

**REPORT FOR: EDUCATION
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

Date of Meeting:	7 March 2012
Subject:	School Place Planning
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Catherine Doran, Corporate Director Children's Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Brian Gate, Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report updates the Education Consultative Forum on a number of school place planning issues, including: the outcome of the statutory consultations; applications for Reception places in September 2012; Free Schools, and; capital funding for schools.

Recommendations:

The Education Consultative Forum is requested to consider the report and offer any comments.

Reason: (For recommendation)

To ensure there are sufficient school places to fulfil the local authority's statutory responsibilities.

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

1. Harrow Council is working closely with schools in Harrow to ensure a sufficient supply of school places to meet the increasing demand. Work is progressing to implement the agreed strategy to permanently increase the size of a sustainable number of schools and to meet peaks and variations in demand through opening temporary additional classes across all schools in Harrow.
2. This report updates the Forum on the range of work that is being progressed.

Options considered

3. At its meeting on 15 December 2012, Harrow Cabinet considered the outcomes of the borough-wide consultation held during the Autumn Term and agreed that statutory consultations would be undertaken about proposals to expand 9 schools on 7 sites.
4. A review is being conducted of how to meet the remaining need for additional places in the South West Primary Planning Area. In view of the considerably low capital allocation from the government and the resulting unaffordability of the proposed school expansion programme, it was decided to defer with the statutory consultation on proposals to permanently expand the Welldon Park schools and to consider the possibility of a different solution to meet the remaining need for additional places in the South West Primary Planning Area. The schools in the South West Primary Planning area have been invited to submit their thoughts about potential solutions to meeting the increased demand for school places in the planning area. A verbal update will be provided to the meeting.

Statutory consultations about proposals to expand schools

5. Statutory consultations were held between 16 January 2012 and 27 February 2012 about proposals to expand the following schools:

Camrose Primary School with Nursery
Cedars Manor School
Glebe Primary School
Marlborough Primary School
Pinner Park Infant and Nursery School
Pinner Park Junior School
Stanburn First School
Stanburn Junior School
Vaughan Primary School

6. Harrow Council distributed consultation information to a wide range of stakeholders including neighbouring local authorities, local MPs, Councillors, unions, diocesan bodies, voluntary organisations, and Harrow Youth Parliament. The schools distributed information and response forms to their school communities, including parents and local residents, and arranged meetings and displays to enable discussion about the proposals. Officers attended consultation meetings at 8 of the schools.
7. At the time of writing this report the statutory consultations had not closed, and information and a verbal update will be provided to the Forum at the meeting.
8. The outcomes of the statutory consultations will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 4 April 2012 and Cabinet will decide whether to publish statutory proposals in relation to each of the schools.

Reception places in September 2012

9. Applications for Reception places in September 2012 are being received in line with projections, and plans are being finalised to open sufficient Reception classes to meet the demand. The 7 schools proposed for permanent expansion that have Reception classes, and Welldon Park Infant and Nursery School, have each agreed to open an additional Reception classes in September 2012.
10. Officers are reviewing the applications against the number of places and at this stage in the process, it is expected that a further one or two classes will be required. Late applications for reception classes continue to be received.

Free schools

11. In October 2011, the Government announced that a free school would open in Harrow in September 2012. The proposers are the I-Foundation and the proposed free school, Avanti House, will be an all through school with two forms of entry in the primary phase and six forms of entry in the secondary phase. To date no site has been identified for the school by the proposers and government officials. The Council has a relationship with the I-Foundation established during the process to open Krishna-Avanti Primary School.
12. The proposers are inviting applications to the new school for Reception and Year 7 places. These applications are being made outside the Local Authority's timescale for admission to reception and Year 7 in September 2012. Those parents that apply to Avanti House may be offered a school place received through applications to local authorities as well as Avanti House.
13. Any free school places would contribute to meeting the increased demand. In particular, the proposed secondary school places would make a significant contribution to the predicted shortfall of secondary places when the increased numbers of pupils in the primary sector transfer to secondary schools from around 2016.

14. The Government has invited applications from proposers wishing to open mainstream, special and alternative provision free schools in September 2013. The deadline for applications is 24 February 2012. Any successful applications for free school provision in Harrow will need to be factored in to school place planning.

Financial Implications

15. The schools capital grant allocated to Harrow in 2012/13 for basic need and maintenance is £5.1m, which is less than last year's allocation (£6.744m was allocated in 2011/12). This allocation is disappointing and if this trend continues for subsequent years there remains a real risk that there will not be adequate external funding for the expansion programme. This risk is being considered as part of setting the Council's 2012/13 to 2016/17 Capital Programme.
16. Government announcements are awaited on the Primary School Building Programme (for which Harrow submitted 11 applications) and on the additional £600m for pupil places nationally included in the Autumn Statement. The outcome of the national review of schools' capital is also awaited.
17. Harrow believes it has fared badly from the current Department for Education allocation method for basic need, and that in the latest announcements it has received less capital grant than any other outer London borough. Strong representations about this have been made to officials at DfE and to Harrow's MPs. In order to further represent its position, Harrow is participating in a pilot capacity data collection exercise being conducted by Partnership for Schools (PfS). The intention of the exercise is to help the Department for Education to better capture basic need pressures. PfS plan to report on their findings to the Department for Education by the end of February 2012.

Risk Management Implications

18. The directorate and corporate risk management implications for the council arising from school place planning are included on the directorate and corporate risk registers.

Equalities Implications

19. Equalities Impact Assessments have been undertaken by officers and headteachers on the schools proposed for expansion. The conclusions of these assessments are that the implications are either positive or neutral.
20. Harrow's schools are successful and 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.

Corporate Priorities

21. These considerations will support the Council's Corporate Priorities for 2011-2012:

- United and involved communities: A Council that listens and leads.
- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name:	Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:	22 February 2012		
Name:	Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:	22 February 2012		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Johanna Morgan, Education Professional Lead, Education Strategy and School Organisation, 020 8736 6841

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report 21 July 2011, School Expansion Programme.

Cabinet Report 15 December 2011, School Expansion Programme.

Education Consultative Forum report 25 January 2012, Primary School Expansion Programme