

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

23 May 2016

2017-18 SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING - RED HILL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Relevant Cabinet Member

Cabinet Member for Children and Families

Relevant Officer

Interim Director of Children, Families and Communities

Local Member

Mr M L Bayliss

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families is recommended to:**
 - (a) withdraw the current proposal to expand Red Hill CE Primary School with an associated increase in Published Admission Number from 30 to 60 per year having regard to the continued objection of the school;**
 - (b) note continuing efforts by officers to reach agreement with the Governing Body of Red Hill CE Primary School with a view that the proposal to expand can be re-published;**
 - (c) authorise the Director of Children, Families and Communities to re-publish such statutory notices to expand in due course as are appropriate as having regard to the outcomes of discussions with the school provided such an expansion could still be delivered for September 2017; and**
 - (d) agree that any such re-published notice be determined in the same manner as originally agreed by Cabinet in February 2016, namely that the Director of Children, Families and Communities may approve the proposal where there are no remaining objections to the Public Notice and the Cabinet Member for Children and Families may decide the proposal where there are such objections.**

Background

- 2. At their meeting on 4 February 2016 Cabinet decided to publish statutory proposals to expand Red Hill CE Primary School to allow an increase in the Published Admission Number from 30 to 60 per year group from September 2017.**
- 3. The proposals were published on 23 March 2016 and followed by a four week representation period.**

4. During the representation period the Governing Body of Red Hill CE Primary School notified the Council that they were unhappy with details of the design and scope of the additional accommodation proposed to be provided and lodged an objection to the proposed expansion. This objection was supported by the Diocesan Board of Education. No other objections were received.

5. Under the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, proposals must be determined within 2 months of the close of the period for representations. In this case the determination period finishes on 23 May 2016. If the proposal is not determined by this date it must be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for a decision.

6. Officers continue to work with the Governing Body to resolve the issues raised but there is insufficient time to reach agreement before the determination period expires.

7. At their meeting in February 2016 Cabinet decided that if there were objections to the proposal the decision should be made by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families.

Need for Places

8. There are currently 1230 permanent primary school places across Worcester. The latest forecasts for the city show that without the expansion of Red Hill CE Primary it should still be possible to meet the Council's statutory duty to offer all children a school place.

Admission to school	Forecast cohort using average intake rate	Percentage surplus
September 2017	1161	5.6
September 2018	1028	16.4
September 2019	1106	10.1

9. The expansion of Red Hill CE Primary was proposed because the school often has more children living in its catchment area than the 30 places currently available. The school is popular and on occasions the school has been unable to accommodate all in-catchment children who wanted a place. The table below shows the number of children currently known to reside in the catchment area against their year of admission to school:

2016 intake	2017 intake	2018 intake	2019 intake
28	39	43	30

10. Following the withdrawal of the appeal against refusal of permission for housing at Middle Battenhall Farm there are no significant housing sites within the Red Hill catchment.

Recommendation

11. There is a need for additional places to ensure that children resident in the Red Hill CE Primary catchment area can access their local school. However, the projected level of demand across the city as a whole shows that the Council could meet its statutory duty to offer every child a school place without expanding Red Hill CE Primary. It is therefore recommended that the proposed expansion of Red Hill CE Primary should not be approved at the present time in light of the concerns of the Governing Body.

12. Officers believe that with further negotiation it may be possible to reach agreement with the Governing Body on the design and scope of the additional accommodation. It is therefore recommended that the proposal for expansion be withdrawn rather than be refused. If agreement is achieved with the Governing Body the proposal to expand can be re-published.

13. If agreement can be reached with the Governing Body by the end of the summer term 2016 it would be possible to deliver the expansion for September 2017 as originally proposed.

14. If agreement is not reached with the school by the end of the summer term 2016 but it is still deemed desirable to progress an expansion, a report will be presented to Cabinet to request variation of the original decision to implement the expansion for 2018.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

15. Cabinet recommended the addition of the project to expand Red Hill CE Primary to the 2016/17 Children's Services Capital Investment Programme. The allocated funding will remain within the programme until it is confirmed that the expansion is not progressing.

Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments

16. A Privacy Impact Assessment Screening was completed in respect of the expansion proposal. The screening did not identify any potential Privacy considerations requiring further consideration during implementation.

17. There is no known Public Health impact arising from this decision.

Equality and Diversity Implications

18. An Equality Relevance Screening was completed in respect of the expansion proposal. The screening did not identify any potential Equality considerations requiring further consideration during implementation.

Supporting Information

- Objection of Governing Body of Red Hill CE Primary
- Objection of Worcester Diocesan Board of Education

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Interim Director of Children, Families and Communities) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held on 4 February 2016