

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services

Date of Meeting:	22 April 2013
Report of:	Director of Children's Services
Subject/Title:	Proposed School Expansions – Wilmslow and Macclesfield
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Rachel Bailey

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 As the Strategic Commissioner of School Places, Cheshire East Council has a statutory duty to commission sufficient school places for children resident in its area.
- 1.2 This Decision Paper requests approval to commence consultation on a number of school expansion proposals to address increasing demand for school places in the Wilmslow and Macclesfield areas of the Borough. The proposed completion date for these expansions is September 2014.
- 1.3 Full details setting out the rationale for the proposals are included in the consultation documents appended to this report

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 That the Portfolio Holder gives approval to commence statutory consultation on the following proposed expansions for completion in September 2014:
- **Wilmslow Grange Community Primary and Nursery School, Handforth** - from 210 to 315 pupil places;
 - **Dean Oaks Primary, Wilmslow** - from 315 to 420 pupil places;
 - **Lacey Green Primary Academy** - from 300 to 420 pupils places;
 - **Ash Grove Primary School and Nursery, Macclesfield** – from 105 to 210 pupil places.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 It should be noted that the Local Authority cannot propose the expansion of an Academy. This is the responsibility of the Academy Trust. The purpose of including the Lacey Green proposal in the Authority's consultation exercise is to work in collaboration with the Academy and to provide clarity for all consultees on the plans for growth in the Wilmslow area. The headteacher and governing body support the Local Authority in this approach. The financial implication of these proposals is set out later in this report, although it is important to note that the final picture cannot be resolved until the outcome of

discussions between Lacey Green Primary Academy and the Education Funding Agency (its main funding body) have been determined.

- 3.2 In making these recommendations the Authority has given consideration to a number of issues including the number of pupils in each school's catchment area and the community's ability to sustain the school, the number of first preferences received for each school as an indication of popularity, the current size of the school and capacity to expand; the latter taking into account site suitability, and the latest Ofsted inspections.

Wilmslow Area (Appendices 1, 2, 3)

- 3.3 The Wilmslow Local Area Partnership (LAP) has 10 primary schools and 1 secondary school covering the areas of Wilmslow, Handforth and Alderley Edge. The total primary school capacity across this area is 2498 pupil places, and currently provides 360 reception class places. Pupil forecasts for the Wilmslow LAP indicate a shortfall in pupil places across all schools and year groups of 227 by 2018.

Wilmslow Area	Number on Roll (NOR) Jan 13	Capacity -Number of Pupil Places	Academic Year					
			13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Forecast NOR	2424	2498	2511	2562	2607	2661	2692	2725
Forecast without surplus	Shortfall the 4% operational	Places	-13	-64	-109	-163	-194	-227
Forecast including surplus	Shortfall the 4% operational	Places	-113	-164	-209	-263	-294	-327

- 3.4 These forecasts exclude the Local Authorities preferred target of 4% 'operational surplus', which is 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. To meet this target, current forecasts (October 2012 School Census) indicate the need for 327 pupil places by 2018.
- 3.5 For admission in September 2012, the Local Authority received applications for Wilmslow schools in excess of the 345 reception class places available at that time with a total of 376 admissions by the start of term in September. (October 2012, School Census). To accommodate these additional children a number of schools agreed admissions above their published admission number (PAN) to provide school places within a reasonable distance. Long term measures have been taken to increase capacity in this area (and this capacity is included in the latest forecasts, as shown above in paragraph 3.2) providing an additional 147 pupil places in two schools across all year groups and increasing the reception class places in the area to 360 for 2013 and subsequent years. To date the Authority has received 413 applications for admission to reception in

September 2013. This increasing demand at the normal point of entry to school, together with the forecast shortfall across all year groups of 227 pupil places by 2018, has necessitated further expansion proposals for this area of the Borough.

- 3.6 This increasing demand in the Wilmslow area at the normal point of entry to school (i.e. the reception class) is impacting significantly on parental preference and the Authority's ability to comply with its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for its residents. It is expected that this increase will continue in the coming years with the potential admission pool; which is based on birth rate data for this area, remaining high for 2013 – and increasing further for 2015 with a potential admission pool of 441 pupils, which is well beyond the current capacity of 360 pupil places.

Wilmslow LAP Reception (January 2012)				
Year	Reception Admissions	Live Births – Potential Admissions	Difference	% Difference
2008	336	<i>Data not available for these two years</i>		
2009	317			
2010	336	400	-64	-16.0%
2011	348	377	-29	-7.7%
2012	376	410	-34	-8.3%
2013		412		
2014		386		
2015		441		
2016				
2017				

- 3.7 The proposed expansions, if approved, would provide an additional 330 places (all year groups) for the Wilmslow area. This additional capacity would be phased in at the normal point of entry to school allowing the current reception admission to increase from 360 pupil places to 405 pupil places (+45) and therefore more in line with current demand. Admissions into other year groups may be necessary to provide some operational surplus in other year groups from 2014.

October 2012 School Census Forecasts	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Wilmslow additional capacity phased in	45	90	135	180	225
Forecast Shortfall Places without the 4% operational surplus	-64	-109	-163	-194	-227
Net effect	-19	-19	-28	-14	-2

- 3.8 It is therefore recommended that the local demand for places justifies further expansion of schools in this area to provide the additional school places required and to provide a level of operational surplus, where necessary, to

accommodate reasonable journey times to school, allow some degree of parental choice and to provide flexibility to allow for mid-year entrants.

- 3.9 These proposals have the full support of the headteachers and governing bodies.
- 3.10 Informal consultation with headteachers of the Wilmslow primary schools has been undertaken and the feedback received during this process has informed these proposals.

Macclesfield Area (Appendices 4, 5, 6)

- 3.11 Ash Grove Primary School is a popular and successful school.
- 3.12 The proposal to expand the school is to address the increasing demand for places from the school's local community. This school had an intake at the normal point of entry of 47 pupils up until 2005 when it was reduced to a 25 intake following a review of surplus places implemented by the former Cheshire County Council. A further reduction was made in 2011 taking the school to a half form of entry primary school with an intake of 15 pupils at the normal point of entry and reducing the school's overall capacity to 105 places.
- 3.13 To facilitate this reduction in capacity, classrooms were converted for alternative use by the school and a temporary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) was located at the school, which has since been relocated. The Local Authority is proposing to reintroduce the classrooms and increase the school's net capacity from 105 pupil places (0.5 form of entry) to 210 pupil places (1 form of entry) with an intake of 30 pupils into the reception class from 2014. This proposed expansion is therefore cost neutral.
- 3.14 The number of children resident within the schools catchment area has increased in recent years and, for the last 3 years, the number of first preferences for the school has exceeded the 15 places available in the reception class. In order to accommodate children resident in the school's catchment area for whom there was no other schools with vacancies within a reasonable distance, the Local Authority, in agreement with the school agreed additional places over the school's published admission number for September 2011 and 2012 and has agreed admission of up to 30 children for 2013

Year	Reception Places Available	Number of Children Resident in the Catchment Area
2010	15	74
2011	15	98
2012	15	108
2013	15	91*

Reception Admissions	Number of First Preferences
2010	7
2011	22
2012	24
2013	25*

*at 3 April 2013

- 3.15 The school achieved the category of 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in March 2013
- 3.16 This proposal has the full support of the Headteacher and Governing Body.
- 3.17 Informal consultation with headteachers of the Macclesfield primary schools has been undertaken and the feedback received during this process has informed this proposal.
- 3.18 It is therefore recommended that the local demand for places in this area justifies expansion of the school to provide the additional school places required and provide for some operational surplus to accommodate reasonable journey times to school, allow some degree of parental choice and to provide flexibility to allow for mid-year entrants.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Wilmslow Grange Community Primary and Nursery School is situated in Handforth Ward. Dean Oaks Primary is situated in Wilmslow East Ward and Lacey Green Primary Academy is situated in Wilmslow Lacey Green Ward. However, consultation would be undertaken with all neighbouring wards:-

Alderley Edge
Handforth
Wilmslow Dean Row
Wilmslow East
Wilmslow Lacey Green
Wilmslow West & Chorley

Local Ward Members

Cllr Frank Keegan – Alderley Edge
Cllr Barry Burkhill - Handforth
Cllr Dennis Mahon – Handforth
Cllr Paul Whiteley – Wilmslow Dean Row
Cllr Ron Menlove – Wilmslow East
Cllr Don Stockton – Wilmslow Lacey Green
Cllr Gary Barton – Wilmslow West and Chorley
Cllr Wesley Fitzgerald – Wilmslow West and Chorley

- 4.2 Ash Grove Primary School and Nursery is situated in Macclesfield South Ward. However, consultation would be undertaken with all neighbouring wards:-

Broken Cross and Upton
Macclesfield Central
Macclesfield East
Macclesfield Hurdsfield.
Macclesfield South
Macclesfield and Tytherington
Macclesfield West and Ivy

Local Ward Members

Cllr Louise Brown - Broken Cross and Upton
Cllr Martin Hardy - Broken Cross and Upton
Cllr Ken Edwards - Macclesfield Central
Cllr Janet Jackson - Macclesfield Central
Cllr David Neilson - Macclesfield East
Cllr Damien Druce - Macclesfield South
Cllr Laura Jeuda - Macclesfield South
Cllr Brendan Murphy - Macclesfield Tytherington
Cllr Lloyd Roberts - Macclesfield Tytherington
Cllr Carolyn Andrew - Macclesfield West and Ivy
Cllr Alift Harewood - Macclesfield West and Ivy
Vacancy - Macclesfield Hurdsfield

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Ash Grove Primary School proposal is cost neutral and therefore there are no funding implications if this proposal is approved post consultation.
- 5.2 A block budget (grant) has been approved to fund schemes identified as Basic Need. This block budget was formally approved at Council on 28 February 2013.
- 5.3 The building works necessary for the Wilmslow proposals would be funded from the Council's 2013/2014 Capital Programme and investments required for each school are estimated at:
- Wilmslow Grange Community Primary £887,000
 - Dean Oaks Primary £900,000
 - Lacey Green Primary Academy £1,237,000
- 5.4 It should be noted that the funding approved by the Council includes £887,000 for the proposed expansion of Wilmslow Grange and £1,237,000 set aside as a block allocation to fund one of two options - Dean Oaks Primary or Lacey Green Primary Academy. The implementation of all three proposals is therefore subject to Council approval to fund the additional investment required, as set out above, utilising funding streams as follows:

Option 1 - Unallocated funds from the Children, Families and Adults 2013-2014 Capital Programme.

Option 2 – Department for Education Funding - ‘Targeted Basic Need’- The Local Authority is in the process of submitting a bid for Capital investment in Lacey Green Primary Academy from the Targeted Basic Need programme implemented by the Department for Education. This programme is to provide additional support to local authorities experiencing the greatest pressure on places to expand good and outstanding schools with high levels of demand. The target date for decisions on bids is June 2013.

Please Note: Members are advised that to deliver both projects (Dean Oaks and Lacey Green) additional funding may be necessary and this level of additional funding will be determined by the outcome of the bid for Targeted Basic Need funding, as set out in option 2 above.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Statutory consultation is required for all of the proposals as the changes, if approved, will fall within the category of a significant enlargement, with capacity increasing by more than 30 pupils and more than 25% of existing capacity.
- 6.2 As aforementioned, it should be noted that the Local Authority cannot propose the expansion of an Academy. This is the responsibility of the Academy Trust. The purpose of including this proposal in the Authority’s consultation exercise is to work in collaboration with the Academy and to provide clarity to all consultees on the plans for growth in the Wilmslow area in order that appropriate feedback can be given. The next stage in the statutory process involves the publication of notices and subsequent 4-weeks representation period. This will be the responsibility of the Academy taking into account feedback received during this consultation process. A final decision of the expansion of Lacey Green Primary Academy will be taken by the Secretary of State and not the Local authority.
- 6.3 Statutory consultation would ensure compliance with statutory requirements as set out in The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2007 which came into force on 21 January 2008 and The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2009 which came into force on 1 September 2009).
- 6.4 The 5 statutory stages to expanding a school are:-
 - 1. Consultation
 - 2. Publication
 - 3. Representation

4. Decision
5. Implementation.

Proposed timescales for the statutory process are:

22 April 2013	Portfolio Holder's Decision on consultation
30 April 2013 to 4 June 2013	Consultation Period (if approved)
10 June 2013	Portfolio Holder's Decision on Public Notices
17 June 2013 to 15 July 2013	Representation Period (if approved) 4 weeks
22 July 2013	Cabinet Decision
29 July 2013	Implementation
September 2014	Proposed Completion date

7.0 Risk Management

- 7.1 Disruption to pupils, staff and the community must be kept a minimum during the consultation period, and any subsequent building programme, to ensure that standards continue to improve
- 7.2 The proposed expansions of Wilmslow Grange Community Primary and Nursery, Dean Oaks Primary and Lacey Green Primary Academy were identified to address a Basic Need in the Wilmslow area. This is in order to ensure that the Authority meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places in this area. In order to complete these scheme by September 2014 the construction phase would need to commence by September 2013. There is therefore a key risk resulting from the very tight timetable leading up to this.
- 7.3 The proposed expansion of Ash Grove Primary School and Nursery can be accommodated within the existing school premises and this will be managed by the school.
- 7.4 Implementation of Wilmslow Grange Community Primary and Nursery, Dean Oaks Primary and Lacey Green Primary Academy proposals will be subject to the necessary planning permissions.

8.0 Access to Information

Appendices (1-6):

Consultation Documents, Consultation Response Forms, Equality Impact Assessments.

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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