

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisers for Lifelong Learning and Culture
2.	Date:	24th April 2012
3.	Title:	Proposed expansion of Flanderwell Primary School
4.	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services

5. Summary

Flanderwell Primary School has pressure on the school's accommodation from increasing pupil numbers from within the school's catchment area. Preferences for the school now regularly exceed the number of places (30) available each year. An initial Report was submitted to Cabinet Member and Advisers on the 20th December 2011 and a pre-statutory consultation on the proposal to expand the school was approved at that stage.

Pre-statutory consultations have now been undertaken through separate meetings with Flanderwell Primary School Governors, Staff and Parents. Consultation meetings and / or communications have also been undertaken with the Governing Bodies of Sunnyside Infant and Junior Schools, Bramley Grange Primary School, Dalton Listerdale Primary School, Wickersley Northfield Primary School and Wickersley St Alban's Primary School which are the neighbouring schools to Flanderwell Primary School. Copies of the consultation papers have been sent to Ward Members, the MP and the local Parish Council.

Separate meetings have taken place, and shall continue to take place, with the CYPs Capital Team, EDS Architects and Surveyors, Flanderwell school staff and the Governing Body in relation to the proposed building expansion.

This report details the outcome of the pre-statutory consultations and requests approval to commence the statutory stages of the process.

6. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the statutory consultation process on the proposal to expand Flanderwell Primary School by the posting of a statutory notice detailing how objections or representations can be made and to whom, is

begun and that a further report be brought to Members with details of the outcome of that consultation.

7. Proposals and Details

The proposal to formally consult on is:-

It is proposed to expand the numbers on roll at Flanderwell Primary School from September 2013. The school will be expanded in order to accommodate 45 children per statutory year group (45 x 7 = 315 places) rather than its current capacity (30 x 7 = 210 places). The school would have an amended published admission number (PAN) of 45 per year group. The non-statutory nursery (F1) year group published admission number will also be increased to a published admission number of 26 full time equivalent places.

Separate meetings were held on the 9th February 2012 for the Flanderwell Governing Body, Staff and Union representatives and parents of pupils at Flanderwell Primary School. Further meetings / communication took place after this date with the Governing Bodies of the neighbouring schools.

All meetings were advised of the timetable for the consultation and how concerns/comments can be submitted during the statutory consultation period.

As the number of children attending Flanderwell Primary School would increase by 50%, it is a statutory requirement for a public notice to be published in the local press and on the school gates of affected school and neighbouring schools, and for any opposition to the expansion declared by a set date stated within the notice. The notices also advise where to write to in the event of any opposition to the proposal.

8. Finance

The capital cost of the building project is £900,000. This building programme will provide four new teaching areas and other required space. Funding for the project is from 'Basic Need funding' allocated by the DfE for the provision of sufficient school places.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There are always risks and uncertainties when school place provision is considered since future pupil numbers and consequently, individual school budget funding, are based on estimated projections at a point in time. Over provision at one school could have a negative impact on provision at other schools. Local Authorities have a duty, however, to provide sufficient places, promote diversity and increase parental choice.

If the Authority moves on to the statutory phase of consultation, then formal objections may be lodged during the representation period following the publication of the statutory notice. A final decision should be determined by the Cabinet Member within 2 months from the end of the representation period. If this fails to be done, then the matter is referred to the Schools Adjudicator for decision.

The pre-statutory consultation meetings raised issues and concerns which relevant services within CYPS will discuss and address in consultation with the Flanderwell senior leadership Team and Governing Body. In addition, a detailed and costed report will be submitted to Schools Forum in due course to request authorisation for DSG funding to be allocated to support the transitional September 2013 – March 2014 period (7/12^{ths}). The additional pupils would not be on roll for the 2013 January School Census return and, therefore, the 2013/2014 school budget allocation will be insufficient to fund additional teaching and support staff required from the September 2013 proposed expansion date.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The major theme supported by the proposal is 'to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society'. It is likely that the expansion would enable more parents to access their catchment area and first preference school for their child and, therefore, increase that performance indicator.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report to Cabinet Member and Advisers of the 20th December 2011 and the minutes of the meetings held with relevant School Governors, staff and parents, during the pre statutory consultation phase.

12. Contact Name

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