

**TO: EXECUTIVE
18 NOVEMBER 2014**

**SCHOOL PLACES PLAN 2014 - 2019
Director of Children, Young People and Learning**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 To note the School Places Plan 2014 – 2019, including the 2014-based pupil forecasts.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Executive:

- 2.1 **Note the School Places Plan 2014 – 2019 which forecasts a further 4,090 pupils will be seeking a school place by 2019, a 25% increase.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The provision of school places remains an essential part of the Council's organisation and planning process and enables the Council to meet its statutory duties in relation to school places. A school place continues to be available for every child in the Borough who wants one.
- 3.2 On the last occasion that Department for Education grants for targeted basic needs were allocated, the Council's 2012-based forecasts were successful in securing £7.8M of grant through the bidding process to build additional places in the future.
- 3.3 The Council forecasts on a 'worst case' basis, bringing schemes forward for implementation when short term forecasts demonstrate the need.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 It is business critical to undertake pupil forecasting to ensure the Council meets its statutory obligation of sufficiency of school places. The plan provides a mechanism to communicate these forecasts.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The School Places Plan (attached as Appendix 1) is produced as a result of an annual review of future housing plans, numbers on roll and demographic data. It includes forecasts of school intake and total numbers on roll and calculates the impact on places.
- 5.2 The planning and capital programme processes that deliver places constitute both a major challenge and a major achievement for the Council. In excess of 5,000 school places have been created in Bracknell Forest schools over the last 10 years, including expansions and surge classrooms at existing schools in all three organisational areas, construction of a new primary school at Jennett's Park and the re-provided expanded secondary school at Garth Hill College. The cost of these places has been in the region of £90M. Given the national pressures on school places this is a major success for the Council, with school places continuing to be available for every child in the Borough who wants one.

- 5.3 The forecasts contained in this plan support school estate planning to meet demand for pupil places. The Education Capital Programme has always succeeded in creating sufficient physical capacity in our schools to meet local demand, and the key factors in this have been:
- the ability to plan well in advance
 - planning for the worst case (highest) pupil numbers but only building what is actually needed
 - working with schools to minimise the disruption and optimise the enhancement of the physical environment through the construction works.
- 5.4 The Plan builds on the lessons learnt in the last year, and practice has been further improved this year. Increased scrutiny has been given to input data, the model and the assumptions taken in response to various factors in the model. These improvements can enhance the Council's confidence in the forecasts.
- 5.5 Planning area forecasts in this Plan are produced for medium term planning purposes. Forecasts are based on trends in past numbers on roll, admissions and birth rates, and take into account planned housing and other factors. Pupils are projected in the designated area of schools and forecasts are not constrained by accommodation at the school. The Admissions Authority for each school will determine, based on their admission arrangements, which pupils can be offered places at the school.
- 5.6 A full description of factors impacting the forecasts and changes since the previous plan are contained in this year's Plan. The Register of Factors influencing the forecasts is attached as Appendix 2.
- 5.7 Trends in the figures and the measures being taken to increase the number of places available, are set out in the Borough-wide commentary. Further detail for each of the three planning areas (Bracknell North, Bracknell South, Crowthorne & Sandhurst) is contained in the Planning Area commentaries.
- 5.8 In summary, the trend of increasing pupil numbers and pressure on the intake year in primary schools that has been seen in recent years continues.
- Total - there are currently 16,036 pupils in primary and secondary schools in the Borough and the Council forecasts this number to grow to 20,126 by 2019. This represents an additional 4,090 pupils or a 25% increase overall.
- Primary - there are currently 9,460 primary pupils in the Borough - this year's forecasts indicate this number could rise to 11,669 by 2019 (2,209 additional pupils, a 23% increase).
- Secondary - there are currently 6,576 secondary pupils in 5 maintained schools and an academy. This year's forecasts indicate this number could rise to 8,458 by 2019. This represents an additional 1882 pupils or a 29% increase overall.
- 5.9 In recent years the forecasts have been robust in forecasting accurate numbers of school places required for, in particular, the following school year and in giving a good guide for the years immediately following this. Last year's forecasts for 2014 were within 1% of the actual numbers on roll.
- 5.10 The Council works closely with colleagues in neighbouring authorities, in particular those in Wokingham BC and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Information on housing developments is shared, and implications for school places and designated areas discussed. For example there is expected to be displacement

back to Bracknell Forest of children previously attending school in Wokingham, but where places are no longer available due to local housing growth.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Borough Solicitor has noted the contents of this report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from agreeing the School Places Plan 2014-2019.
- 6.3 Any additional accommodation needs identified in the Plan will have to be considered as part of the Council's budget setting process, with the full Council responsible for agreeing to the release of capital funding.
- 6.4 Resourcing schools for their day to day running costs is through the Dedicated Schools Grant, the amount of which is set by the Department for Education. Therefore, any cost impact arising from changes in pupil numbers will need to be met from within the overall level of grant receipts and is outside the Council's financial responsibility.

Borough HR Manager

- 6.5 There will be HR issues arising from this report as increasing school capacity will have implications for the recruitment and employment of teaching and support staff.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.6 See Equalities Impact Assessment relating to the provision of additional places attached as Appendix 3.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.7 Risks in the production and delivery of the forecasts are attached as Appendix 4.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 The Pupil Place Planning (PPP) Board – the Council decision-making body composed of key senior officers, consultants and the Executive Member for CYPL - have been consulted about the contents of the plan.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 PPP Board meeting on 7 October 2014.

Representations Received

- 7.3 The Board understood the issues, the overall trends and the implications for the supply of additional places.

Background papers

None

Contacts for further information

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