

Subject: Proposal to expand Greentrees Primary School, Salisbury, and to establish a resource base for up to 14 autistic children.

Cabinet member: Councillor Laura Mayes – Children’s Services

Key Decision: No

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to ask the Cabinet Member to determine the statutory proposals involving Greentrees Primary School, Salisbury. The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the proposals.

Background

2. Greentrees Primary School is a community school for children aged 4-11 in the Hampton Park / Bishopdown area of Salisbury. Since opening in 2002, Greentrees Primary School has been an eight class school, with a published admission number of 34. The school is very popular and many applications to the school each year are unsuccessful.
3. Wiltshire Council is proposing to expand Greentrees Primary School to become two forms of entry, with an infant department on the existing site and a junior department on a new site about 400 metres away, provided by the developer of Hampton Park. The admission number would become 60 on a permanent basis (420 places). The school will admit 60 children in to reception 2014 on the existing site. If this proposal is approved the school’s admission number will permanently change to 60 children from September 2015.
4. An increased pupil admission number of 60 would enable the school, once it reaches its capacity, to teach the children in single age classes of 30 pupils; currently there are some mixed age classes and Junior classes have up to 34 pupils in each. The organisation of infant and junior children in two separate buildings, will give the school increased accommodation capacity and greater flexibility in the use of space.
5. The birth rate across Salisbury City has increased over the last few years. This pattern, coupled with the impact of significant housing development, will increase the demand for primary school places in Salisbury over the coming 10 years.

Table 1 – The capacity and anticipated demand for places in the Salisbury area

Year	PAN	Pupils in Year R	Spare Year R Places	% Spare Year R	Total Places	Total NOR	Housing Pupil Product	Surplus Places	% Surplus Places
2010/11	445	398	47	11%	3115	2707	0	408	13%
2011/12	445	434	11	2%	3115	2751	0	364	12%
2012/13	445	432	13	3%	3115	2866	75	174	8%
2013/14	445	431	14	3%	3115	2908	150	57	7%
2014/15	445	464	-19	-4%	3115	2989	225	-99	-3%
2015/16	445	465	-20	-4%	3115	3055	300	-240	-8%
2016/17	445	429	16	4%	3115	3084	375	-344	-11%
2025/26	445	429	16	4%	3115	3084	1000 (1240)	-969 (-1209)	-31% (-39%)

6. The table above uses figures calculated by projecting the birth rate and the likely take up of places based on past trends. Without any additional housing, it can be seen in column 3 that there will be pressure on reception places from the 2014/15 academic year. Overall, 4,982 houses have been identified in the South Wiltshire Core Strategy to be built in or adjacent to the Salisbury Community Area. For school place planning it is assumed that 4,000 houses will be built within the city at a rate of 300 houses per year. This is predicted to generate a shortfall in a range between 969 and 1,209 primary aged pupils over the whole planning period (to 2026) at a rate of 75 pupils per year. The precise shortfall will depend on the final mix of dwelling sizes, social housing and windfall sites actually built.
7. Plans are in place to enlarge Pembroke Park Primary School from 1 form of entry to 2 form of entry generating an additional 210 places. Also, as the housing schemes come forward, there will be a new primary school at Fugglestone Red generating up to 420 places.
8. Specifically for Greentrees Primary School, Hampton Park II has been given planning permission generating the need for a further 180 places in the catchment area of Greentrees Primary School. With Hampton Park Development now about to commence, it is the right time to consult about expanding Greentrees School by opening a new department on the site secured under the section 106 agreement, generating 180 places.
9. Timescales are linked, in part, to housing developments at Hampton Park, which has already started. It is, therefore, proposed to increase the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) in the Reception class from September 2014 on a temporary basis and permanently from September 2015 if these proposals are approved.
10. For 2013 entry, the school received 42 first preferences, and was allocated 34 Reception children. Of these, 31 lived within the school's designated area. Of the

children offered a place who live outside the school's designated area, one was a sibling of a child already at the school. The other children lived less than one mile from the school.

11. Some of the benefits that the council is seeking to achieve from the new department:
 - Accessible facilities that reflect the expected pupil demand from the local area
 - Developing and providing sustainable and energy efficient buildings
 - Ensuring long term flexibility in terms of the use of space is fundamental to the design and construction method
 - Allowing children to attend their local school
 - Building the infrastructure for outstanding schools fit for the 21st Century
 - More effective and efficient class organisation

12. A small number of children and young people with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) may require a higher level of support than can be provided from the general SEN arrangements within their local mainstream school. However, their needs are not so complex or severe that a place at a special school is appropriate either. To meet this need, the local authority maintains a range of Resource Base (RB) provision.

13. Wiltshire Council is committed to further developing inclusive education for all pupils in Wiltshire. The development of RB provision is a central part of the drive to develop a more inclusive education for pupils with SEN and additional needs.

14. The overall aim is for RBs to provide an inclusive mainstream provision where aspects of the education are adapted to meet the additional needs of pupils.
 - The design of the curriculum, the environment, the teaching and learning and support systems are specific to the needs of the RB pupils.
 - A strategic and practical approach ensures that there are equal opportunities and high expectations and aspirations for all.
 - Accommodation designed for a range of specialist input to be delivered to students who require it.

15. The School Effectiveness and Commissioning service of Wiltshire Council advises that the demand for Resource Base places for children with Autism is increasing. This is in the context of availability of places in other similar RBs in Wiltshire. The RB Communication and Interaction (Autism) is likely to be full, thus ensuring that a larger number of children will benefit from receiving the appropriate support to improve their learning outcomes. It is proposed that the RB will open from September 2015.

16. An extensive consultation was carried out lasting six weeks from Monday 13 January 2014 to Monday 24 February 2014. Those consulted were provided with a short questionnaire to complete if they wished to, with a freepost address to return it to. The consultation document was available in the 'Current Consultations' section of the Council's website with an email to send responses

17. The Local Authority (LA) received a total of 61 responses during the consultation period with a small number of respondents writing a supporting statement about the proposals.

There were no duplicate responses. A freedom of information request was also sent to the council during the consultation period.

18. In the six week period there were two parent / public meetings attended by over 50 interested individuals.

19. Respondents were asked two questions.

Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to expand Greentrees Primary School to two forms of entry per year (420 places)

Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to establish a Resource Base at Greentrees Primary School for up to 14 pupils with Autism (Communication and Interaction)?

Table 2: Shows the overall responses to the two proposal questions

	Agree	Disagree
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to expand Greentrees Primary School to two forms of entry per year (420 places)	56 (92%)	5 (8%)
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to establish a Resource Base at Greentrees Primary School for up to 14 pupils with Autism (Communication and Interaction)?	54 (89%)	7 (11%)

Main Considerations for the Council

20. The majority of those who responded to the consultation agreed with the proposals and supported the benefits that the Council sought to achieve from the new department.

21. There have been no responses to the statutory proposal published on 1st May 2014, with a closing date for responses of 13 June 2014 .

22. The local authority, as decision maker, has two months in which to make a decision, starting from the end of the notice period. As the proposed implementation date is 1 September 2015, a decision will be helpful in allowing the capital project to move forward into planning and procurement and for the governing body the maximum time to plan for and implement the changes required.

23. 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.” Decision makers are further advised that “they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal – especially parents of children at the affected school(s).”

Safeguarding Considerations

24. There are no safeguarding implications of implementing the change proposed – the services offered to children at these schools will continue under one headteacher and governing body.

Public Health Implications

25. There are no public health implications of implementing the proposed change.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

26. The environmental implications of implementing the proposed change are favourable as the new buildings will exceed current building regulations with respect to carbon reduction.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

27. There are no equalities implications of implementing the proposed change as the same locations and the same entitlements remain in place after the change.

Risk Assessment

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

28. If a decision on this matter is not taken within two months of the end of the notice period (ie by 13 August 2014) then the matter will be automatically transferred to the Schools Adjudicator for decision.

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

29. If the proposal is approved then the governing body will be responsible for implementing changes, with the support of specialist Council staff.

Financial Implications

30. 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 finance team are working with the school regarding the growth of the PAN and also the introduction of a second site for the school. The funding formula will ensure that the school receives funding for the pupils at the expanded school

31. Wiltshire Council will make available funding to allow the junior department to be constructed and some modest adaptations to the existing site to form an infant's department. £3.8m has been allocated from earmarked schools capital funding in the financial year 2014/15 & 2015/16 this includes approximately £0.4m for the resource base.

Legal Implications

32. Alterations to Maintained schools, such as Greentrees Primary 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.

33. 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 (A copy

has been placed in the Cabinet Room). 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.”

34. 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.

Options Considered

35. The option to open another primary school rather than expand Greentrees was considered. However, Greentrees is an outstanding school, substantially oversubscribed and is close to the new housing at Hampton Park. Therefore, the proposal is most consistent with a policy of providing school places close to where children live, and the expansion of popular and successful schools.

Conclusions

36. The consultation in January and February showed overall support for the proposed changes.
37. The proposals have local support and are seen as a good way forward for the community. As there have been no objections received in relation to the published proposals, the overall level of support expressed in the consultation period is seen to have remained in place.

Proposal

The proposal is to approve the statutory proposals to expand Greentrees Primary School, Salisbury, and to establish a resource base for up to 14 autistic children.

Reason for Proposal

The proposed changes have secured widespread support within the community and are judged the Council as being necessary provide the required number of primary school places in that community, and provision for autism in the context of rising population of Salisbury as a whole.

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Background Papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices

Copy of statutory proposal published 1 May 2014.
