

Portfolio Holder Decision

Consultation on the expansion of infant and junior places in Nuneaton

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Education
Date of decision	11 October 2024
	Signed 

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 by 90 places at Whitestone Infant School and for an expansion by 120 places at Chetwynd Junior School

2. Reasons for decisions

- 2.1 Current pupil forecasts suggest the Nuneaton South East Primary School Place Planning area will start to face a significant pressure in places as approved housing continues to build out.
- 2.2 The majority of the housing development in this area is located within the priority areas for Whitestone Infant School and Chetwynd Junior School. To address the forecast shortfall in pupil places, it is proposed to expand Whitestone Infant School and Chetwynd Junior School by one form of entry. This will permanently increase Whitestone Infant School by 90 places and Chetwynd Junior School by 120 places.
- 2.3 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 SEN 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 4 weeks.

3. Background information

- 3.1 Current housing development in the south east/Whitestone area of Nuneaton is forecast to increase reception cohorts and applications to other year groups over the next five years. It is proposed to increase the number of primary places in this area by expanding Whitestone Infant School (4 to 7 years) from three form entry (270 places) to four form entry (360 places) and expand Chetwynd Junior School (7 to 11 years) from three form entry (360 places) to four form entry (480 places).
- 3.2 If the proposal is agreed, capital works would be initiated to ensure additional accommodation is in place to allow the school to operate with increased numbers from September 2026.
- 3.3 In line with the timing of provision it is anticipated that the consultation would need to take place between 21st October and 22nd November 2024. Should the matter go to Cabinet for a decision, this is anticipated in December 2024. Parents at the schools 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 WCC consultation platform 'Ask Warwickshire'.
- 3.4 An Equality Impact Assessment would form part of the report that would go to Cabinet in December 2024.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no additional costs to the LA to undertake this consultation.
- 4.2 However, if after the consultation, there is a decision to go ahead with the expansion there will be capital costs to the Local Authority in order for additional teaching and ancillary space to be provided.
- 4.3 Initial feasibility assessments have indicated that the works associated with the proposed development would include new extensions and internal remodelling works to the existing school buildings.
- 4.4 The capital project would be funded via relevant developer contributions collected, developer contributions to be received, and Education Capital Investment Funding as required.
- 4.5 Feasibility work will continue with final costings and identified funding presented to Cabinet for approval at a later date with the outcome of the proposed consultation.

5. Environmental Implications

- 5.1 In terms of any proposed capital works, wherever possible the existing structure should be left intact and utilized to minimise the use of new structural materials and therefore the environmental impact. Consideration will be given to limiting the

embodied carbon generated by the structural works by efficient use of materials. Sustainable materials and recycled components will be considered where relevant and appropriate. Consideration will be given to utilising thermal mass to reduce operational carbon emissions subject to suitability and co-ordination with building services engineers.

5.2 There is also the positive impact of the expansion of mainstream places in close proximity to the areas of to reduce journey times for the learner, encourages active travel and limits the need to access places in neighbouring areas which increases the requirement for transport.

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Director	Jonny Kyriacou, Director of Education
Executive Director	Nigel Minns, Executive Director – Children & Young People Directorate
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Kam Kaur, Portfolio Holder for Education

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

List of background papers

None

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Kam Kaur

Corporate Board – Nigel Minns

Legal – Caroline Gutteridge

Finance – Purnima Kandula

Equality – Hannah Laurence

Democratic Services –

Councillors – Cllr M Humphreys, Cllr J Roodhouse, Cllr B Brown

Local Member(s): Cllr Jeff Morgan, Cllr Richard Baxter-Payne, Cllr Jeff Clarke