

Education Place Planning Update

Children's Health, Social Care and Education

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 13th April 2016

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|--------------------|-------------------|
| Author: | Head of Education |
| Wards: | All |
| Locality Affected: | All |
| Parishes Affected: | All |

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the committee of the number of education places required to meet Swindon's long-term educational early years, primary, secondary and special education needs until 2026.
- 1.2 The report brings together information from a range of sources and sets out the issues the Borough will face in meeting its statutory duties until 2026. The strategy includes present and predicted future pupil numbers on roll, together with information about birth rates, school capacity and new housing.
- 1.3 This report supports the Priority Two of the Vision to "Offer education opportunities that lead to the right skills and right jobs in the right places" and in specifically pledge 15 "in addition to two new Free secondary schools, build one secondary and 12 primary schools to meet the needs of our increasing population".

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the education place planning demand arising across the Borough for early years, primary, secondary and special school places;
- 2.2 Note the proposals to meet the future demand for places.

3. Detail

- 3.1 It is the Local Authority's statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places in Swindon. Please note the numbers provided in this report relate to forms of entry, which in planning school places one form of entry (usually expressed as FE) equals 30 pupils at the initial point of entry (reception year for primary schools or year 7 for secondary schools). For clarity, we have attempted to refer to FE throughout this report.
- 3.2 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously had an update on School Place Planning in January 2013. Since then Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet has received a number of reports on additional early years, primary, secondary and special school places in recent years and this

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report intends to pull together the Borough wide need for places following the latest update of the school place planning study and other developments in this area.

School Places

- 3.3 The updated school place planning study identifies that by 2026 the Borough will need to provide 23 to 25 FE to meet Primary Place needs, and 22 to 24 FE to meet Secondary Place needs, with potential expansions in addition.
- 3.4 The School Place Planning Study was updated in 2009 and 2011 to identify the number of school places and a range of other educational needs, required to meet Swindon's long-term educational place planning needs until 2026.
- 3.5 Since the 2011 version of the school place planning study was published, the Swindon Local Plan has been approved and the information contained within the previous study required updating. In addition, there have been some changes to the demographic situation and school capacity in some existing areas of the town.
- 3.6 Further in the report these changes will be detailed in the following school place planning areas;
 - 3.6.1 North Swindon
 - 3.6.2 Central and South Swindon
 - 3.6.3 East Swindon
 - 3.6.4 West Swindon
 - 3.6.5 Catholic cluster of schools
- 3.7 The table below shows the borough wide Primary Place Needs identified within the study and estimates the expected opening date for new provision (these are subject to review as the timing of opening is directly linked to the delivery of new houses):

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| Area | Number of schools | School Place Planning Area | Type of Provision | FE | Status | Expected opening date (September) |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Tadpole Farm 2 | 1 | North | New build | 2 | New (Free School bid in March 2016) | 2018 |
| Abbey Farm | 1 | North | New build | 2 | New | 2019 or 2020 |
| Wichelstowe | 2 | Central & South | New build | 4 | New (Free School bid in March 2016) | 2018 & 2020 |
| Central Urban area | 1 | Central & South | New build | 2 | New | 2020 |
| Central urban area | 1 | Central and South | Expansion | 1 | New | 2022 |
| Commonhead | 1 | East | New build | 1 | New | 2018 |
| South Marston | 1 | East | Expansion | 1 | Planning due for submission in February 2016 | 2018 |
| New Eastern Villages | 4/5 | East | New build | 8/10 | New | 2019 to 2026 |
| Kingsdown | 1 | East | New build | 2 | New | 2020 |
| | | | Total | 23/25 | | |

3.8 The table below shows the borough wide Secondary Place Needs identified within the study:

| Area | School Place Planning Area | Type of Provision | FE | Status | Expected opening date (September) |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Great Western Academy | North | New School | 5 - 7 | Free School approved | 2018 |
| Swindon Church of England Secondary (Wichelstowe) | Central & South | New School | 7 | Free School approved | 2018 |
| New Eastern Villages | East | New School | 10FE | New | 2020 or 2021 |
| | | Total | 22 - 24FE | | |

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Gareth Cheal, Direct Dial 01793 465802, gcheal@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 3.9 Further detail and background behind the requirements above are set out in the School Place Planning Study 2016 attached at **Appendix 1**.

Summary of School Places

- 3.10 The following section of this report sets out a summary of the pressures within the individual school place planning areas set out in paragraph 3.6 above and proposals to meet the demand.

North

- 3.11 There are already pressures for Primary and Secondary places in North Swindon, caused by a rise in cohort size. Further growth at Tadpole and Abbey Farm will add to this existing pressure. A 2FE primary school has been provided at Tadpole Farm and expansions have increased both Orchid Vale and Haydonleigh by an additional 1FE. A further 2FE primary school will be needed by September 2018 to manage the pressure from additional housing at Tadpole Farm and it is expected that the Great Western Academy will submit a Free School application in September 2018 for this provision. In addition a further 2FE school will be needed at Abbey Farm to accommodate the cumulative impact of infill developments around Blunsdon from September 2019 or September 2020.
- 3.12 As of September 2015, there were surplus places across the town in the secondary sector, however there will be an increase in demand once the larger cohorts already in the Primary schools feed into the secondary sector. This will be apparent from the continued house building programme at Tadpole Farm. A new 5FE to 7FE secondary free school is scheduled and needed in this area. The Department of Education has approved the opening of The Great Western Academy by 2018.
- 3.13 Historically the north planning area loses approximately 3.6FE out of the Borough to neighbouring Wiltshire schools through pupil and parental choice. This is envisaged to continue.

Central South

- 3.14 There are existing pressures on Primary and Secondary places in Central Swindon caused by a rise in cohort size from demographic trends.
- 3.15 Large-scale housing developments, such as Wichelstowe, have been started and will continue in this area. In addition to this, the birth rate in this area continues to increase in the short term.
- 3.16 These pressures will transfer to secondary school in due course. The Wichelstowe development will significantly increase demand for places, and the
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build out rate of these houses will determine where and when the new school will be built.

- 3.17 Two new primary schools opened in 2012 and 2014 reliving some immediate pressure and Even Swindon Primary School was expanded by 1FE in 2012. However, two further 2FE Primary Schools will need to be provided at the Wichelstowe site, the first of which, is subject to a Free School application submitted by the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT) in March 2016. The remaining pressure in the existing urban area will need to be met by 1 new 2FE school and expanding an existing school.
- 3.18 A new 7FE Church of England Secondary School will be built at Wichelstowe for September 2018. This will significantly relieve the future pressure for secondary school places.

East

- 3.19 There are both surplus Primary and Secondary places in this part of town at present. However, additional schools will need to be built to accommodate the young people that the planned housing developments at North Eastern Villages, Commonhead, and Kingsdown will produce.
- 3.20 These will comprise of a new 1FE Primary school to be built at Commonhead. South Marston Primary School will be expanded from 0.5FE to 1.5FE, a further four to five 2FE Primary schools will be built in the New Eastern Villages, the first of which, is subject to a Free School application submitted by the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT) in March 2016. In addition a new 2FE Primary school will be required in the Kingsdown development area.
- 3.21 There is currently a small surplus of places in the secondary schools in this area, however, these will not be nearly enough to cope with the demand for places once the three major developments areas have been built. A new 8 to 10FE secondary school will be built in the East of Swindon development. The timing of this building and opening will depend on the build rates of the developments. Existing schools Dorcan and Kingsdown Schools will be needed to assist in managing the pressure in the short-term, either may have to be expanded if necessary.

West

- 3.22 There are currently no Primary surplus places in West Swindon, and a complex picture of secondary pupils moving towards Wiltshire schools. There are no major housing developments planned within the Borough boundaries in this area either.

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- 3.23 This area has seen a slight rise in birth rate in recent years in the next few years this will have an impact on the lack of surplus places. There may be a need for some temporary solutions in the short term to further increase primary pupil numbers.
- 3.24 At present 3FE from West Swindon apply to be educated in Wiltshire each year. The long-term pressure for this area is the knock on effect of the housing developments adjacent to Swindon and Wiltshire and the potential impact if the parental choice for Bradon Forest or Wootton Bassett secondary schools changes.
- 3.25 If this does happen and those pupils return to the Swindon network there would not be enough places to accommodate them. A potential expansion would be needed to manage this pressure.

Catholic Provision

- 3.26 Swindon has five Catholic primary schools and one Catholic Secondary school. The number of parents choosing Catholic education for their children is increasing. The Local Authority has worked with the Catholic Diocese and School to increase the Primary school provision within the Borough through the expansion of Holy Cross and Holy Rood Schools.
- 3.27 There is a concern that if the provision of Catholic education continues to grow as predicted then St Joseph's Catholic College will lack capacity, and will potentially need to be extended by 2022. The Local Authority will work closely with the Diocese and school should this happen.

Special Educational Needs

- 3.28 In Swindon there are more proportionally children and young people with a Statement of Special Education Need or Education, health and Care Plan than regionally or nationally. The average is 3.8% of the overall school population, which is the 3rd highest average nationally. Swindon also has a higher number of specialist providers, which includes six Special schools and fifteen Specialist Resource Units attached to mainstream schools.
- 3.29 There is a forecast increase in demand for all Special Education Needs provision but Swindon is also seeing children needing to access special provision at a younger age than before, which is increasing the pressure even further. The new SEND Reforms implemented from 1 September 2014 extended the age range able to access statutory Special Educational Needs assessment from 0-25 and could place additional pressure on the system. As a result there are a number of proposals detailed below to meet various pressures in the system.

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Crowdys Hill Special School post 16 provision

- 3.30 The decision to add a sixth form at Crowdys Hill Special School was developed in the light of over-whelming parental and student support and a desire to extend the choice open to current students of the school who are currently denied the opportunity of remaining in their school environment to study post-16 qualifications.
- 3.31 At age 16 the options for students to continue in Special Education were limited as, only Uplands Special School and the Colleges provided a 6th form. Parental preference to remain in a school environment was increase numbers at Uplands and creating pressure on the infrastructure of the learning campus. As such the proposal will provided a balance of options at post 16 and the Crowdys Hill Special School 6th form will open with a full intake in September 2016.

Crowdys Hill Special School Primary

- 3.32 Both national and local data show there is a significant increase in the number of children diagnosed with Autism and the Chalet Special School was proposed for an increase in numbers. Unfortunately, there are restrictions on the site that made expansion of the Chalet unfeasible and an alternative option for primary SEND places was investigated.
- 3.33 The decision to lower the age range at Crowdys Hill Special School was the result of significant pressure across the borough to provide additional SEND primary places in September 2016 due to the increased number of statements and Education Health and Care Plans and will offer 16 places initially before growing to 36 places.
- 3.34 The proposal is currently out to consultation and is likely to be considered by a panel of Cabinet in May/June 2016.
- 3.35 The Education Funding Agency (EFA) are expected to propose a significant capital programme for Special School expansions in December 2016 and due to the continuing increase in Autism, the Local Authority intend to submit a bid for a redeveloped Chalet Special School.

Secondary Autism Free School application

- 3.36 The forecast increase in autism will obviously feed from primary provision through to secondary age. The proposed Brunel Autistic Free School (Uplands Special School) will provide a curriculum for 50 boys and girls aged between 11 and 19, with autism as their primary Special Educational Need, who live in Swindon and its surrounding areas.

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3.37 The expected growth of the Brunel Free School will be phased over 4 years commencing at 20 in September 2017 and reaching a maximum of 50 in September 2021. There will be the capacity for further growth to a total of 70 places, after September 2021, should additional capacity across Swindon be required for ASC students.

3.38 A free school application was submitted by the 2nd March 2016.

White Horse Federation

3.39 The White Horse Federation has notified the Local Authority of their intention to submit a free school application to the Department for Education in September 2016 (wave 12). The proposal is to establish a new setting that will offer places for secondary aged children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties.

3.40 The setting will also offer residential and respite facilities in order to further reduce the number of Swindon children attending settings in other Local Authority areas by offering the relevant provision within the town.

3.41 Included within the application is a proposal similar to the Oakfield Project with a registered alternative provision to support pupils who find it difficult to access mainstream secondary education.

Alternative Provision

3.42 SchoolsCompany is an educational consultancy, school management and training company and an academy sponsor through the SchoolsCompany Trust.

3.43 A free school application was submitted by the 2nd March 2016. The proposal is to establish an 11 to 16 aged alternative provision for 50 pupils offering a skill based curriculum and therapeutic services as an alternative pathway to mainstream education. This is provision primarily targeted at the 135 pupils currently registered as elected home education.

Early Years

3.44 It was announced in January 2016 that Swindon has been chosen to be one of eight Early Implementers for the 30 hour entitlement from September 2016, ahead of national roll out in September 2017.

3.45 This will give Swindon the chance to inform policy, and give access to approximately 10% of our 3 and 4 year olds to 30 hours of free childcare a year early. Swindon has been tasked with focusing on flexibility, sufficiency, low income and BME families. In addition, Swindon will be working closely with the other Local Authority's, spread across the country which will be looking at specific areas of the policy.

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- 3.46 Through the Capital funding made available to create additional two year old places, Swindon has created 406 new two year old funded places and 178 new 3 and 4 year old places, to meet the Department of Education target of 957 funded places.
- 3.47 With the continuing growth of the borough and looking ahead to the full rollout of the increase in hours from September 2017 there are plans for an additional 144 new 2 year old and 80 new 3 and 4 year old places. These places have been created in a range of private day nurseries, preschools and maintained settings.
- 3.48 There are further plans for seven new private nursery provisions across the town, with 2, 3 and 4 year old places to be incorporated. A further six are actively exploring expansion opportunities on their current sites.
- 3.49 Seven schools are looking to work closer with the private preschools on their site from September 2016, with the intention of then expanding in the future. A further two are looking to lower their age range of the school to incorporate 2 year olds into their existing maintained early year's provision. As a result of the decommissioning of Children's Centre's, five schools and one private day nursery are being given the opportunity to expand to create more early years places.
- 3.50 We have recently experienced the closure of two of our private day nurseries, as a result of poor Ofsted ratings. A further preschool is closed in March 2016 after loss of funded children due to a nursery opening in close proximity and parental choice favouring the school provision.
- 3.51 There were two nurseries run directly by the local authority, but following a consultation recently taken place following the decision made by Cabinet in March was to close one and put the other out to tender to seek a new private provider.
- 3.52 Overall there are sufficient early year's places and plans set out above for further capacity to manage the changes coming in future years.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Alternative options for school provision have been considered with the School Place Planning study.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 Government capital grant allocations for capital spending on schools have been significantly reduced in recent years and are highly unlikely to be sufficient to

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meet the needs of existing schools and the requirement to fund new ones. Any shortfall will result in the Council entering into additional borrowing to support identified needs as has been the case over recent years. Options for expansion of schools should, therefore, consider all possible options in order to try to minimise the effect on the revenue budget of increased debt.

- 5.2 All capital proposals will affect the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) although DfE are recognising pupil growth in annual grant settlements albeit on a lagged basis for mainstream pupils. This means that the LA has to top slice the DSG each year in relation to "pre-opening start-up costs", "trigger" funding (the increased revenue funding provided to schools that have an in-year increase in pupil numbers over a certain threshold) and "set-up" costs (the provision of furniture and equipment for additional classrooms). As the number of new and growing schools increase, the amount of growth funding required increases and reduces the amount of funding that is available to be distributed to established schools.
- 5.3 As a consequence of the DfE's school funding reform programme, the Local Authority need to consult formally with each sector of the Schools Forum to seek agreement to the policies by which funding is allocated and the levels of funding proposed in advance of each financial year.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.4 The Council has a responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient school places available. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires Local Authorities to promote choice and diversity when carrying out their strategic duties in relation to the provision of new school places.
- 5.5 Human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with Convention rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.6 Implications relating to sustainability and health are included within the school site selection criteria.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.7 A DIA for the School Place Planning Strategy was attached to February 2016 Cabinet report. No further implications have been identified.

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6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Cambridge Education Associates School Place Planning Study 2009.
- 7.2 Swindon School Place Planning Study Update 2011.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - School Place Planning Study update September 2015.