

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

CABINET – 20 June 2013

REFERENCE FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING – 4 JUNE 2013

400. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note, that in accordance with the Council's petition scheme (paragraph 7.3) that the following petition from 'Vaughan Parents for Progress', containing 1,125 signatures submitted to the Planning Committee on 29 May, be received. The Chairman read the terms of the petition, which were as follows:

'We are a community group that supports the proposed building project at Vaughan Primary School, for a number of important reasons. We have collected 1125 signatures from supportive Harrow residents and employees.

The school intake has now permanently increased from 60 to 90 pupils a year. As it is, the current school building is not fit for purpose, and by September 2014 it will fail to accommodate this increase without temporary classrooms.

We feel that the proposed scheme offers the best possible outcome for our children, as it will give them a wonderful learning space and will provide a more secure environment by placing the reception at the front of the school, maximising the safety of our children.

We fear further delay in the planning or building of this scheme will result in unnecessary disruption to our children's education.

Please consider who will suffer as a result of any further delay.

Residents?

Parents?

Teachers?

Staff?

Local businesses?

In their own "small way", maybe.

But, the real victims will be the children...

We urge you to pass these plans when they come before the planning committee and to ensure there is no delay in the release of funding, so that this vital building work can start as soon as possible.'

The Chairman stated that it would not be appropriate for the Committee to discuss the planning application relating to the expansion of Vaughan School, as this should be considered at the Planning Committee meeting on 19 June 2013. He stated that the meeting should focus on next steps should planning permission be granted or refused. He asked officers from the Children and Families Department to clarify the following:

- if planning permission was granted at the meeting on 19 June, was the necessary funding in place to begin the building works and what were the lead-in times for this;
- what plans were in place should planning permission be refused.

An officer from the Children and Families Department advised that:

- the proposed expansion of Vaughan School was part of the phase 1 Primary School Expansion Programme as agreed by Cabinet in 2012, whereby 13 schools had been identified for permanent expansion over the next few years;
- the planned expansion at Vaughan School was included in the Capital Programme and funding had been agreed by Members;
- the planning application relating to Vaughan School had generated a great deal of public interest, and the item had been deferred at the Planning Committee meeting of April 2013 so that additional information relating to the planning application could be sought;
- the petition was a reflection of the level of demand in Harrow for high quality education;
- all the places at the school for September 2013 had been filled including any additional places in bulge classes;
- if planning permission were to be refused, then officers would discuss with the school how additional pupils could be accommodated at the school from September 2014 onwards. In the longer term, Vaughan School would be included in the Priority Schools Programme, which would not be available until 2017.

A Member stated that he had been previously advised that if planning permission were not granted, then the deadline set by the builders would have been missed. An officer advised that the deadline date for the builders was February 2014 and December 2014 was the anticipated completion date for the building works. The Member asked whether the building works would take place during term time only, or would they also take place during school holidays. The officer stated that it was anticipated that some of the works would take place during the summer holidays, however, as the site in front of the school was self-contained, the building works could take place during term time if necessary.

A Member asked how many pupils the school would be expected to accommodate between 2013-2017. An officer advised that between 2013-17 there would be 5 year groups, each with a bulge class, which would work out to 150 pupils over a four year period.

The Committee agreed that the petition should be referred back to the next meeting of the Planning Committee for further consideration.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Background Documents:

None

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