

**REPORT FOR: EDUCATION STRATEGY
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

Date of Meeting:	27 June 2012
Subject:	School Place Planning
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Adrian Parker, Head of Education Strategy and School Organisation
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Brian Gate, Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Families
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report updates the Forum about a range of school place planning and school organisation matters.

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

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 ('bulge' classes) across all schools in Harrow.
2. The role of the Local Authority and its relationship with schools is changing considerably as a result of the Government's education reform programme. Harrow has been proactive in responding to these changes, including the review and revision of the education consultation mechanisms leading to the establishment of this Education Strategy Consultative Forum.
3. This report updates the Forum on the range of work that is being progressed.

Options considered

4. In February 2010, Cabinet agreed its School Place Planning Strategy 2010 - 2013. This strategy establishes the framework for officers to develop and bring forward options to ensure there are sufficient school places and to promote high standards to fulfil the local authority's statutory responsibilities. Because the increased demand is primarily driven by increased birth rate, the initial focus has been on ensuring sufficient places are available in the primary sector schools to meet the increased demand. The implications for the secondary and special school sectors are recognised and options will be brought forward as may be required.

Primary School Expansion Programme

5. Following consultations during the Autumn and Spring Terms, Cabinet decided to publish statutory proposals to expand 9 primary sector schools on 7 sites. Cabinet made its decisions following careful consideration of the consultation outcomes, a review of the options for the South West Primary Planning Area, and the limited available capital. These statutory proposals will be determined by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 June 2012.
6. Planning for the primary school expansion programme has been complicated by lack of certainty about capital funding allocations from the Government, and the Free School programme, which are summarised later in this report.

September 2012

7. Careful consideration of the projection data, available provision, and applications for Reception places confirmed the need to open 10 additional Reception classes in September 2012. These additional Reception classes will be opened at 7 schools proposed for expansion, and at 3 other schools. All on-time Reception applications have been offered a place in September, and 93% have been offered a place at one

of their top three preferences. The planning range developed last year was for between 9 and 13 additional Reception classes. Two Reception classes will be opened in September 2012 at Avanti House Free School (see below).

Projections

8. Harrow's population is not stable: the borough's overall population is projected to increase until at least 2020; birth rate is projected to continue to rise to 2016; and there is net increase in numbers through migration currently and projected to continue. The latest school roll projections prepared by the Greater London Authority for Harrow predict Reception numbers will continue to increase until 2018/19, following which there will be a gradual reduction. The school roll projections last year predicted the increase would peak two years earlier in 2016/17. The position will continue to be monitored closely, and it is expected that there will be helpful updating of available data as the information from the 2011 National Census becomes available

Secondary strategy

9. The increased demand for places being experienced in the primary sector will progress through into the secondary sector from around 2015. Currently there is some capacity in Year 7 at three high schools, though there is pressure for places in Year 10 and Year 11 across the sector. Work is being progressed on projection data, retention rates and transfer patterns into high schools to help identify potential Year 7 demand in more detail. The impact of Avanti House, and any further Free Schools, will need to be considered in the short and longer term. The additional 150 Year 7 places in the next academic year may be expected to impact on the take up of places at the other high schools in Harrow. If this school is permanently located within Harrow the additional capacity may be expected to go a long way towards meeting the additional demand for places that will be needed in future years.

Free Schools

Avanti House

10. In October 2011, the Department for Education announced that a new free school would be established in Harrow or Barnet in September 2012. The new school will be an all-through school with two forms of entry at the primary phase and six forms of entry at the secondary phase. The proposers are the Avanti Schools Trust. The proposers and the Department for Education have been seeking a permanent site for the school, and have not announced this at the time of writing this report. Harrow Council has been liaising with the proposers and the Department for Education and in May 2012 agreed arrangements for the school to open in temporary premises in September 2012 for one year. Two Reception classes will open at Krishna-Avanti Primary School, and up to five Year 7 classes will open at Harrow Teachers' Centre.
11. The proposers will undertake a statutory consultation about their proposed permanent site for the school when this is identified. If the permanent site for the school is in Harrow, this additional provision will be factored in to the planning for school places.

Jubilee Academy

12. The seven academy high schools in Harrow have submitted an application to the Department for Education for an alternative provision free school to be established in September 2013. It is understood that this application has been accepted for the interview stage of the application process. The Government will announce the successful applications later in the summer term.

Special School/SEN Placements Strategy

13. Work is being progressed to develop a Special School/SEN Placements Strategy in Harrow. The key drivers for the strategy are the demands of a growing population, increasing financial pressure arising from statements of special education need, pressure on places at special schools in Harrow, and the range and complexities of special educational needs. Data is being collated about the current and future demand, the pressure points and context, and tentative options. These will inform discussions with special school headteachers and representative headteachers of mainstream schools.
14. A report will be presented to Cabinet on 19 July 2012 to agree principles for the strategy and options for consultation. It is proposed that consultation will be undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders during the Autumn Term, the outcome of which would be reported to Cabinet to agree the strategy.
15. The strategy will need to take into account the Government's response to the green paper 'Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability' which is the subject of a separate report to the Forum.

Academy Schools

16. Seven high schools in Harrow converted to become academy schools in August 2011. Since then two voluntary aided schools have embarked on consultations about converting to academy school status: Krishna-Avanti Primary School and Salvatorian College. At the date of writing this report, the decisions of the Krishna-Avanti governing body is awaited. Salvatorian College intends to become an Academy School on 1 August 2012. A further school, Grange Primary School, notified Harrow Council in late May of its intention to consult about converting to become a sponsored academy.

School Organisation

17. School organisation, including models of governance, is fundamental to supporting school improvement strategies and securing sufficient high quality school places. There are many models of school organisation which are successful including combined and separate maintained primary sector schools, federations and academy schools. In its role as a commissioner of school places Harrow Council will support school improvement through implementation of strategic and structural change to school organisation and governance structures. In all instances, the local authority will work with governing bodies and other parties including the Department for Education to establish the best way forward. There are three broad policy areas that secure different school organisation to support school improvement.

The Amalgamation Policy

18. Harrow Council has had an Amalgamation Policy since 2005. The policy was amended in 2007, and clarified in 2008 when guidance notes were included. The policy is currently being updated and reviewed. It is anticipated that a proposed revised policy will be available later this term.

Promoting collaborative arrangements through federation to support school improvement

19. Harrow Council has supported the governing bodies of Whitefriars Community School and Heathland School in developing federation proposals that are the subject of consultation until 25 June 2012. At the invitation of the Local Authority, Heathland School and Whitefriars Community School have been working together since January 2012. The two schools consider it will be of mutual benefit to build on this cooperative model and to seek to progress improvements at a faster rate through the creation of one federated governing body and new shared leadership arrangements across the two schools from 1 August 2012.

Supporting Academy Conversion when agreed by Governing Bodies

20. Harrow Council has established an Academy Schools Conversion Working Group to coordinate corporate actions in relation to schools planning to convert to academy school status.

Financial Implications

Revenue

21. Any school expansion programme will inevitably have significant financial implications. 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. This revenue funding is then allocated to schools based on the Harrow Schools' Funding Formula. Currently schools who agree to an additional class are provided with '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.
22. The DfE are proposing to reform school funding from April 2013 which will significantly impact on the Harrow School Funding Formula. The details of the school funding formula have yet to be developed. However the formula will look to maintain funding for additional classes to ensure schools undertaking a permanent expansion or bulge class are financially compensated.

Capital

23. It is currently estimated that the cost of permanently expanding the nine schools in the proposals is £26.2m. These costs were considered as part of setting the Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2014/15. DfE capital grants are insufficient to fund the expansion programme so council funding, totalling £2.25m, has been allocated in the capital programme. To fully fund the expansion programme requires additional funding,

estimated at £7.9m. Section 106 planning resource (s106) contributions are routinely negotiated from developers, including specific allocations for additional school places. It is planned to use these s106 contributions to fund the financing costs associated with the additional borrowings required for the first three years. Once the Council's transformation programme is complete there will be headroom in the capital financing budget to accommodate the future years financing costs.

Priority School Building Programme

24. The Department for Education announced on 24 May 2012 that eight Harrow Schools (on 7 sites) have been selected for inclusion in the Priority School Building Programme (for which Harrow submitted 11 applications). Very few details of the Priority School Building Programme have been announced at the time of writing this report, though the aim is to rebuild the selected schools over a 5 year programme with the first school being delivered in 2014. Officers are seeking further clarification from the Department for Education about the programme and discussions are planned to be held with the selected schools.
25. Included in the eight schools are Cedars Manor, Marlborough and Vaughan primary schools which are in the primary school expansion programme. If the programme does provide funding for expansion within the rebuild at the three schools it should reduce the requirement for council funding and should contribute to meeting the funding requirement.

Other funding opportunities

26. Harrow is awaiting the final allocation from the additional £600m for pupil places nationally that was announced for other areas on 12 April 2012. When confirmed, this will contribute to meeting the funding requirement.
27. Wherever possible officers will seek to maximise the benefits to Harrow from government policies and new housing development. For example, the contribution of Free Schools to school provision, and Section 106 contributions to mitigate the impact of new housing developments within Harrow.

Risk Management Implications

28. 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

29. 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 in that the expansion of the schools will help to ensure sufficient school places for the increasing numbers of children in Harrow.
30. 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. A special school/SEN placements strategy will be developed that considers the potential increased demand for school places for children with disabilities arising from the growth in the school age population overall.

Corporate Priorities

31. 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:	14.6.12		
Name:	Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:	14.6.12		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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

Background Papers: None