	<b>8 December 2023</b>
	<b>Signed</b>

### 1. Decision taken

- 1.1 That the Portfolio Holder for Education agrees to the commencement of a consultation in line with the statutory process required for an expansion of Lighthorne Heath Primary School to 420 places and the establishment of specialist resourced provision (SRP) to cater for pupils with special education needs and disabilities (SEND)

### 2. Reasons for decisions

- 2.1 3000 homes have been approved in Lighthorne Heath on the Upper Lighthorne development with construction and occupation of the houses underway.
- 2.2 It is anticipated the development will generate circa 3 forms of entry over the medium to long term build out of the development.
- 2.3 In year numbers and reception numbers have increased at Lighthorne Heath Primary School over the last two years with reception numbers anticipated to increase beyond the current PAN of 13 for September 2024 onwards.
- 2.4 Lighthorne Heath Primary School currently has a PAN of 13 which equates to 91 places across the school. It is proposed to increase permanently the capacity of the school to 420 pupils. The PAN of the school will increase to 30 from September 2025. A further increase in PAN will be reviewed in line with demand for places from the housing development.
- 2.5 The Local Authority are also proposing to establish a specialist resourced provision for up to 14 primary aged pupils. The introduction of this specialist resourced provision aims to increase the offer of local specialist provision in the area to reduce travel times and out of area placements.

- 2.6 In line with the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, 'Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools', any proposals to establish, remove or alter SEND provision (including specialist resourced provision) and any proposed enlargement of the capacity of the school premises requires the local authority to undertake a statutory process including a consultation period of at least four weeks. In order to commence a consultation the approval of the Portfolio Holder is required in line with the Council's constitution.

### 3. Background information

- 3.1 The Upper Lighthorne housing development has a 2.8 hectare site safeguarded for primary education.
- 3.2 Lighthorne Heath Primary School's existing site is located circa half a mile from the Upper Lighthorne new school site. The existing school site is not big enough to accommodate demand from the new housing development. To ensure sustainability of existing provision, it is proposed to relocate and expand the existing Lighthorne Heath Primary School (rather than open a new primary school). This proposal was given Cabinet endorsement in July 2018 with funding for design and development of the new school approved in December 2020.
- 3.3 It is proposed to build the school as two form entry (420 places) ensuring scope remains to expand the school to three forms of entry when required.
- 3.4 Lighthorne Heath Primary School currently has a nursery and the new school building would include accommodation for additional early years places.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the PAN for the school will be initially set at 30 for September 2025 and subsequently increased in line with demand from the development. The PAN for the school will be set through the Local Authority's consultation process for the determination of Admission Arrangements for Maintained Schools.
- 3.6 Admissions to the specialist resourced provision would follow a different process from that operating for the rest of the school. Admissions into the specialist resourced provision will be through the WCC process for specialist admissions.
- 3.7 If the proposal and funding is agreed by Cabinet and Council, it is proposed to complete the new school building for Autumn 2025.
- 3.8 In line with the timing of provision it is anticipated that, if approved, the consultation would need to take place over a four week period between February and March 2024. Parents at the school will be consulted using the school's established form of communication, other schools and stakeholders will be notified of the proposal and further information will be placed on the WCC consultation platform 'Ask Warwickshire'.
- 3.9 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken in respect of final proposals following the consultation. The final recommendations will be taken through the appropriate Council governance and approval processes.

## 4. Financial implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from a decision to undertake this consultation.
- 4.2 However, if after the consultation there is a decision to go ahead with the expansion and specialist resourced provision there will be capital costs to the Local Authority to provide the new school building.
- 4.3 The capital project would be funded via relevant developer contributions received and Education Capital Funding as required.
- 4.4 Pupil places in the specialist resourced provisions are funded at a higher rate so that additional learning needs can be met. The level of funding will be broadly in line with how pupils are funded in the County's special schools. A service level agreement between WCC and the school will confirm the exact arrangements and expectations.

## 5. Environmental implications

- 5.1 The proposed new primary school will be designed with a strong commitment to sustainability to ensure high standards of environmental performance and occupant comfort. The project will be promoting a holistic approach that reduces carbon emissions, optimizes energy efficiency, and enhances the overall well-being of students and staff.
- 5.2 There is also the positive impact of the expansion of mainstream places and the increasing development of specialist resourced provision aiming to provide more 'local' education provision, reduce journey times for the learner, and limit the need to access places in neighbouring areas which increases the requirement for transport.

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<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Cllr Kam Kaur, Portfolio Holder for Education

<b>Urgent matter?</b>	No
<b>Confidential or exempt?</b>	No
<b>Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?</b>	No

## List of background papers

None

### **Members and officers consulted and informed**

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Kam Kaur

Corporate Board – Nigel Minns

Legal – Guy Darvill

Finance – Brian Smith

Equality – Delroy Madden

Democratic Services – Deborah Moseley

Councillors – Councillors Marian Humphreys, Jerry Roodhouse and Barbara Brown

Local Member(s): Cllr Christopher Kettle, Cllr Chris Mills