

School Organisation Meeting

Appendix 2.3

Date: 14 January 2013

Venue: Haslington Primary School

Attendees:

Ken White – Capital Implementation Manager
Julie Mills – Admissions & Appeals Officer – Note taker
Simon Hodgkiss – Land and Sites Co-ordinator
Val Simons – Pupil Place Planning Officer
Barbara Dale – Admissions & Appeals Manager
Fintan Bradley – Head of Service: Strategy, Planning & Performance
J Dyson – Head Teacher, Wheelock School
C Houghton – Chair of Governors – Wheelock School
J Granger – Governor, St John's C of E School
R Whittle – Head Teacher, St John's C of E School
L Treadway – Head Teacher, Sandbach Community Primary School
D Morrison – Governor, Sandbach Community Primary
B Cox – Head teacher, The Dingle Primary School
M A Blease-Bourne – Head Teacher, Elworth Hall School
Karen Samples – Head Teacher, Elworth C of E School
D Doubleday – Chair of Governors, Offley School
J A Davies – Head Teacher, Offley School
J Fitzhugh – Head teacher, Haslington Primary School
Chris Davies – Chair of Governors, Haslington Primary

Introduction by Head of Service Fintan Bradley who advised that notes of the meeting would be taken and shared at a future date, format of the notes would be in relation to discussion and action points raised.

Background – meeting arranged today arising from Portfolio Holder for Children, Adults and Families decision taken on 17 December 2012, which was

“that the cabinet Member for Children and Family Services defers a decision on the request to publish a statutory notice detailing the proposed expansion of Wheelock Primary School in order to allow a further two weeks’ consultation on possible alternative solutions to the increasing demand for places in the Sandbach area.”

Presentation by Barbara Dale - Key Areas highlighted

Purpose of the meeting
Proposed Expansion – Wheelock Primary
Why Wheelock Primary?
Financial implications
School Partnership Meeting, Autumn 2012

- Forecasts 2013-2017

- 4% Operational Surplus
- Sandbach Forecasts (6 schools)
- Catchment and preference data (December 2012)
- Estimating Future Intakes
- Sandbach Housing (Local Plan 1600 houses by 2030)
- Strategy (subject to internal approval process)
- Alternatives Solutions Shared
- Agree Alternatives Solution/s for Public Meeting

As the presentation was made comments and questions were invited and responded to by officers.

Strategy – Local Plan is currently out for consultation and available on the County website

Meeting arranged for Tuesday 15 January at the Wesley Centre in Sandbach to collect views on the current proposal and to feedback those views to Rachel Bailey – Portfolio Manager, for final decision on 4 February 2013 Should the current proposal be agreed to expand Wheelock to 1 FE to 1 ½ FE – for 2013, the earliest completion date is anticipated as April 2014.

Forecast data, unused surplus – relates to Reception through to year 6 based on October census

Haslington schools, where do they feature – for Sandbach purpose they have been included, however as a whole they feature within the Crewe LAP as 2 of the 21 Crewe schools, however when considering Crewe town centre this relates to 14 Crewe schools.

Sandbach housing, several questions were raised in relation to housing including the land off Junction 17; there are differing views as to whether this is for housing or light industry; LA are looking into this.

Pupil yield estimate – advised this is based on a ratio of 17 primary aged children per 100 houses.

Population growth estimated based on new Cheshire East residents.

Cheshire East Council based on the current economic climate is in favour of promoting industry. However, it was acknowledged that it is difficult to predict pupil numbers.

In line with government legislation each LA should have a 5 year rolling supply of housing.

The role of appeal panels was discussed, it was confirmed that any decision by an independent appeal panel was outside the remit of the LA. The decision of a recent appeal hearing was shared – it was felt as this was in relation to an individual school any further conversations would take place outside of this meeting.

Published Admission Numbers – advised PAN applies to year of entry (Reception), although there is an expectation that it continues through school, however this may not be the case if accommodation has changed at a school.

Strategy – some of the group were surprised, but appreciated information shared in respect of possible future solutions to the increased demand for school places. Some proposed expansions are due to 'basic need' and some due to increased housing. For the proposed Wheelock expansion it was highlighted that the children were already in the local area. Proposed expansion of Elworth CE is in relation to addressing future need due to housing and the application to the developer for 106 monies. No guarantee – on whether this can be delivered.

Published Admission number increases – clarified that where changes are proposed it is the responsibility of the admission authority for the school to follow statutory procedures.

Suggestions to re-zone the area of Ettiley Heath were put forward; advised this would require statutory consultation.

Any other alternatives could potentially require statutory consultation, nor is there any guarantee in respect alternatives that they can be delivered.

Concerns were expressed in relation to the 'bleeding of pupils' should a school expand; this could apply to any school where an increase is proposed.

The meeting was informed that a number of schools had met last week – and the expansion of Offley School to return to 2 FE was the 'favoured' alternative option to the expansion of Wheelock

In relation to 2013 intake the LA was asked how this would be managed, group were advised that as in previous years where there was need individual schools would be contacted during the process.

Alternatives

Following the presentation and now that more information had been made available views on alternative expansion solutions to the demand for school places in the Sandbach area were given as follows from the schools:-

Haslington – favoured option expansion of Offley

Elworth C of E – will be a squeeze on the school - Offley / Wheelock

Elworth Hall – Offley/ Wheelock

St John's – Wheelock or Offley

Sandbach Primary School – long term strategy very useful/ Offley/ Wheelock

Offley – Offley / Wheelock

It was the view of all a number of attendees that transparency was important for any future proposed school expansions.

A question was asked regarding the purpose of the meeting to be held on 15 January BD advised that the purpose of the meeting tomorrow was to collect views on the current proposal from anyone who wishes to contribute.