

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services, and Rural Affairs**
held on Monday, 2nd December, 2013 in Committee Suite 1 & 2, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillors Rachel Bailey and Rhoda Bailey

Officers in attendance:

Mark Bayley – Principal Manager Quality and Assurance
Fintan Bradley – Head of Strategy, Planning and Performance
Val Simons – School Organisation and Pupil Place Planning Officer
Janine Smart – Capital and Land Development Manager
Cherry Foreman – Democratic Services Officer

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor G Merry declared an interest by virtue of being a Governor at Elworth C of E Primary School.

18 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Councillor S Corcoran spoke in support of the proposal to expand Offley Primary School, and he reported that the Headteacher and Governors were also in favour of the proposal. He was, however, still concerned at the lack of an overall solution to the shortage of school places in the Sandbach area bearing in mind the number of other applications submitted but not yet decided upon.

Councillor G Merry welcomed the proposed expansions at both Offley Primary School and Elworth C of E School. She was not, however, in support of any suggestion that a new school should be built in order to accommodate the increased numbers, in view of the revisions and disruption there would be to schools in the existing catchment areas.

19 PROPOSED EXPANSION OF OFFLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND ELWORTH CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL, SANDBACH

Consideration was given to the proposed expansion Offley Primary School from 315 to 420 pupil places for implementation from September 2015; and to the proposed expansion of Elworth CE Primary School from 280 to 315 pupil places, for implementation from September 2015 subject to the necessary funding and planning approvals.

As the Strategic Commissioner of School Places, Cheshire East Council has a statutory duty to review provision within its area and to establish future demand. Pupil forecasts indicated a shortfall in capacity in primary school places due to changing populations and increasing demand in some areas of the Borough. Proposals were being made for the Sandbach area of the Borough to expand existing accommodation to meet this increasing demand and to ensure a level of operational surplus with a level of spare capacity intended to accommodate reasonable journey times to school, some degree of parental choice, and flexibility to allow for mid-year entrants.

In making this recommendation officers had considered a number of issues including the number of pupils in each school's catchment area, the number of first preferences received for each school, the current size of the school together with the school sites, those suitable for expansion and the likely cost of extension. Suitable schools needed to be central to the areas where the places were required. The advice of the Council's Legal and Finance Officers had been taken into account in producing the report now under consideration.

At the meeting a revised copy of Appendix 1 was circulated and the Portfolio Holder allowed time for it to be read. The revisions were to take into account additional housing developments along with a further sheet to show the impact of the additional housing on Sandbach Town together with the proposed expansions.

RESOLVED

1. That approval be given to commence statutory consultation on the proposed expansion of Offley Primary School from 315 (1.5 forms of entry/FE) to 420 pupil places (2FE) for implementation from September 2015.
2. That the need to expand Elworth CE Primary School from 280 to 315 pupil places be acknowledged, providing an additional 35 pupil places for implementation from September 2015, subject to the necessary funding and planning approvals.

The meeting commenced at 12.30 pm and concluded at 12.45 pm