

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES- CLLR LAURA MAYES

CHILDRENS SERVICES

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REFERENCE: CS-01-17

**Statutory Notice regarding the expansion of The Stonehenge School,
Amesbury**

1. Purpose of Report

To ask the Cabinet Member to approve the statutory proposal published by Wiltshire Council on 26 January 2017. The notice seeks to enlarge the premises of The Stonehenge School by incrementally admitting an additional 60 pupils into Year 7 from September 2018. This will be accommodated through building works to provide purpose built new accommodation (subject to the receipt of planning permission). The current capacity of the school is 820 and the proposed capacity will be 1120, an increase of 300 places.

2. Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure effective school organisation and sufficient school places are provided across the Council area.

3. Main Considerations for the Council

A decision needs to be taken no later than 23rd April 2017 in order to comply with current statutory process.

4. Background

The Stonehenge School (secondary) needs to expand because of a growing primary school population and new housing being developed in the town of Amesbury. The Wiltshire Core Strategy identifies 2,785 houses to be built in the Amesbury community area by 2026 of which approximately 60% have yet to be completed. The remaining housing is predicted to generate in excess of 300 additional secondary aged pupils and although there is a level of surplus currently, it is anticipated that along with the impact of Army Basing, expansion of The Stonehenge School will be required.

Table 1: Attendance at public meetings

Attendance at Public Meetings	
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24th November 2016	1 Parent 5 Residents 4 Governors 5 Staff
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Table 2: Written Responses at January 2017

Expansion of The Stonehenge School would mean we could:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Improve educational facilities for students	2 Parents 2 Resident	5 Residents Town Council	2 Residents	1 Parent		1 Resident
Help meet the growing demand for school places:	1 Parent 2 Residents	2 Parents 4 Residents Town Council	2 Residents			2 Residents
Offer more places to students within the area	1 Parent 2 Resident	1 Parent 5 Residents Town Council	2 Residents			1 Residents 1 Parent
I support the proposal:	1 Parent 2 Residents	4 Residents Town Council	3 Residents	1 Parent		1 Parent 1 Resident

The Governing Body analysed all responses received during the consultation process and considered the merits of all the opinions presented.

The main issues raised were:

- Size and height of the proposed new buildings.
- Impact on neighbouring homes
- Overall infrastructure of the town e.g. roads, drainage, traffic
- Play space
- Need for a Sixth Form

Generally, the case for expansion was supported by respondents. The majority of the issues raised relate more to seeking Planning Permission for the buildings rather than the need to expand the school. Such issues will be addressed in a separate planning consultation and all of the points raised have been shared with the project design team who are working to mitigate them, where possible. Following all of the consultation events, a Statutory Notice was therefore published on 26th January 2017 proposing to enlarge the premises of The Stonehenge School by incrementally admitting an additional 60 pupils into Year 7 from September 2018.

In line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance the Statutory Notice provided a period of 4 weeks for receipt of any comment on the proposal. The 4 week period ended on 23rd February 2017. A copy of the Statutory Notice is available at Appendix A.

No responses have been received during the statutory notice period.

5. Overview & Scrutiny Engagement

Not applicable.

6. Safeguarding Implications

There are no safeguarding implications of implementing the change proposed – the services offered to children will continue under one head teacher and governing body.

7. Public Health Implications

The impact of The Wiltshire Core Strategy identifies 2,785 houses to be built in the Amesbury community area by 2026. The proposals therefore present an opportunity to influence long term health and wellbeing through the provision of effective locally based education. Travel to school represents a key opportunity to build physical activity into our daily lives.

8. Procurement Implications

The proposals being pursued have been subject to rigorous VFM processes through the option appraisal process. The tenders for the construction of the new school buildings will be sought in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules and the Council's Corporate Property Team will evaluate them to establish the most economically advantageous tender to the Council.

9. Equalities Impact of the Proposal

Equality of opportunity will be improved when the school occupies its new building in 2018, as the new building will be fully accessible.

10. Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

There are no environmental implications of implementing the proposed decision. The new building to be constructed will meet or exceed all of the energy and thermal standards required by current Building Regulations.

11. Risk Assessment

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is not taken

- a. If a decision on this matter is not taken by the 23rd April 2017 the matter will be automatically transferred to the Schools Adjudicator for decision.
- b. A delay in implementing would create a continuing period of uncertainty for families, staff and pupils as homes are completed as identified by Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- c. Wiltshire Council would not have carried out its Statutory Duty to provide school places.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

- d. It will be recognised that pupil projections may either under or over-estimate future numbers and become less accurate the further into the future they go. Projections are kept under review as new data becomes available, including termly pupil censuses and live births.
- e. Identified risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken:

Risk	Action to mitigate the risk
1. Financial envelope does not enable delivery of proposals	Project steering group to drive specifications and work with strategic asset management and design team to ensure proposals are deliverable
2. Delays in project delivery	Management of project to an agreed timeline
3. Academy orders / transfers	If the situation arises, the LA will work with an Academy Trust to ensure that the commissioned school places can proceed. This requirement will be secured by a commercial undertakings agreement.

12. Financial Implications

Funding for running schools (paying staff, energy costs etc) is allocated by a formula set by central government, with the biggest part of any school's funding being based on the number of pupils. In the growth period the school will benefit from the new class allowance as agreed by Schools Forum. The funding formula will ensure that the school receives funding for the pupils at the expanded school.

The project was approved as part of the schools capital programme (see Cabinet Capital Assets Committee report 17th January 2017). Wiltshire Council will make available funding to allow the new buildings to be constructed; a capital budget will be allocated in the financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19. The expansion will be funded by the Council from funds provided by the DfE and S106 developer contributions secured by legal agreements as part of the planning process.

13. Legal Implications

Alterations to Maintained schools, are governed by The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 ("Prescribed Alterations Regulations") and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 ("Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations"). When exercising functions under these regulations regard must be had to guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), including School Organisation Maintained Schools: Guidance for proposers and

decision-makers, which sets out the process to be followed. The process as set out in the report follows that of the guidance.

1. The Cabinet member, as decision maker will need to have regard to a list of factors included in further guidance, namely School Organisation Maintained Schools Annex B Guidance for Decision Makers, particularly paragraphs 10 to 78. The DfE does not prescribe the decision making process, commenting that the factors listed in the guidance “are not exhaustive and the importance of each will vary depending on the type and circumstances of the proposal. All proposals must be considered on their individual merits.”
2. Consideration has been given to whether or not there are any ethical or governance issues or any Human Rights implications, and none have been identified.

14. Options Considered

The option to expand another secondary school rather than The Stonehenge School could have been considered. However, The Stonehenge School is a good school, well regarded by parents and is close to the new housing at King’s Gate, Amesbury. Therefore, the proposal is most consistent with a policy of expansion of local popular and successful schools.

15. Reason for Proposal

The proposal published by Wiltshire Council has secured significant backing from the community and parents, and will help to secure the future of good secondary education in the locality.

16. Proposal

To expand the school from 820 to 1120 students aged 11 to 16 starting in 2018 with 60 extra students in each age group. The expansion will be funded by the Council from funds provided by the DfE and S106 developer contributions secured by legal agreements as part of the planning process.

The following supporting documents are attached: statutory notice published by Wiltshire Council on 26th January 2017 (Appendix A)

The following supporting documents are available from the officer named above: consultation letter circulated to parents, staff, governing bodies and others from November 2016.