

REPORT FOR: Education Consultative Forum

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| Date: | 27 January 2010 |
| Subject: | School Place Planning Strategy 2010-2013 |
| Key Decision: | No |
| Responsible Officer: | Heather Clements, Director Schools and Children's Development |
| Portfolio Holder: | Councillor Anjana Patel, Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development |
| Exempt: | No |
| Decision subject to Call-in: | No |
| Enclosures: | School Place Planning Strategy 2010-2013 |

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the approach it is proposed that the Council takes to ensuring that there are sufficient school places.

Recommendations:

Education Consultative is requested to consider the report and feedback any comments from constituent groups.

Reason: (For recommendation)

To provide Education Consultative Forum members the opportunity to consider the Strategy and incorporate their comments before the Strategy is presented to Cabinet.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

1. The local authority has a statutory responsibility to provide sufficient school places for its area. This strategy outlines the process that will be completed to ensure that there are sufficient school places.

Options considered

2. Extensive work has been completed by officers across directorates to collate data and analyse the range of information that is relevant to school place planning. The proposed strategy details actions that are required and provides a framework for options to be developed.

Background

3. Over the last few years there has been considerable change for schools in Harrow:
 - The Harrow Collegiate established sixth form provision on all community high schools sites with effect from September 2008. In September 2010, the two voluntary aided high schools will have post-16 provision on their sites.
 - The first Hindu Primary School opened in September 2008 and transferred to its new accommodation in September 2009.
 - All schools will be aligned with the National Curriculum Key Stages with effect from September 2010. This will mean that all high schools will be Year 7 to Year 13, combined first and middle schools will become combined primary schools and separate first schools and separate middle schools will become separate infant and junior schools respectively.
 - Additional reception classes were opened on a temporary basis in September 2009 to accommodate additional rising 5 children in Harrow.
 - With effect from January 2010, 14 separate first and separate middle schools will have amalgamated in line with the Council's Amalgamation Policy.

Current situation

4. School organisation issues are considered by officers from across the Council. The focus in recent years has been to; secure post-16 provision; the consultation, planning and preparation for school reorganisation in Harrow to change the ages of transfer; and supporting the amalgamation policy. There have been some changes to the number of school places by increasing or reducing the planned admissions numbers (PAN) and the opening of the Hindu VA School. In general, the number of places has been relatively constant.

Why a change is needed

5. However, we are now entering a time when there is expected to be continued growth as predicted by the population projections combined with potential developments within Harrow. In addition as the school reorganisation changes to the ages of transfer and post-16 provision embed we need to monitor their impact.
6. Therefore it is proposed that the School Place Planning Strategy is published and reviewed annually. The document outlines the local authority's approach to school place planning. It covers the following:

Areas for Action by school sector.

7. This section includes a statement on school reorganisation, and outlines the provision for early years, primary and secondary schools age ranges, special schools and voluntary aided schools in Harrow. It also makes reference to cross sector issues and neighbouring boroughs. This section is supplemented by two tables. Table 1 presents the changes for reception in September 2009 and proposed temporary increases for 2010. Table 2 outlines the timescale for the approval of the School Place Planning Strategy and future changes to the number of reception places.
8. Five annexes provide the detailed information that supports the development of proposals to change the number of school places. A summary of each annexe is as follows:

Annexe A School Organisation in Harrow

9. This section sets out pre-school provision and the current organisation of schools in Harrow. It includes the number of schools, special school provision and additional resources for pupils with special educational needs in schools.

Annexe B Local and National Initiatives

10. There are several key local and national initiatives that impact on place planning. This annexe outlines the context for school place planning in Harrow in relation to local and national initiatives, and DCSF Guidance. In addition, it details how school place planning is managed in Harrow.

Annexe C Contextual Factors Influencing School Place Planning

11. There is a range of contextual factors that can influence changes to the patterns of demand for school places, which do not necessarily impact immediately on the roll projections. These factors include London wide issues, admissions, new schools, school reorganisation etc

Annexe D Principles Guiding Place Planning in Harrow

12. This annexe sets out the principles that the Council will use to guide the development of proposals for making changes to schools, including increasing and decreasing their size.

Annexe E Demographic Information

13. The methodology for population projections and school place planning is presented in this section. Information is provided on the birth rates and population trends, along with the impacts on the number of places

required across the primary and secondary sectors. For the purposes of primary school place planning the borough is divided into 5 geographic areas or Planning Areas. The voluntary aided schools create Planning Area 6. The projections are shown for each planning area. This Annexe also includes a section on the expected demand for reception places overall and for each planning area.

Implications of the Recommendation

14. The views of the Education Consultative Forum will help inform Cabinet's decision making.

Financial Implications

15. The majority of school's funding is allocated through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). In addition there are a number of specific revenue and capital funding streams including the Standards Fund, Schools Devolved Formula Capital and Primary Capital Programme. The School Place Planning Strategy outlines the following areas of action.

Actual and projected growth in primary sector provision

16. The DCSF allocates DSG based on pupil numbers therefore an increase in pupil numbers results in additional grant funding. This funding is then distributed to schools through the Harrow Schools Funding Formula. As this formula allocates the majority of funding based on pupil numbers schools experiencing an increase in pupil numbers will receive a corresponding increase in funding. As funding is based on pupil numbers in the January prior to the start of the financial year, there is a funding lag when schools increase their pupil numbers during the financial year. To ensure that schools who have agreed to an increase in their PAN are not financially penalised the school funding formula is being amended to include an Additional Class Funding Formula. This provides funding for the period from September to the end of March following which the mainstream funding formula will take effect.
17. Whether schools have suitable accommodation is a key factor when determining which schools are suitable for an increase in places (see Annexe D). This, coupled with the change to the age of transfer creating spare capacity in the primary sector, should minimise the need for capital expenditure. Any capital expenditure would have to be met from within the current capital resources. There is a range of capital funding streams. These include the DCSF Schools Devolved Formula Capital, Primary Capital Programme, and other targeted grants for basis need. In addition, capital funding is available from corporate funding and Section 106 funding.
18. The strategy looks to utilise temporary and permanent increases in current schools and would only consider opening a new school when both these options were exhausted. Any new school would require substantial capital investment and would be dependent on securing capital funding.

Implementation of school reorganisation

19. Schools Forum has agreed transitional protection funding for schools adversely affected by the change to the age of transfer.

Increase provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs

20. Additional funding, totalling £650k, for the increase of provision for pupils with special educational needs in 2010/11 has been approved by Schools Forum. It is being financed from DSG headroom. Future expansions will be subject to securing further approval.

Risk Management Implications

21. Risk included on Directorate risk register? No
22. Separate risk register in place? No

Corporate Priorities

23. The School Place Planning Strategy contributes to the corporate priority to Build Stronger Communities by increasing the role of schools at the heart of the community.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

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| Name: Emma Stabler | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer |
| Date: 4 January 2010 | | |
| Name: George Curran | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer |
| Date: 7 January 2010 | | |

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background

Papers

Contact: Johanna Morgan, Head of School Organisation Strategy, 020 8736 6841.

Background Papers:

None.