

Agenda item:

Decision maker Cabinet Member for Education

Subject: Arundel Court Primary School - Priority School Building Programme Round 2

Date of decision: 13th February 2017

Report from: Mike Stoneman, Deputy Directory of Children's Services - Education

Report by: Caroline Corcoran, Head of Sufficiency, Participation and Resources

Wards affected: Charles Dickens

Key decision (over £250k): No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out the case for re-allocating capital funding for primary school expansion in order to fund capital works at Arundel Court Primary School as part of the Priority School Building Programme Round 2 (PSPB2).
- 1.2 The re-allocation of capital will enable the Council to secure an increase in the capacity of the school (to support its statutory duty of providing sufficient school places) and to replace temporary classrooms (to address suitability issues at the school) as part of the proposed rebuild which is being led and managed by the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Member:

- a) **Note and acknowledge the projects and their associated budget requirements within the current capital sufficiency programme for primary expansion, together with the £1.9m of funds available to be allocated, as shown at Appendix 3; and**
- b) **Approves the re-allocation of capital funding in order to:**
 - **meet the costs of the associated capital works to increase the capacity of the school from 2.5 Form Entry (FE) to a 3 FE (an increase of 105 places) at a cost of £1.07m; and**

- **Replace the three temporary classrooms and ensure the new build accommodates the associated places at a cost of £528,000.**

3. Arundel Court Primary School PSPB2: background

- 3.1 In 2015 the Council made a successful bid to the EFA under PSBP2 for the replacement of Arundel Court Primary School. The project is being led and managed by the EFA.
- 3.2 PSBP2 projects are based on a Block replacement programme of the worst condition school buildings. On this basis, the EFA has deemed that only part of the school buildings are to be replaced, as shown as Block A in [Appendix 1](#).
- 3.3 The project has been on hold pending clarification about timescales from the EFA. The Council had previously challenged the stated intention of the EFA to commence the feasibility study in 2018 with a completion date for the proposed new build of 2020/21. The EFA subsequently agreed to commence the feasibility study earlier, and this is now underway, with a view to an earlier completion date for the project.
- 3.4 Due to the continuing pressure on primary school places at the time the bid was submitted, the Council expressed an interest in expanding Arundel Court Primary School from a 2.5 FE to 3 FE school; an overall increase of 105 pupil places (from the current school capacity of 525 to a capacity of 630).
- 3.5 The EFA has confirmed that the cost to expand Arundel Court Primary School by 0.5FE is £1.07m. This figure is based on an additional 105 pupils and has been calculated as a percentage of the total cost of the project
- 3.6 A further consideration is the three temporary classrooms at the school. As the EFA project is based on a Block replacement only, the EFA has confirmed that the project will not include the replacement of these classrooms as part of the overall scheme. The cost to include these three classrooms as part of the new build would be an additional £528,000.
- 3.7 It should be noted that to maintain the current capacity of the school (2.5FE) the temporary classrooms would either need to be retained or included as part of the new build. If the temporary classrooms are replaced by a new build, they could be re-used in other projects, or utilised to provide "bulge" class capacity at other primary schools.
- 3.8 The replacement of the three classrooms is a suitability issue, and investing in these additional works would provide a consistency of accommodation across the schools site for all pupils.
- 3.9 It should be noted that there is a risk that the figures quoted for Arundel Court Primary School capital works by the EFA (£1.07m and £528,000 respectively) could change as a result of the EFA's tender process. If the

tenders came in at a higher level, the Council contribution would increase. Conversely, it is possible, although unlikely, that the figures may reduce. Any increase would be robustly challenged

3.10 Arundel Court Primary School is currently rated by Ofsted as a Good school. It is due to convert to academy status in spring 2017 and will form part of the University of Chichester Academy Trust (UCAT).

3.11 The provision of school places remains the responsibility of the Local Authority.

4. Pupil places and school capacity: background

Primary school places

4.1 [Appendix 2](#) provides a summary of the pupil place forecasts based on the 2016 annual pupil number capacity return to the EFA (excludes the Arundel Court Primary School expansion).

4.2 The Council has addressed the immediate pressure on primary school places by investing in a number of primary school expansions through two sufficiency programmes, which have provided an additional 1560 primary school places. This expansion will ensure that the Local Authority can meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places within a 2 mile radius of a resident's home.

4.3 Despite this increase in capacity, the surplus achieved will remain very small with a forecast of only 1% in Year R and Year 3 by 2020/21 and hot spot pressures in the south and north east of the City (refer to [Appendix 2](#)). It is therefore imperative that additional places are secured in order to ensure the council can meet its statutory duties.

4.4 An increase in capacity at Arundel Court Primary School would provide additional capacity for the city at a centrally located and successful school. The waiting list for a place in Year R is 19 children (as of 5th January 2017) illustrates the popularity of the school and the high demand for places in the local area.

Secondary school places

4.5 In the past, Portsmouth has had significant surplus places in the secondary phase. However, this will drop substantially as the unprecedented rise in primary school numbers move through the system into the secondary phase.

4.6 Secondary places capacity is already under pressure in some areas of the City, most notably in the North East of the City (in the Springfield School and Admiral Lord Nelson school catchment areas). The issue has been exacerbated by:

- The distance and logistical travel issues to other secondary schools within Portsmouth
 - The fact that neighbouring secondary schools in Hampshire are now less able to accommodate Portsmouth's pupils due to pressures on school places.
- 4.7 Of the 10 Portsmouth secondary schools, only two schools (King Richard School and Trafalgar School) have any significant surplus Year 7 places available.
- 4.8 In February 2016, the Council allocated £1.5m for phase 1 of the secondary sufficiency programme (short term projects) and £1.8m for Phase 2 (longer term projects). Officers have been progressing with the design and feasibility for a number of short term project and phased longer term projects.
- 4.9 The short term projects are funded from basic need allocations and identified within the capacity as shown in Appendix 2. The funding for the longer term phased projects is subject to future allocations of basic need funding from the DfE and approval by Full Council.
- 4.10 Appendix 2 shows that more secondary pupil places will be needed by September 2019 onwards. Therefore, without further expansion in capacity, there will be a deficit of secondary year 7 pupil places available across the city.

5. Capital programme: primary school places expansion

- 5.1 Within the education capital programme, there is currently a surplus of circa £1.9m from the Primary School Places Expansion Programme. Appendix 3 provides a summary of projects undertaken.
- 5.2 A report was presented to the Cabinet Member for Children and Education on 17 September 2015. It was agreed that the following projects were approved in principle for a future re-allocation of sufficiency capital funding, subject to the provision of further information at a future decision meeting:
- Arundel Court Primary School – expansion from 2.5 FE to 3 FE (as part of the Priority School Building Programme Round 2)
 - Cliffdale Primary Academy – remodelling of the special school to take on more complex cohorts of children (the majority of whom will transfer to Redwood Park School)
 - Redwood Park School – remodelling of the special school to take on more complex cohorts of young people.
- 5.3 Feasibility work for the remodelling of Redwood Park and Cliffdale is now well underway and a capital bid has been submitted as part of the Council's annual capital budget process for additional capital funds to enable both projects to be finalised.

- 5.4 There was an initial allocation of £1.2m from the Council and £2m from the DSG carry-forward for the re-modelling of special schools. The total of £3.2m was allocated to Phase 1 works .

School	Phase 1 works (allocated)	Phase 2 works (capital bids under consideration)
Cliffdale Primary scheme	£2.0m	An additional £1.1m is required for Phase 2.
Redwood Park scheme	£1.2m	An additional £3.5m is required for Phase 2.
Total	£3.2m	£4.6m

- 5.5 With the continued pressure on secondary school places, the 2016/17 capital programme refresh also includes a bid of £4.47m for additional secondary places at The Portsmouth Academy in order to secure a permanent increase in capacity from 1000 to 1250 and a PAN increase from 200 to 250.
- 5.6 Therefore, against a surplus of £1.9m (as per para 3.1), the Council has urgent capital requirements of:

School	Funding required	Notes
Arundel Court	£1.07m	Expansion by 0.5 FE
Arundel Court	£0.53m	Replacement of 3 classrooms
Cliffdale Primary	£3.50m	Phase 2
Redwood Park	£1.10m	Phase 2
Portsmouth Academy	£4.47M	Secondary sufficiency
Total	£10.67m	

6. Reasons for recommendation

- 6.1 The Council has heavily invested in increasing primary place capacity and now has sufficient places, but with a very small surplus of 2-3% at Year R and Year 3 which is due to reduce further to just 1% by the end of the decade. There is an acute demand for places, especially in central Portsmouth, and the opportunity to add additional places at Arundel Court would enhance the capacity in this area. The replacement of the three classrooms would ensure consistent quality of accommodation for the pupils
- 6.2 In order to meet its statutory duty, the Council must increase secondary capacity, and projects (such as the The Portsmouth Academy capital bid) will be critical to the delivery of sufficient secondary places
- 6.3 Increasing numbers and complexity of special school pupils have required a fresh approach to special school provision, which will ensure that pupils do not require specialist provision outside of Portsmouth at a higher cost

7. Equality impact assessment

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not have a negative impact on any of the protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010. The proposal expands the availability of school places for all Portsmouth resident primary-aged children, which are allocated in accordance with the each school's admission policy and in line with the statutory Admissions Code.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 As highlighted in the body of the report, the Council has a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure that sufficient schools for providing both primary and secondary education are available for its area.
- 8.2 In this context "sufficient" means sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education. "Appropriate education" means education *"which offers such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of:*
- a) the pupils' different ages, abilities and aptitudes, and*
 - b) the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school."*
- 8.3 The Council has a duty to exercise this schools sufficiency function *"with a view to:*
- a) securing diversity in the provision of schools, and*
 - b) increasing opportunities for parental choice."*
- 8.4 The Council's statutory schools sufficiency duty in relation to its area as a whole remains notwithstanding the conversion of a number of schools to become academies so that it is necessary for the Council work in cooperation with academy schools in the City as appropriate to ensure that the duty is fulfilled

9. Head of Finance comments

- 9.1 There is currently an unallocated sum of £1.9m within the approved capital schemes as identified in [Appendix 3](#), and it is proposed within this report to allocate £1.6m of this towards building additional capacity at Arundel Court Primary School.
- 9.2 As identified in the report, this estimated cost is derived from the EFA new build programme estimate. As the works are linked to that programme, the cost estimate will also be related and subject to change as the programme progresses through to completion. This may lead to an increased contribution being required to the DfE project. Any such variation will need to be managed within the capital programme allocations that will be approved by Council in February 2017.

Signed by: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services

Appendices:

1. Arundel Court Primary School Site Plan
2. SCAP Pupil Number Forecast (excluding Arundel Court expansion)
3. Capital Programme: Primary School Expansion

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: