

## **Children and Families Committee**

**18 September 2023**

### **Pupil Place Planning Sufficiency Report (SCAP Return)**

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**Report of: Deborah Woodcock Executive Director Children's Services**

**Report Reference No: CF/23/23-24**

**Ward(s) Affected: All Wards**

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. This paper reports on the outcome of the 2023 primary and secondary mainstream forecasts which will be submitted to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The forecasts will ultimately inform the amount of Basic Need grant awarded to the authority for the 2026/2027 academic year. Notification of any award is usually received around April / May of the following year.

#### **Executive Summary**

- 2.1 Each year local authorities have a statutory duty to submit information relating to individual schools and planning areas. This return is called the SCAP (Schools **CAP**acity) return and is submitted to the ESFA in June and July, closing date for 2023 submission was Friday 28 July.
- 2.2 The SCAP return consists of 6 different pieces of data with the main emphasis on the pupil forecasts, 5 years for primary (2023 to 2027) – 7 years for secondary schools (2023 to 2029). The forecasts submitted will determine the amount of Basic Need monies that the authority receives from the ESFA to provide any additional pupil places required and which are not covered by section 106 monies received from developers.
- 2.3 Due to the lead in time needed to facilitate school expansions the Basic Need allocations are always notified in advance. Following last year's SCAP submission Cheshire East Basic Need Allocation for 2025/26 was £2,442,238.

**2.4** For the 2023 SCAP submission the authority is required to submit forecasts for Special Education Needs pupils in both Special Schools and Resource Provision. The forecasting periods are the same 5 years for primary and 7 years for secondary.

**2.5** However, as previously mentioned this report will only summarise the mainstream primary and secondary outcomes.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Children and Families Committee is recommended to:

1. Note that the SCAP return was completed and submitted prior to the deadline of 28 July.

## **Background**

**3.1** Local authorities are required to plan for pupil places by Planning Areas that have been agreed with the DfE. Cheshire East has 29 planning areas for primary and 12 planning areas for secondary. Generally, these planning areas are centred around main towns but due to the geographical nature of Cheshire East some of the rural primary schools form a planning area of their own. i.e., Disley, Kettleshulme, Wincle and Bosley.

**3.2** As mentioned the SCAP return consists of 6 different pieces of data:-

- Published Admission Numbers (PAN) – This is reported by school and is the number of children usually admitted to each year group.
- Schools Net Capacity – This is reported by school and is a calculation of the total number of children that a school can reasonably be expected to accommodate.
- Planned Places – This is reported by school and is any local plans to add or remove places from a schools Net Capacity over the next 3 academic years.
- Pupil Forecasts – This is reported by planning area but split into 2 sections the pupil forecasts and Section 106 contributions from developers.

- 1 Pupil Forecasts are prepared in two parts. First part is referred to as the Basic Need and these figures are calculated using a variety of data including, birth rates, GP Data, average pupil intakes, transfer rates for secondary schools and migration of pupils between neighbouring authorities. The second part is referred to as With Housing and these figures include the additional pupils anticipated from new housing developments. New developments are only included in the forecasts once planning permission has been granted and any section 106 agreement has been signed. The anticipated additional pupils are added to the basic need element to produce the final anticipated numbers on roll for each school which are then reported to the ESFA by planning area.
  - 2 The SCAP return also requires the authority to separate out the number of pupils that have been included in the forecasts but have been funded by section 106 contributions even though those contributions may not have been received yet.
- Commentary - A written report on the planning areas, detailing any current projects or any plans which impact on the availability of places overall. This can include school expansions, new free schools, reduction in schools' capacity or school closures.
  - Forecast Methodology - A written statement detailing the forecasting model and data used to produce the forecasts.

**3.3** It should be noted that pupil forecasting required on the SCAP submission relates to all primary and secondary schools regardless of status, including the Studio School at Knutsford Academy and Crewe UTC. Although two sets of forecasts are produced, Basic Need and With Housing, it is the with housing figures that are submitted to the ESFA.

**3.4** **Appendix 1** summarises the anticipated position for the primary planning areas over the next 5 years. The summary shows that of the 29 planning areas are indicating a shortfall in places either immediately or within the next 5 years. A couple of these areas the shortfall is due to previous admissions over the Published Admission Number (PAN) by schools. The planning areas showing the highest shortfalls expansions are already underway which will remove any anticipated shortfall, all these expansions are anticipated to be completed by September 2024. It should be noted that whilst a planning area may not indicate an overall shortfall there could be an individual school within the area with

a shortfall, but the shortfall is offset by neighbouring schools having surplus places.

- 3.5 Appendix 2** summaries the anticipated position for the secondary planning areas for years 7 to 11 only. The summary shows more planning areas indicating an immediate shortfall. However, expansions are already underway at all these areas which will provide an additional 900 places across the borough when they are all completed. It should also be noted that the large surplus places shown at Crewe and Knutsford are in part due to surplus places within the UTC and Cheshire Studio School. For instance, the UTC has a capacity of 400 for years 9 - 11 but only has 161 on roll and Cheshire Studio School has a capacity of 150 for years 9 to 11 but only has 54 on roll.
- 3.6 Appendix 3** summaries the anticipated position for the secondary planning areas for years 7 to 13. Although the shortfall is higher than the overall totals shown for years 7 to 11, the 900 additional places being provided are still relevant which will remove the shortfall shown. Schools do end to admit more into their sixth form than the official net capacity figures allow for but because pupils utilise the same spaces as the other year groups this doesn't seem to impact greatly on the schools. Again, the large surplus places shown at Crewe and Knutsford are in part due to surplus places within the UTC and Cheshire Studio School. For instance, the UTC has a capacity of 800 for years 9 -13 but only has 218 on roll and Cheshire Studio School has a capacity of 300 for years 9 to13 but only has 120 on roll.
- 3.7** Apart from being a statutory requirement to submit forecast information to the EFSA the forecasts inform the 5 -year forward plan for pupil place planning purposes. The 5-year plan, attached as **Appendix 4**, shows the expansions that are underway and when they are due to complete together with potential future needs.
- 3.8** The SCAP Submission portal, COLLECT, opened to local authorities on Monday 5 June 2023 and deadline for submission was Friday 28 July 2023. Once the closing date has passed the ESFA review all the data submitted and will come back to the authority with any queries. Once the ESFA are satisfied that all the information is correct the Executive Director of Children's Services is asked to sign off a form to attest to the accuracy of the final SCAP data submitted by the local authority, this is usually late November.

## **Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1** The SCAP return is based on data produced annually by the School Organisation and Capital Strategy Team and no consultation on the outcomes is necessary.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1** Submission of the annual SCAP return is a statutory duty required of the Local Authority.

## **Other Options Considered**

- 6.1** No other options available. The SCAP return is a mandatory duty based on very specific data sets that are submitted in a form laid down by the DfE.

## **Implications and Comments**

### *Monitoring Officer/Legal*

- 7.1.1** The Local Authority as the Strategic Commissioner for school places has a statutory duty (under section 14 of the Education Act 1996) to ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet the demands of its residents in the area. The DfE have issued guidance for local authorities in May 2023 School capacity (SCAP) Survey 2023 as to how the SCAP return should be submitted.
- 7.1.2** The requirement to submit the SCAP return by the deadline of 28 July is mandatory. Failure to submit by the deadline will risk the Authority's entitlement to Basic Need Allocation. SCAP is a statutory collection under the Information as to Provision of Education (England) Regulations 2016.
- 7.1.3** The information contained within the SCAP return should form part of the overall picture from a suite of reports that include the SEN provision and should align with the capital programme.

### *Section 151 Officer/Finance*

- 7.2.1** Combined Basic Need Allocation and Section 106 contributions from developers may be insufficient to provide the additional places to ensure sufficient places for pupil's resident in Cheshire East.
- 7.2.2** Any shortfall in funding would have to be found within the existing capital programme that has been approved in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2023/27.

- 7.2.3** If further funding is required and there is no existing budget available, then schemes would need to be prioritised and decisions made by committee as to which schemes can be removed/delayed within the Children & Families capital programme and/or the wider capital programme to allow certain schemes to proceed.

#### *Policy*

- 7.3** Local Authorities are under a duty to ensure sufficiency of school places in their area (section 14 of the Education Act 1996). Submission of the mandatory SCAP return by the given deadline will support the Council in meetings its duty to provide sufficient school places.

#### *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

- 7.4** An Equality Impact Assessment is not necessary as pupil forecasting is a statistics exercise used to assess the provision of sufficient school places across the borough regardless of pupil characteristics.

#### *Human Resources*

- 7.5** There are no increased human resource implications for the Council.

#### *Risk Management*

- 7.6** The requirement to submit the SCAP return by the deadline of 28 July is mandatory. Failure to submit by the deadline will risk the Authority's entitlement to Basic Need Allocation, and in consequence, its ability to meet this statutory duty.

#### *Rural Communities*

- 7.7** There are no direct implications for rural communities although providing sufficient places in rural schools will ensure that pupils can stay in their local community.

#### *Children and Young People / Cared for Children*

- 7.8** Providing sufficient school places for all children and young people resident in our area is a statutory duty.

#### *Public Health*

- 7.9.1** There are no direct implications for public health, however providing sufficient places in their local community could improve the child's social and emotional wellbeing.

**7.9.2** By providing local school places the distances which some children may have to travel to attend school should be reduced thus reduce congestion on the roads and therefore reduce emissions improving the air quality and making a better environment to live in.

### *Climate Change*

**7.10** Forecasting future pupil numbers helps ensure that sufficient pupil places are available in the correct places across the borough to meet demand. Providing adequate places means that more pupils can attend their local school and reduce the need to travel.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Joanne Prophet, School Organisation and Capital Manager  joanne.prophet@cheshireeast.gov.uk  Mobile 07890 321801
Appendices:	<b>Appendix 1</b> - 2023 Primary Shortfall/ Surplus by Planning Area  <b>Appendix 2</b> – 2023 Secondary Shortfall/Surplus for years 7-11 by Planning Area  <b>Appendix 3</b> – 2023 Secondary Shortfall/ Surplus for years 7-13 by Planning Area  <b>Appendix 4</b> – 5-Year Forward Plan
Background Papers:	n/a