

CABINET MEETING – 4 SEPTEMBER 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Proposed Capital Works at Easington Lane Primary School and Biddick Primary School to respond to demand for Primary School Places

Author(s):

Executive Director People Services

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval for capital development to create additional primary school places at Easington Lane Primary School and Biddick Primary School.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to approve capital developments at Easington Lane Primary School and Biddick Primary School in order to ensure sufficiency of primary school places locally for September 2014

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? ***Yes/**

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

Projected pupil numbers indicate that there will be a requirement for additional places in the Washington and Coalfields areas from September 2013. This requirement cannot be met from within existing capacity and therefore it is proposed that additional capital development takes place to both schools to reflect the agreed increases to Published Admission Numbers (PAN) from 30 to 45. This increases the overall capacity at both schools from 210 to 315, creating 105 additional places at each school.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

Given the need for additional primary places in the identified planning areas there are no alternative options for consideration.

Impacts analysed:

Equality ☐ Privacy ☐ Sustainability ☒ Crime and Disorder ☐

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? **Yes/**
Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? **Yes**

Scrutiny Committee:

Proposed Capital Works at Easington Lane Primary School and Biddick Primary School to respond to demand for primary school places from September 2014

Report of the Executive Director of People Services

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval for capital development to create additional primary school places at Easington Lane Primary School and Biddick Primary School.

2. Description of the Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve capital developments at Easington Lane Primary School and Biddick Primary School in order to ensure sufficiency of primary school places locally for September 2014

3. Background

- 3.1 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient local school places to meet the needs of the local population. This statutory requirement is set out in the Education Act 1996 and remains as a duty in the Education Act 2011. In order to identify whether there are sufficient places available, the local authority uses a variety of data sources, including live birth rate data, GP registration data and housing development information, to forecast likely demand for places against the capacity available in schools.
- 3.2 Having previously experienced a trend of falling birth rates across Sunderland there has recently been a reversal in this pattern with increased birth rates in key areas of the city, including Washington and Coalfields. Both areas have also been subject to recent housing developments which have placed additional pressure on the sufficiency of primary school places.
- 3.3 In 2012/13 Sunderland City Council made temporary increases in the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of a number of schools in Washington in order to ensure that there were sufficient places across the planning area to accommodate all pupils. As pupil projections indicated a drop in pupil numbers for 2013/14 all PANs returned to their previous levels for the 2013/14 academic year (with the exception of Biddick Primary School). However, pupil numbers are projected to increase again in 2014/15 and beyond and so it will be necessary to create additional accommodation across Washington to meet the demand for school places. For this reason the PAN at Biddick Primary School was proposed to remain at 45 from September 2013. This was agreed by Cabinet in March 2013.

- 3.4 In addition to this there are projected increases in the Coalfields area in each of the next three years. This is added to by anticipated increase in the demand for primary school places as a consequence of large housing developments in the vicinity of Easington Lane Primary School (at Murton Lane and the site behind Neil Lane). This prompted a proposed increase in the PAN at Easington Lane Primary School from 30 to 45 to ensure sufficient primary school places to meet this future demand. This was agreed by Cabinet in March 2013.

4. Current Position

4.1.1 Easington Lane Primary School

- 4.1.2 Pupil numbers in the Coalfields Area are projected to increase in future years. It has been identified therefore that there will be a shortfall of primary places in the area. Based on live birth data, this amounts to eight places in 2014/15, 15 places in 2015/16 and 21 places in 2016/17.

- 4.1.3 In addition to this the developments at Murton Lane and the Bat Cave/ Neil Road are expected to create an additional 450 new houses in the area (with current data indicating 100 are already developed across the two sites). While projections associated with housing developments vary from area to area it is expected that the named developments could yield between 50 and 112 new primary aged children requiring new school places in the local area.

- 4.1.4 Easington Lane Primary School's pupil population is currently accommodated in nine general teaching bases two of which are leased modular classroom units. One existing teaching space is used to deliver the entitlement for free childcare in the local area for disadvantaged two year olds. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the proposed additional space to be created in the school also meets the space requirements attached to changes to legislation around two year old childcare places.

- 4.1.5 To facilitate the proposed pupil capacity increase from 210 to 315 (an increase of 105 places in total) it will be necessary to increase the number of existing general teaching spaces in the school from 9 to 11. The school was originally designed to achieve expansion if necessary by means of new build extension at both ends of the school building. The new accommodation will increase the capacity of the school by 45 pupils in Key Stage 1 and 60 pupils in Key Stage 2. The two existing leased modular classrooms will be replaced by the new build saving around £17,000 per annum.

- 4.1.6 To meet the required accommodation standards for a 315 place school (an increase of 105 places in total) it will be necessary to provide a separate studio space to enhance the curriculum in areas such as music and drama. The new accommodation will also include increased toilet and storage provision as well as an increase in outdoor play area.
- 4.1.7 The estimated cost for this development is £600,000. In the first instance it is proposed that funding is allocated from the Council's 'Basic Need' capital grant (provided by the Department for Education to develop school facilities in areas of rising demand) which part funds the school asset management programme capital budget. However, the two housing developments identified have Section 106 developer contributions attached to them to the value of £458,758. It is proposed that this funding is transferred to the school asset management programme capital budget as it is released which would free-up further funds in this budget for other areas of the city. In addition to this, longer term efficiencies of £17,000 per annum will be made through the replacement of the hired units on the school site with permanent class bases.
- 4.1.8 If approved the first phase of work will commence in June 2014 with a view to being completed for September 2014. Some initial enabling works may begin earlier in 2014.

4.2.1 Biddick Primary School

- 4.2.2 The increase in primary aged pupil numbers in Washington has required the Council working with local schools in the planning area, to seek a number of additional places in order to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet demand in coming years.
- 4.2.3 In March 2013, following a temporary PAN increase at Biddick Primary School, the PAN at the school for reception aged children was raised permanently from 30 to 45 from September 2013. This increase will mitigate the future demand for places in Washington and will form part of the local authority's strategy to ensure there are sufficient school places in the area.
- 4.2.4 As a result of the agreed pupil admission number increase it will be necessary to increase the current school capacity to 315. Work has already been successfully completed to increase the capacity of the Key Stage 1 accommodation. A further phase of development is now needed to increase the accommodation requirements in Key Stage 2 in readiness for September 2014.
- 4.2.5 It is proposed by means of a new build extension and some internal re-modeling to provide two additional general teaching spaces, a studio space as well as the necessary increased toilet and storage provision. Additional outdoor hard play area will also be provided to facilitate the ongoing increase of the school pupil population.

- 4.2.6 The required works are estimated to cost in the region of £450,000. Costs will be met from Basic Need capital grant provided by the Department for Education to the local authority to address its need for additional school places.
- 4.2.7 If approved works are expected to commence in June 2014 and be completed by September 2014.

6. Reason for the Decision

- 6.1 Projected pupil numbers indicate that there will be a requirement for additional places in the Washington and Coalfields areas from September 2013. This requirement cannot be met within existing capacity and therefore it is proposed that additional capital development takes place to both schools to reflect the agreed increases to PANs from 30 to 45. This increases the overall capacity at both schools from 210 to 315, creating 105 additional places at each school.

7. Alternative Options

- 7.1 Given the need for additional primary places in the identified planning areas there are no alternative options for consideration..

8. Sustainability

- 8.1 The recommendations outlined above will ensure that the Council carries out its statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient educational provision across all areas of the city where excess demand is projected.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 The total value of works is estimated at £1,050,000 with an estimated £600,000 required for works at Easington Lane Primary School and £450,000 estimated to complete works at Biddick Primary School.
- 9.2 All works are to be funded through the Basic Need Capital grant which is provided by the Department for Education to create additional places where these are necessary. It is proposed that as the agreed Section 106 Developer Contributions become available linked to Easington Lane Primary School this funding be transferred in to the school asset management programme capital budget in order to support further sufficiency of places works across the city.

9. Legal Implications

Subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendation, procurement of the above schemes will be subject to the Council's corporate procurement scheme.

10. Relevant Consultation

- 10.1 Consultation has taken place with Headteachers and Governing Bodies of both schools as required under the School Admissions Code 2012.

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 Cabinet Report – March 2013

