

EXECUTIVE

DATE: 20 APRIL 2009

SUBJECT: ADMISSION NUMBERS - HILLBOROUGH INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN & LEARNING

CONTACT OFFICER: DEBORAH CRAIG, ADMISSIONS & PLANNING MANAGER (Tel: 548015)

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	✓	STAFFING	
EQUALITIES		COMMUNITY SAFETY	✓
FINANCIAL	✓	RISKS	✓
OTHER			

CONSULTATIONS:

COUNCILLORS CONSULTED		SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CONSULTED
STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED	✓	OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: Farley and South

LEAD EXECUTIVE MEMBER(S): Cllr T Khan

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Executive is recommended to approve the prescribed alteration to Hillborough Infant and Junior Schools as set out in the statutory proposals at Appendix A to ensure that:
 - There is a better supply of local school places available in the south of Luton
 - The Council can fulfil its statutory duty to ensure sufficient supply of school places for its pupil population.

REPORT

2. A temporary increase to the admission number of Hillborough Infant School was applied to the Reception Year intake in September 2007 and subsequent intakes. Therefore, the admission numbers for the current Reception Year, Year 1 and the new intake in September have been increased from 60 to 86.
3. The statutory proposals appended to this paper propose the enlargement of the premises of Hillborough Infant School and the increase of its admissions number to 90. If approved, this new admissions number will apply to the current Reception Year, Year 1 and subsequent intakes. It is also proposed to enlarge the premises of the Junior School's and increase its admissions number from 60 to 90 for Year 3 intakes from September 2010. This increase will enable the junior school to accommodate the increased output from the infant school.
4. This higher admissions numbers and enlargement of premises is necessary to increase the number of school places available to local children. In particular, the temporary expansion in September 2007 was undertaken on an emergency basis to ensure that the Council could fulfil its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for its pupil population.
5. Both the Hillborough schools are popular and successful, therefore, the expansion will increase parental satisfaction rates and contribute to raising attainment and standards.
6. Prior to the publication of the Statutory Proposals the following stakeholders were consulted on the proposal to permanently expand the school.
 - Governing Body of Hillborough Infant School
 - Governing Body of Hillborough Junior School
 - Staff at both schools
 - Parents & prospective parents
 - Trade union representatives
 - Local residents
 - MPs and ward councillors
7. Responses to this consultation were very limited (only three responses were received). Details of the responses are included in the statutory proposals given at Appendix A. The Council did not receive any objections or comments following the publication of its statutory proposals. The Statutory Notice was placed in the Luton & Dunstable Express on 25 February 2009; it was also placed on the main entrances to the school and in the local community centre.
8. Planning permission to enlarge the school has been agreed. The travel plans for both schools have also been updated.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9. There are the following legal implications to this report, and this has been agreed with Mary Cormack in Legal Services on 1 April 2009.
10. The Council is under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in its area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. They must also promote diversity and increase parental choice.
11. Statutory proposals are necessary when the increase requires an enlargement to the school premises which would increase the capacity of the school by more than 30 pupils and either by 25% or by 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser). Statutory proposals are also required where there is to be an increase in the number of pupils in any relevant age group by 27 or more.
12. Decisions on expansions are taken by the Council. If the Council fails to decide proposals within two months of the end of the representation period it must forward proposals to the schools adjudicator for a decision.
13. Regulation 8 of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) provides that the Council are required to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State when they take decisions on proposals. The relevant statutory guidance is set out at Appendix B. Paragraph 4.32 of the Guidance states "The strong presumption is that proposals to expand successful and popular schools should be approved".

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The expansion project will be funded using Basic Need Capital Funding allocated to the Council by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocated to the Council by the DCSF will match the additional revenue funding required for the extra pupils.
15. The above financial implications have been agreed with the Finance Manager (Children & Learning) on 1 April 2009.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

16. Increasing the number of school places in the area of population pressure improves the Council's ability to ensure an adequate supply of school places for local children. The provision of local school places enables children to walk to school.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

17. An increase in the number of places available in the South of Luton ensures the supply of school places better fits the demand in this area. This has been approved by the Equalities Co-ordinator (Children & Learning) on 30 March 2009.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

18. A decision to reject these proposals would reduce the number of school places available to local children. Such a decision would also jeopardise the Council's ability to fulfil its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for its pupil population.

STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIONS

19. Consultation has been conducted in accordance with statutory requirements; details of the consultation are given in Appendix A.

OPTIONS

20. In considering these proposals and the representations received the Executive can decide to:

- (a) Reject the proposals
- (b) Approve the proposals
- (c) Consult the Governing Body with a view to approving the proposals with a modification; or
- (d) Approve the proposals subject to them meeting a specific condition (conditional approval can only be granted in the limited circumstances specified in the regulations)

APPENDIX

21. The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix A – Statutory Proposals for Hillborough Infant and Junior Schools
- Appendix B – Statutory Guidance for decision makers relevant to the statutory proposals.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

22. Executive reports on the expansion of primary school places dated 2/7/07, 1/10/07 and 26/8/08.