

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Council

Date of Meeting:	18 July 2013
Report of:	Tony Crane, Director of Children's Services
Subject/Title:	Proposed School Expansion – Lacey Green Primary Academy
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Rachel Bailey

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report requests formal approval to a Supplementary Capital Estimate which has been approved by Cabinet at the meeting on 24 June 2013. The item requires the approval of Full Council in accordance with Finance Procedure Rules.
- 1.2 This proposed expansion of Lacey Green is from 300 to 420 places with a planned implementation date of September, 2014. This will be fully funded from the DfE grant allocation 2013-14.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 Cabinet requests Council to approve the Supplementary Capital Estimate to finance the proposed expansion of Lacey Green Primary Academy at a cost of £1.273m, subject to Gateway 2 approval.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Finance Procedure Rules require the approval of Council to requests for supplementary estimates in excess of £1m, or which require funding from general reserves, or which have significant implications for future years' budgets.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Wilmslow Lacey Green

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Cllr Don Stockton – Wilmslow Lacey Green

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 Cheshire East Local Authority has a statutory duty to commission sufficient school places for children resident in its area and this project will enable the Local Authority to comply with its duty to provide these places. The Education Act 2006 requires local authorities to promote fair access to educational opportunity, high standards and pupil achievement, to increase opportunities for parental choice and respond to parental representations and secure diversity in the provision of schools when planning the provision of school places

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2.1 The building works necessary for the proposal would be funded from the Council's 2013/2014 Capital Programme and the investment required is estimated at £1.273m.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Significant changes to an Academy's existing arrangements are subject to procedures set out in guidance issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). Full details are published on the EFA website at <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/a/significant%20changes%20academies%20qa%20v2.pdf>
- 8.2 The proposed change to Lacey Green Academy, which falls within the category of a significant enlargement; with capacity increasing by more than 30 pupils and more than 25% of existing capacity, needs final approval by the Secretary of State to change the funding agreement. The responsibility for securing such approval rests with the Academy Trust and not the Local Authority.
- 8.3 The Academy Trust is required to submit a business case via the Education Funding Agency. The procedure outlined by the EFA is:
- The Academy read the guidance available, including the School Admissions Code.
 - The Academy carries out a consultation with stakeholders, including parents and other schools.
 - The Academy submits a business case to the EFA. This should include the consultation responses together with the Academy's response to the consultation.
 - The Secretary of State either approves or rejects the proposal.
 - Education Funding Agency (EFA) notifies the Academy of the decision and takes any necessary action.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 Disruption to pupils, staff and the community must be kept a minimum during whilst statutory school organisation procedures are being implemented and during any subsequent building programme.
- 9.2 The proposed expansion of Lacey Green Primary Academy was 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 meet the required time scale, the construction phase would need to be complete by August 2014. There is therefore a key risk resulting from the very tight timetable leading up to this.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The basic need capital allocation to Cheshire East supports the requirement for providing new pupil places both in new or expanded maintained schools, and in Free Schools or expanded Academies. Capital investment necessity will be identified by the School Organisation requirements. The Council will determine there is basic need at a school if the forecast number on roll exceeds the top of the “net capacity” range and there are no surplus places at schools within a reasonable distance. If the need for places is permanent, the Council will seek to provide the accommodation in permanent buildings.
- 10.2 When considering which schools to expand 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. Suitable schools also needed to be central to the areas where the extra places are required.
- 10.3 To accommodate the growing need for additional places in the area the following expansions are proposed 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;
- 10.4 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.

- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 The latest pupil forecasts indicate that there will be a shortfall of 227 pupil places across all schools in the Wilmslow area 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	Places	-13	-64	-109	-163	-194	-227
Forecast including surplus	Shortfall	Places	-113	-164	-209	-263	-294	-327

- 10.7 For admission in 2012 the Local Authority, in agreement with Lacey Green Academy, admitted 60 pupils to ensure that children living in Wilmslow could access a school place within a reasonable distance from their home address. For admission in 2013 the Local Authority, in agreement with the school, are again looking to accommodate additional children above the current 45 intake to ensure local children can access a school place within a reasonable distance to their home address.

Reception Admissions	PAN	Catchment Area Data – Reception Admissions	Number of First Preferences
2010	30	38	44
2011	30	46	48
2012	30	42	60
2013	45	54*	67*

* On 3 April 2013

- 10.8 Planning permission was received for the Lacey Green Academy project on 23 May, 2013 (planning application number 13/1189 M).
- 10.9 A Gateway 1 endorsement was received on the 21 June 2013 from the Executive Monitoring Board.

10.10 Informal consultation with headteacher's of the Wilmslow primary schools has been undertaken and the feedback received during this process has informed these proposals. These proposals have the full support of the headteacher's and governing bodies of the schools proposed for expansion.

11.0 Access to Information

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

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