

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **School Organisation Sub-Committee**
held on Thursday, 19th September, 2013 at The Capesthorne Room - Town
Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor J P Findlow (Chairman)

Councillors L Gilbert and P Raynes

COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Mrs Rhoda Bailey

Councillor B Burkhill

Councillor D Mahon

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Baxter-Democratic Services Officer

Barbara Dale-Admissions and Appeals Manager

Maureen Hills-Lawyer - Education

Phil Yeomans-Capital Development Officer

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Paul Findlow be appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

RESOLVED

That Councillor P Findlow be appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3 PROPOSED EXPANSION OF WILMSLOW GRANGE COMMUNITY PRIMARY AND NURSERY, HANDFORTH, WILMSLOW AND DEAN OAKS PRIMARY, HANDFORTH, WILMSLOW

Consideration was given to the proposal to expand Wilmslow Grange Community Primary and Nursery, Handforth, Wilmslow and Dean Oaks Primary, Handforth, Wilmslow.

The proposal for expansion had been made in response to a shortfall in the number of Primary School places in the Handforth area due to

population changes. Details were included in the full proposal attached as an appendix to a report prepared by the Director of Children's Services.

A report detailing the outcome of the formal consultation undertaken between 30 April 2013 and 4 June 2013 was presented to the Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services on 1 July 2013, whereupon permission was given to issue a statutory public notice for the expansion of Wilmslow Grange Community Primary and Nursery from 210 to 315 school places and Dean Oaks Primary from 315 to 420 pupil places.

Following publication of the public notice a statutory 4 week representation period commenced on 18 July 2013 and concluded on 15 August 2013. Three objections and one response in support of the proposal to expand Wilmslow Grange had been received and two objections to the proposal to expand Dean Oaks Primary School had been received details of which were given in the report.

On behalf of the Proposer, Barbara Dale, the Admissions and Appeals Manager attended the meeting and presented the proposal along with Phil Yeomans, the Capital Development Officer who was also in attendance. In addition three objectors and the two Ward Councillors B Burkhill and D Mahon were in attendance. All made representations and were questioned by the Committee.

Two of the objectors felt that other alternatives should be considered ie the re-opening of the Oakenclough Children's Centre as a new Primary School rather than expanding Dean Oaks Primary School.

The other objector raised concerns regarding the traffic problems at Wilmslow Grange and that further expansion would only serve to exacerbate the problems.

In response the Admissions and Appeals Manager gave information and made statements on the different matters raised.

In accordance with the Sub Committee's procedures Members then considered the matter in private, in particular they considered:

- the statutory school organisation process followed by the Proposer to date and were satisfied that the documentation demonstrated that the procedures and documentation complied with both the law and the guidance;
- whether the need for creating additional primary school places had been proven and, given the increasing numbers of children being born in the area and the planned housing developments in the Macclesfield area, Members concluded that the evidence did show that there was a shortage of Primary school places;
- the strong presumption by the Government that proposals to expand successful and popular schools such as Wilmslow Grange

Community Primary and Nursery and Dean Oaks Primary should be approved;

- the Sub Committee also noted that Cabinet had already approved sufficient funding to deliver this proposal;
- the effect that this proposal was likely to have on transport and traffic problems in the area. They discussed how the school and the Proposer could work more effectively to manage the difficulties generated by this traffic, but decided that these concerns were not sufficient to justify refusing the proposal. These were problems that would be fully explored as part of the planning permission process.

The meeting then reconvened in public and the Chairman announced the decision.

RESOLVED

That the expansion of, Wilmslow Grange Community Primary and Nursery Handforth, Wilmslow from 210 school places to 315 with a proposed implementation date of September 2014 be approved. That the expansion of Dean Oaks Primary, Handforth, Wilmslow from 315 school places to 420 with a proposed date of September 2014 be approved.

(During consideration of the proposals the meeting was adjourned once in order for the Officers to provide further statistical information missing from the report. Whilst deliberating in private the Members required further information from the Officers as a result the meeting was reconvened in public in order for the information to be provided before Members then went back into private session).

4 PROPOSED EXPANSION OF ASH GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, MACCLESFIELD

Consideration was given to the proposal to expand Ash Grove Primary School and Nursery, Macclesfield.

The proposal for expansion had been made in response to a shortfall in the number of Primary School places in the Macclesfield area due to population changes. Details were included in the full proposal attached as an appendix to a report prepared by the Director of Children's Services.

A report detailing the outcome of the formal consultation undertaken between 30 April 2013 and 4 June 2013 was presented to the Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services on 1 July 2013, whereupon permission was given to issue a statutory public notice for the expansion of the school to increase its capacity from 105 pupil places to 210.

Following publication of the public notice a statutory 4 week representation period commenced on 17 July 2013 and concluded on 14 August 2013. One objection had been received details of which were given in the report.

On behalf of the Proposer, Barbara Dale, the Admissions and Appeals Manager attended the meeting and presented the proposal. She and Phil Yeomans, the Capital Development Officer who was also in attendance were questioned by Members of the Sub Committee.

In accordance with the Sub Committee's procedures Members then considered the matter in private, in particular they considered:

- the statutory school organisation process followed by the Proposer to date and were satisfied that the documentation demonstrated that the procedures and documentation complied with both the law and the guidance;
- whether the need for creating additional primary school places had been proven and, given the increasing numbers of children being born in the area and the planned housing developments in the Macclesfield area, Members concluded that the evidence did show that there was a shortage of Primary school places;
- the strong presumption by the Government that proposals to expand successful and popular schools such as Ash Grove should be approved;
- the Sub Committee also noted that Cabinet had already approved sufficient funding to deliver this proposal;

The meeting then reconvened in public and the Chairman announced the decision.

RESOLVED

That the expansion of Ash Grove Primary School and Nursery, Macclesfield from 105 school places to 210 with a proposed implementation date of September 2014 be approved.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 2.35 pm

Councillor J P Findlow (Chairman)