

Executive Decision Report

Primary Pupil Place Planning – Allocation of Basic Need Capital Funds

Decision to be taken by: Assistant City Mayor – Children,
Young People and Schools

Lead Director: Frances Craven and Frank Jordan



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Rob Thomas, Head of Children's Capital Planning
- Author contact details: rob.thomas@leicester.gov.uk tel: 454 6203
- Report version number: 4.4

1. Summary

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient pupil places in their area. LA's must ensure that there are sufficient schools and that they promote diversity and increase parental choice.

This report outlines the background to pupil place planning in Leicester to meet the forecasted demand of pupils and updates on the progress of approved Phase 1 projects and outlines the funding required to be approved to complete Phase 2 of the programme.

Primary Place Planning reports have previously been presented to Executive and Scrutiny on the strategy and proposals, most recently the report to Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission on 20 October 2013 outlining potential additional projects.

Details of the previous allocation of Basic Need funding which were contained within report to Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission on 20 March 2013 and subsequent Executive Decision.

This report summarises progress to date of all projects and, following consideration of views, proposes to seek an Executive Decision on allocation of funding from existing Policy Provisions.

2. Recommendations

Executive is asked to;

1. Note the background of pupil place planning strategy and update on projects
2. Approve the allocation of £1.7m of funding for Phase 1 projects from the existing Basic Need Policy Provision of £16.8m
3. Approve the allocation of £10.2m of funding for Phase 2 projects from the existing Basic Need Policy Provision of £16.8m
4. Agree that the Strategic Director, Children's Services, in consultation with the Assistant City Mayor – Children, Young People and Schools has delegated authority to vary the amounts of individual schemes within the total funding allocated.
5. Note that a further report will be brought to approve the allocation of the

3. Supporting information including options considered:

Basic Need funding

The Local Authority receives capital grant from the DfE to support the requirement for providing new pupil places by expanding existing maintained schools, free schools or academies, and by establishing new schools.

This funding has been allocated on the basis of shortfalls in capacity identified by the comparison of forecasted pupil numbers against existing school capacity.

In Leicester the shortfalls in capacity were all within the primary sector as the BSF programme secured additional funding for increased capacity within the secondary sector.

Local authorities are permitted to take strategic planning decisions about where additional capacity should be provided and Leicester has developed an approved Phase 1 and a proposed Phase 2 programme of works.

Primary Place Planning

The provision of additional capacity of schools is managed on a phased basis to ensure that capacity is planned to meet projected forecasted demand in reception places over future academic years. It is important to not over provide capacity in any particular academic year as this could have negative impact and destabilise less popular schools that potentially lead to viability issues.

The programme of school expansions has been subject to a number of reports to Executive and Scrutiny that has explored a range of options from expanding existing schools on their own sites (where this is feasible) to holding a competition for a new school (with the presumption that any new school would be an Academy/Free School).

The approved Phase 1 programme identified a number of local authority maintained schools that could be expanded where there was underutilised accommodation within the school or where there was sufficient land to build an extension. As the local authority was the admission authority for these schools it was easier, timelier and a better use of existing resources for these schools to be considered as part of the first phase.

The proposed schools as part of the Phase 2 programme required more collaborative discussions with stakeholders as a number of the schools required additional processes to be considered with regards increasing admission numbers

All individual schemes are phased to complete construction works in time for the additional pupils to start schools in September, the start of the academic year. This shows the profiling of expenditure across 2 or 3 financial years to take account of initial design work, procurement and construction phases of the projects.

Wherever possible the local authority looks to expand schools where pupil growth

creates a demand, however the opportunity to expand schools on their own sites is sometimes limited due to a number of issues eg:

- small inner city school sites with limited or no outdoor environment
- planning restrictions in terms of listed buildings, conservation areas and highways considerations
- economic factors in terms of scheme proposals eg adding additional floors to single storey buildings
- educational performance and/or capacity of leadership and management to cope with additional pupils

Phase 1

Following reports on the strategy options for pupil place planning, a report was prepared for the allocation of Basic Need capital funds – Phase 1. This was presented to Scrutiny on 20 March 2013 and subsequent Executive Decision.

The report identified a number of schools that could potentially create additional reception places to help meet future projected demand over a 5 year period. The increase in capacity would depend on a more detailed feasibility study of each scheme including an analysis of the impacts on educational performance.

The estimated costs were approx. £15m and agreement was sought to complete detailed investigations on each site, develop and design these schemes and engage contractors to deliver the projects for September 2015.

Progress of projects

The proposed projects were planned on a phased basis to be completed across the 3 academic years 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.

After the completion of education and building feasibilities a building programme has been agreed to provide the phased increase in capacity across the city that leads to sustained growth to align with forecasted demand that will provide an additional 370 reception places. Across all primary year groups this equates to 2590 primary places.

For September 2013, 6 schools provided an additional 120 Reception places:

- Braunstone Frith Primary – 15 reception places
- Eyres Monsell Primary – 30 reception places
- Imperial Avenue Infant – 30 reception places
- Mowmacre Hill Primary – 15 reception places
- Parks Primary – 15 reception places
- Stokes Wood Primary – 15 reception places

For September 2014, 4 schools provided an additional 100 Reception places:

- Alderman Richard Hallam Primary – 30 reception places
- Caldecote Primary – 30 reception places
- Herrick Primary – 10 reception places
- Rushey Mead Primary – 30 reception places

For September 2015, 5 schools will provide an additional 150 reception places:

- Linden Primary – 30 reception places
- Sandfield Close Primary – 30 reception places
- Whitehall Primary – 30 reception places
- Wolsey House Primary – 30 reception places
- Woodstock Primary – 30 reception places

Following consultation with schools on their accommodation requirements and the completion of feasibility studies it has been necessary to increase the scope of works for some schemes which are due for completion by September 2015. For example, where the increased intake means that existing infrastructure such as the school hall is inadequate, or where temporary classrooms need replacing, such items are proposed to be dealt with as part of this programme.

Subject to the completion of detailed designs and receiving tender prices, it is estimated that an additional £1.7m is required to complete this phase of the programme.

Phase 2

To meet the remaining forecasted demand for September 2015, additional proposals have been developed which were presented Scrutiny on 29 October 2013.

In addition to updating on Phase 1 proposals, the report identified developments not previously included within capacity plans as follows:-

- Successful bid for additional Targeted Basic Need Programme capital funding for the development of a split site through an expansion of Kestrels' Field Primary School
- DfE confirmation that Forest Lodge Primary School would form part of the Priority School Building Programme and rebuilt with additional capacity
- DfE confirmation (at that time) that a new Sikh ethos Free School would open in September 2014.

When realised, Phase 1 and the above new developments are anticipated to meet up to 80% of the capacity required by September 2015.

The proposals for Phase 2 report will meet the remaining projected forecasted demand up to September 2015.

Update on Phase 2 projects:

Detailed feasibility studies and design works are continuing on the projects listed below and this will require a further allocation of the Basic Need Policy Provision.

- Hope Hamilton C of E Primary – expansion of school on existing site to increase Reception places from 45 to 60 from September 2015. Estimated cost of £1m.
- Christ the King Primary School – expansion of school to increase reception places from 50 to 90 from September 2015 by remodelling part of the current

West Gate School following its relocation to a newly built BSF school. Estimated cost £1m.

- St Mary's Fields School – expansion of age range to become an 'all through' primary school by the addition of a new junior block linked to existing infant school. Estimated cost £4m
- Kestrels' Field Primary School – expansion of school on Quakesick site to increase reception places from 60 to 120 from September 2015. The DfE are contributing approximately £3.9m towards the project. The additional costs of providing a new Junior block on the Quakesick site and remodelling the existing school to become the infant block is approximately £2.6m
- Madani Schools – expansion of age range to add primary provision to provide a combined total of 120 reception places from September 2016. Officers have been working with the Governing Body to identify appropriate sites within the City to establish this provision. Following discussion it is not felt there are any suitable local authority sites currently available. An appropriate site has been identified and negotiations are underway with the owner. The site offers an opportunity to establish primary provision in the locality in an area of high parental demand and discussions over valuation and design solution have commenced. A further report will be brought to approve allocation of capital if the project is viable.
- Forest Lodge Primary School – the school will be rebuilt as part of the Priority Schools Building Programme which is funded centrally by the DfE. It will be expanded from 60 to 90 reception places from September 2015. As part of the project the local authority is responsible for some elements of the project including – boundary fencing, planning and highway obligations and some external landscaping costs. Estimated cost £0.1m
- Following completion of feasibilities, the projects at Marriott Primary and Scraftoft Primary School are not being progressed at this time. The governors and leadership at Marriot Primary School raised concerns regarding the distance and walking route between the school and the Knighton Fields Centre and combined with concerns about attendance at a split site believed there would significant educational impact on the school. At Scraftoft Valley Primary School there were concerns over the impact of expansion proposals at Kestrels' Field Primary School and Hope Hamilton Primary School would lead to lower levels of parental preference for this school within the wider Hamilton area.
- Contingencies – it is recommended that a contingency is provided to allow completion of above projects following completion of detailed design solutions and procurement exercises.

Summary:

The provision of additional capacity in primary schools has been planned in a phased approach. The approved programme as part of Phase 1 is providing additional capacity over 3 academic years in local authority schools by expanding on their existing sites.

The proposals as part of Phase 2 add further capacity and, in a number of schools, help the local authority meet its duties for increasing diversity of provision and meeting parental preference by working collaboratively with our faith partners.

The combined increase in capacity of both phases of this programme will, if realised, meet the projected demand forecasted up to September 2015.

The proposal for provision for the Madani Schools for September 2016 will provide additional capacity in an area of high demand and also provide parents with an increased likelihood of securing appropriate faith based provision which would also free up spaces in other popular city schools to allow, in turn, for more local children to be accommodated.

Funding

The Phase 2 proposals in this report requires an allocation of Basic Need capital funding:

Project	Allocation of Basic Need funding £m
Completion of Phase 1 programme	1.7
Hope Hamilton	1.0
Christ the King	1.0
St Mary's Fields	4.0
Kestrels' Field	2.6
Forest Lodge	0.1
Contingencies	1.5
Total	11.9

4. Details of Scrutiny

The Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission have regularly received update reports on proposals for Basic Need allocations and provision of additional capacity in schools. At its latest meeting on 17 September, the Commission gave its support to the proposals contained in this report.

A stakeholder group continues to meet to enable ongoing consultation with colleagues from Children's Services, schools, COLGA, Diocesan education authorities and primary and secondary headteachers. At its most recent meeting this group discussed and endorsed the proposals contained within this report.

The admissions forum representing all categories of schools and the independent choice advice service has discussed and endorsed these proposals at all stages as they have developed.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The existing Basic Need Policy Provision is £16.8m and this paper recommends the allocation of £11.9m from that provision.

There are further Basic Need funding allocations of £6.6m for 2015/16 and £6.9m for 2016/17. A capital bid has been made for the £6.6m allocation and a further report will be brought with details of how this funding and the remainder of the policy provision could be spent.

Martin Judson, Head of Finance

5.2 Legal implications

Proposed developments with regard to school expansion, changes in age range, new provision etc. proposed within this Report are achievable but will be subject to compliance with relevant school organisation legislation. This may necessitate the publication of Statutory notices and that provision be made for stakeholder views to be expressed and considered by the Decision taker during separate consultation and representation periods prior to final decisions being executed.

Kamal Adatia
City Barrister & Head of Standards

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

The proposed increase in the size of the primary school estate will result in a significant increase in energy use and carbon dioxide emissions. Primary schools make up approximately one sixth of the Council's carbon foot print and therefore reducing emissions from primary schools is important if the corporate target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to 50% of the 2008/09 level by 2025/26 is going to be met. Refurbishing the existing primary school buildings and building new classrooms to higher environmental standards will reduce carbon dioxide emissions per m2 floor area, but ultimately further carbon emissions reduction initiatives will needed to meet the corporate target (e.g. support for effective day-to-day energy management in schools).

Mark Jeffcote , Environment Team, Property

5.4 Equalities Implications

The allocation of funds to support additional primary school places will have a positive

impact on the families of young children in the areas covered (evenly split between eastern and western areas of the city) in that their children will be more likely to attend a school near to where they live, thereby reducing school journey times and enabling children to become more active in/engaged with local community life. For families with more than one primary school age child, there will be the added positive impact of the increased likelihood of their children being able to attend the same school as their siblings, thereby promoting family life and reducing burdens (financial and time taken) on families required to arrange transport for different children to different schools in different localities. Two of the ten primary schools put forward to receive Basic Need Capital Funds are faith schools, and the proposal has the positive impact of increasing the number of faith school placements available to parents who wish their children to attend a school reflecting their religious beliefs. The main protected characteristics affected are age followed by religion and belief. Too little information is available to determine whether other protected characteristics, such as disability or race, are also positively affected.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext 374147

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

6. Background information and other papers:

None

7. Summary of appendices:

None

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

Yes/No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes

10. If a key decision please explain reason

Value in excess of £1m