

# REPORT FOR: **CABINET**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	23 April 2015
<b>Subject:</b>	Proposal to expand Longfield Primary School
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chris Spencer, Interim Corporate Director Children and Families
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Simon Brown, Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	Yes
<b>Wards affected:</b>	Headstone North
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Appendix 1 – Representations to the statutory proposals Appendix 2 – Considerations about the proposal in relation to the Decision-Makers Guidance Appendix 3 – Letter from Longfield Primary School Governing Body

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

Statutory proposals to expand permanently Longfield Primary School were published on 23 February 2015 for a four week representation period. This report provides information and recommendations to enable Cabinet to determine the statutory proposals.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is requested to approve the statutory proposals to expand permanently Longfield Primary School by one form of entry (30 pupils) from 1 September 2015.

**Reason: (For recommendation)**

To enable the Local Authority to fulfil its statutory duties to provide sufficient school places in its area.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introductory paragraph**

1. The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to provide sufficient school places for its area. Like many boroughs, Harrow is experiencing significant growth in the pupil population and has been creating additional school places to meet the increased demand since September 2009.
2. The latest school roll projections predict that the increased demand for Reception places will continue at a high level until at least 2023/24.
3. In July 2014, Cabinet agreed to the publication of statutory proposals to expand permanently a third phase of primary schools. The decision sought to expand Longfield Primary School will help the Council meet its corporate priorities to make a difference for families, communities and the vulnerable by ensuring sufficient school places in its area.

### **Options considered**

4. In July 2014, Cabinet agreed to delegate to the interim Corporate Director of Children and Families, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People, the decision about: the final list of schools that should be moved to the statutory process for permanent expansion.
5. Consultation about the proposal to expand Longfield Primary School was held from Thursday 8 January to Thursday 5 February 2015. Just under half (46%) of the 24 respondents to the consultation disagree with the Council's proposal to expand Longfield Primary School. However, one third agree and the low response level of 24 needs to be viewed in the context of some hundreds of response forms distributed to parents and staff by the school and 570 letters delivered by the Council to local residents. Also the publicising of the online consultation response portal on the Harrow Council website. On 13 February 2015, following consideration of the consultation outcomes, the Corporate Director Children & Families approved the publication of statutory proposals. Information about the consultation outcomes is included in Appendix 2 to this report.
6. Statutory proposals to expand Longfield Primary School were published on 23 February 2015 for a four week representation period

which closed on 23 March 2015. The local authority received one representation during the representation period from a resident expressing concern about the additional amount of traffic that the expansion of Longfield Primary School would bring to the area, particularly at the start and finish of the school day, and the impact on parking in the area. The representation is attached as Appendix 1. A letter was sent to the resident responding in full to the concerns expressed. Officer response to the concerns is given in the 'Traffic and congestion issues' section in Appendix 2.

7. In its response to the consultation about the expansion proposals in February, the Governing Body of Longfield Primary School stated it supports publication of statutory proposals to expand the school to four form entry from September 2015. The Governing Body has written a letter dated 23 March in response to the Statutory Notice to expand the school stating it is still supportive and in agreement to the expansion of the school (see Appendix 3).
8. In its letter the Governing Body states it feels that its previously noted concerns have not yet been allayed and in fact its challenges regarding the traffic and illegal parking seem to be increasing. The letter goes on to state the governing body is committed to reviewing the travel plan and will support the school in trying to improve on the current bronze accreditation status.
9. The concerns raised by the Governing Body in its letters are set out below, together with officer response:
  - The ability to continue to provide such a creative and challenging curriculum.  
Officer response: A key principle for the council and schools in the expansion proposals is the maintenance of high quality educational standards. All schools, with council support as necessary, work to ensure high education standards are promoted through the expansions. Schools expand incrementally over a 7 year period which allows time to plan and embed structures and arrangements to deliver the curriculum. Considerable experience has been gained through the initial school expansion phases that can be drawn upon. The governing body and senior leadership team of the school, with support as necessary, would ensure appropriate structures are in place to manage the increased numbers of pupils and to deliver the curriculum. Larger schools have been able to strengthen their broad curriculum offer through opportunities for joint working in larger teams and the deployment of staff and volunteers to a wider variety of extended curricular activities.
  - The feasibility of providing hot lunches to all pupils who require one, in the time frame and space available.  
Officer response: The challenge of providing hot lunches to all pupils who require one has already been discussed by the school and officers with architects in the site scoping stage. Initial design thinking for the existing hall space and kitchen to be remodelled to create additional dining capacity has been incorporated into the

scoping work in consultation with the school and would be considered further in the design feasibility work.

- The increase in traffic and all the challenges of illegal parking and general child safety that this issue illicit.

Officer response: These are consistent major themes arising from the school expansion programme proposals around the borough. To minimise the impact of the additional pupils attending the schools in the expansion programme, a cross-council approach is being implemented. This is set out in detail in the 'Traffic and congestion issues' section in Appendix 2.

There is already a constructive history of work with the school to address safety concerns and to reduce car use and this work would continue through the seven year period that the pupil numbers increase through expansion. School travel planning is a powerful way to influence parental behaviour and the support of the Governing Body for this work is welcomed. The effectiveness of this is demonstrated by the Transport for London (TfL) allocation in 2007/08 of £90,000 to implement traffic measures in the area surrounding Longfield Primary School as a result of their School Travel Plan (STP) submission. The STP put forward a package of measures to improve safety and reduce car use and was based on consultation with teachers, parents, pupils and governors and other local people. The Longfield First & Middle Schools STP scheme included a new zebra crossing on Rayners Lane close to Dukes Avenue, a speed platform outside the school entrance in Farm Avenue, a raised entry treatment at the Dukes Avenue junction and additional signage for children approaching from the west of the school. The scheme was completed in March 2008.

The School Travel Plan would be updated and submitted with the planning application and would be reviewed annually. Measures arising from the Transport Assessment and School Travel Plan would be incorporated into submissions for highways measures as may be appropriate. Work will be done to achieve Gold level of accreditation at Longfield Primary School, which signifies a decrease in car use of 6% or 90% of pupils travelling sustainably.

- several governors raised queries about the apparent shortness in length, and timing of the recent traffic survey conducted by the highways team.

Officer response: Transport Assessments are being produced by independent traffic consultants on all the proposed Phase 3 expansion schools. Surveys are conducted during the preparation of these assessments, and survey work was undertaken for the Longfield Primary School Transport Assessment that is consistent with the practice for all the Transport Assessments.

- Site visit on Tuesday 27th January 2015.
- Traffic data was collected over the period from 19th February to 3rd March 2015. This period was selected following checks for factors such as school holidays, and whether there were any road works in the vicinity or rail and bus strikes. During the survey period, Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) surveys were placed on Lankers Drive, Hawthorn Drive and Rayners Lane.

The ATCs counted the number of vehicles using these roads each hour over this period.

- Arrivals and departures at the school were recorded as part of High Mast Video Surveys, conducted on Tuesday 24th February 2015 directly outside the main school vehicular entrance.
- Parking beat surveys were undertaken in roads within reasonable walking distance of Longfield Primary School with no parking restrictions during the AM and PM School Peak Periods (07:30-09:30 and 14:00-17:00 respectively) every 15 minutes.

10. Cabinet has the following options:
  - a. Reject the proposals;
  - b. Approve the proposals without modification;
  - c. Approve the proposals with modification;
  - d. Approve the proposals, with or without modification, subject to certain conditions being met.

### **Recommendation**

11. The Corporate Director of Children and Families recommends that Cabinet approves the statutory expansion proposals as published to effect the permanent expansion of Longfield Primary School by one form of entry (30 pupils) from 1 September 2015. The school would fill incrementally from the point of admission into the school.
12. One representation has been received about the statutory proposal from a resident concerned about the additional amount of traffic the expansion would bring to the area. This is a concern raised at all the school expansion proposals and a cross-directorate approach is being brought to address these concerns that is detailed in Appendix 2.
13. Though just under half the respondents to the consultation disagree with the proposal to permanently expand the school, a third of the respondents do agree and the proposal has the support of the Governing Body. The comments made by individual respondents and the Governing Body are noted and work would be done to address the issues and to follow up on suggestions made wherever possible. Also the response rate to the consultation of 24 responses is low in the context of hundreds of communications sent to parents, residents and staff which does not suggest a significant level of disagreement with the proposal.

### **Performance Issues**

14. Schools in Harrow perform well in comparison to national and statistically similar local authorities. The vast majority of primary schools and secondary schools are judged 'good' or 'outstanding' by OfSTED. As at October 2014, 87% of Harrow's primary and secondary schools are judged 'good' or 'outstanding', compared to 85% in London and 80% nationally (Source: Ofsted Data View).
15. The Local Authority continues to monitor key education indicators. The indicators are used locally to monitor, improve and support education at both school and local authority level. They are also used within information provided to the DfE.

Year	Key Stage 2	Reading, Writing & Maths L4+	KS1-KS2 Expected Progress - Reading	KS1-KS2 Expected Progress - Writing	KS1-KS2 Expected Progress - Maths
2012	Harrow	79%	91%	93%	90%
	National	74%	90%	90%	87%
2013	Harrow	79%	90%	92%	92%
	National	75%	88%	92%	88%
2014	Harrow	83%	94%	93%	93%
	National	79%	91%	93%	90%

Source: DfE Statistical First Release

16. The indicators fall within the following areas:
- Attendance and exclusions - the Local Authority retains a statutory duty to monitor and improve.
  - Underperforming schools – schools are assessed at Key Stage 2 & Key Stage 4 against defined floor standards.
  - Closing the Gap - is a fundamental part of Ofsted’s school inspection process, and accordingly, the Local Authority monitors the attainment of identified groups of pupils in its schools. The table below includes the gap at Key Stage 2 between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers and the gap between Harrow’s SEN children and their peers – children with a SEN provision includes School Action, School Action Plus or a Statement.

2014 Key Stage 2 – Closing the Gap	Harrow	National
Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers, based on pupils achieving level 4 or above in Reading, Writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2.	14%	18%
Achievement gap between pupils with special educational needs and their peers, based on pupils achieving level 4 or above in Reading, Writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2.	52%	52%

17. There is a complex interrelationship between a number of other performance issues such as traffic congestion, road safety, traffic and parking enforcement and travel plan performance and all these considerations are taken into account in assessing school expansion proposals.

### Environmental Implications

18. The Council’s over-arching climate change strategy sets a target to reduce carbon emissions by 4% a year. Schools account for 50% of the council’s total carbon emissions. Reducing emissions from schools is therefore a vital component in meeting the Council’s target. However there is a significant risk that the expansion programme will increase emissions rather than reduce them. Phase 3 of the School Expansion Programme will have an impact on carbon emissions that will need to be carefully considered in this context.

19. The RE:FIT Schools Programme will be available to retrofit existing school buildings to improve their energy efficiency. For new-build schools, the design standards will need to ensure that they meet high energy use efficiency standards. Of particular importance will be the use of low carbon technologies – particularly for space heating – and these will need to be thoroughly investigated during the design phase.
20. For many of the projects in the school expansion, programme, planning applications will be required and part of the application will be a school travel plan. Through this process and the development of the solutions for the schools, the impact of the additional pupils and their travel modes will be addressed.

**Risk Management Implications**

21. Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes  
Separate risk register in place? Yes
22. The directorate and corporate risk management implications for the Council arising from school place planning are included on the directorate and corporate risk registers.
23. The key high level risks for the school expansion programme are set out below:

<b>High Level Risks</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Mitigating/Control Actions</b>
<b>Planning</b>	Planning permission not granted creating delays to programme.	<p>Any school expansion that involves building works requiring planning consent is governed by planning law. Planning applications are subject to statutory consultation processes that are conducted separately and independently by the Planning Department. In order to mitigate risks to the programme, the following control actions have been put in place:</p> <p>Informal discussions with Planners during feasibility regarding planning polices.</p> <p>Community engagement through the school expansion consultation and the pre-planning engagement activities. School community and local residents invited to meetings and provided with information about local proposals.</p> <p>Traffic Assessments undertaken to inform School Travel Plans and highways mitigation measures.</p> <p>IT improvements have been put in place for the planning applications to be viewed on the Council website.</p>
<b>Finance</b>	Unaffordable Programme /	Capital Strategy developed to bring together the Government's school funding streams:

	<p>individual projects and additional costs to Council.</p>	<p>Basic Need, Capital Maintenance, Targeted Basic Need Programme; and building programmes e.g. Priority School Building Programme.</p> <p>School expansion feasibility designs aligned to the DfE guidance on spaces and areas for schools.</p> <p>Indicative costs calculated from feasibility studies to inform programme budget.</p> <p>Programme contingency has been included in the programme budget.</p> <p>Robust financial and programme monitoring through the Programme Board, Capital Forum and Cabinet reports.</p> <p>Exploring how the Government's Free School Programme for new schools (programme funded directly from government) may be supported in Harrow.</p>
<p><b>Programme delivery</b></p>	<p>Delays to programme – school places not available, additional costs. Keepmoat – late AMPs and delivery programmes may impact on provision of places in September 2015.</p>	<p>Capital Team expanded with appropriate skills, experience and expertise in major construction projects to deliver programme.</p> <p>Programme Board meets regularly with Corporate Director and senior officer membership.</p>
<p><b>Pupil Projections</b></p>	<p>Over or under estimate of pupil growth leading to a mismatch of provision – shortage of places or over provision of places leading to high levels of vacancies.</p>	<p>GLA commissioned to provide school roll projections. Review of projections against Admissions data on applications and in-year movement of pupils. Close working with schools.</p> <p>The permanent expansions are planned to achieve a sustainable level of school places to meet the growth as indicated by the pupil projections. The additional permanent places are created as the demand grows over the years.</p> <p>The peak and variations in demand for school places will be met by continued use of temporary additional places. This approach will minimise the risk of having to remove permanent capacity in the years following the peak in demand.</p>



<b>Communication</b>	Lack of understanding of need and proposals leading to delays and complaints.	<p>Communication strategy developed for overall programme and individual projects.</p> <p>School Expansion Stakeholder Reference Group meets with cross-party and representative membership to provide advice and guidance on the implementation of the school expansion programme.</p> <p>Programme communications officer develops and co-ordinates communications and community engagement.</p>
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## Legal Implications

24. The Council has a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in their area.
25. For maintained schools, there are prescribed requirements in order to make specific alterations. This includes expanding existing schools to add additional form groups. The requirements are set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and associated regulations. The statutory requirements and national guidance have been followed when publishing the statutory proposals for the expansion of Longfield Primary School.
26. The statutory guidance on expansion of schools confirms factors which should be taken into account by local authorities when determining proposals. Appendix 2 to this report sets out considerations about the proposal in relation to the Department for Education School Organisation Guidance for proposers and decision-makers.
27. The Council must ensure it meets its public law duties when making decisions, including meeting its public sector equality duty. It must consider all relevant information, including consultation responses and representations, disregard irrelevant information, act in accordance with the statutory requirements and make its decision in a fair and transparent manner.
28. The report sets out the representation made in relation to traffic issues around the site. It is fair to say that traffic issues are amongst the most common concerns raised for all the school expansion proposals. The appendix confirms how traffic congestion issues are addressed by schools in general and the report also refers to specific factors at this individual school.
29. It is important that Cabinet recognise the different decisions to be made around school expansion proposals and planning permission for new school buildings. When making decisions on school expansion proposals, the Department for Education has published guidance for decision makers. This highlights the need to particularly consider:
  - (1) education standards and diversity of provision;

- (2) demand;
  - (3) school size in relation to financial viability and cost effectiveness;
  - (4) proposed admission arrangements;
  - (5) national curriculum;
  - (6) equality issues;
  - (7) community cohesion;
  - (8) travel and accessibility;
  - (9) capital;
  - (10) use of school premises and playing fields;
  - (11) views submitted during the expansion consultation and
  - (12) representations about the statutory proposals.
30. Appendix 1 refers to the representation made, specifically in relation to traffic and congestion. This proposal will require a building programme, for which planning permission would be needed and any planning application would be considered by the Council's planning committee.
31. The planning process is a separate statutory process and interested parties, as well as statutory consultees, are entitled to make representations to the Council on a planning application. Whilst Cabinet should consider all relevant representations, traffic and highway issues resulting from planned building works are primarily a matter to be considered by the planning committee, following consultation with the highways department. There are a number of ways in which traffic and highway concerns can be addressed and these will be considered during the design stage and through the planning process.

## **Financial Implications**

### **Revenue**

32. Any school expansion programme will inevitably have significant financial implications. All schools proposed for expansion have raised concerns about available funding and clarity about funding is essential to maintain their commitment to the School Expansion Programme. School revenue budgets are funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). As the Department for Education (DfE) allocates DSG based on pupil numbers, any increase in pupil numbers results in additional revenue funding for the expanding school. The revenue funding is allocated to schools based on the Harrow Schools' Funding Formula. School budgets are based on pupil numbers in the October prior to the start of the financial year, so there is always a funding lag when schools increase their pupil numbers. To ensure that schools who agree to an additional class are not financially penalised, the Harrow School Funding Formula provides 'Additional Class Funding' for the period from September to the end of March, following which the mainstream funding formula will take effect. This ensures that schools have adequate funding for at least the average costs of a teacher and some set up costs.

## **Capital**

33. The budget for the school expansion programme, including primary school expansions, secondary school expansions and provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) up to 2018-19 is £125.382m.
34. At its meeting on 16 October 2014, Cabinet delegated authority to use suitable national or local public sector Framework(s) to:
- a) undertake feasibility studies, surveys and provide professional costs and technical services, and;
  - b) design and build / refurbish school facilities.
- Feasibility study will be completed to develop design proposals and develop costings if the statutory proposals are approved. This work will need to ensure that the necessary building work could be completed by September 2016 and any necessary interim accommodation requirements could be made for the intake of additional children in September 2015. The separate quarterly report to April Cabinet on the School Expansion Programme seeks delegated authority to appoint contractors for works on projects in the capital programme, including for school expansions.
35. Based on current estimates and market conditions it is expected that it is possible to deliver this programme within the overall approved capital programme. If it is not deliverable within the current programme then further borrowing may be required. This risk is being monitored closely in consultation with Cabinet Members.

## **Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

36. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that public bodies, in exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other unlawful conduct under the Act, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
37. Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the proposal to permanently expand Longfield Primary School. The Equalities Impact Assessment is included as a Background Paper to this report. The conclusion of this assessment is that the implications are either positive or neutral in that the expansion of the school will help to ensure sufficient school places for the increasing numbers of children in Harrow. The assessment has not identified any potential for unlawful conduct or disproportionate impact and concludes that all opportunities to advance equality are being addressed.
38. Harrow's schools are successful, inclusive and provide a diversity of provision. The school expansion programme will ensure sufficient school places for the increasing numbers of children in Harrow and will build on the successful provision that already exists in Harrow's schools. By acting to ensure all children in Harrow have access to a

high quality school place, Harrow is promoting equality of opportunity for all children and young people.

### Council Priorities

39. The Council's vision is: **Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow.**
40. The Council Priorities are as follows:
- Making a difference for the vulnerable
  - Making a difference for communities
  - Making a difference for local businesses
  - Making a difference for families
41. The recommendation supports these priorities by:
- Ensuring Harrow Council fulfils its statutory duties to provide sufficient school places in its area.
  - Providing high quality local mainstream and special educational need provision in schools for children close to where they live.

### Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jo Frost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 12 March 2015		
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 13 March 2015		

<b>Ward Councillors notified:</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>EqIA carried out:</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>EqIA cleared by:</b>	Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment Quality Assurance Group

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Johanna Morgan, Education Lead School Organisation,  
020 8736 6841 [johanna.morgan@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:johanna.morgan@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** Equalities Impact Assessment on the proposed expansion of Longfield Primary School  
Comments made in the responses to the Longfield consultation

<b>Call-In Waived by the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>  <i>[Call-in applies]</i>
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