

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 18 December 2013	Decision Taker: Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Report title:		Permanent enlargement of Albion, Bessemer Grange, Charles Dickens, Crawford, Grange and Keyworth primary schools – considering initial consultation and agreeing publication of statutory notices.	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From		Strategic Director of Children's and Adults' Services	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the cabinet member notes the outcome of the initial consultation on the proposed enlargements of Albion, Bessemer Grange, Charles Dickens, Crawford, Grange and Keyworth primary schools.
2. That the cabinet member approves the publication of the statutory notices in connection with these proposed enlargements.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Cabinet agreed on 16 July 2013 in the Primary Investment Strategy report to open initial consultation on the statutory proposals to permanently enlarge Albion, Bessemer Grange, Charles Dickens, Crawford, Grange and Keyworth primary schools. These primary school enlargements were part of the target of 14 forms of entry of new reception places.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. Initial consultation has been carried out with all the individual school parents/carers, staff and governors, including a drop-in parents' meeting at all of the schools. In addition there has been consultation with head teachers and chairs of governors of Southwark's schools, Southwark councillors and Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham MPs, the Southwark Diocesan Board and Commission, trade unions and neighbouring authorities.

Key points from the consultation

Albion primary school

5. The Albion primary school consultation responses were as follows
 - in favour: 5 parents and 2 staff;
 - against: 8 parents.
 - unsure 1 parent.
6. Various comments were made on the consultation responses and these are summarised below with officer comments in response –

Comments about proposed enlargement	Officer comments
Improvements so far have only been positive so can only think 2 form entry will work well	
Need to have sufficient open space; play area should not get smaller	Albion school has a site area which is sufficient to accommodate a 2FE primary school. The plans are to build a new two storey school building which should ensure that the school play area is not reduced.
School will be too crowded and fear standards of education will suffer. Shame to lose small school ethos	The new school building will be designed to appropriately accommodate a 2 FE primary school. It is the intention of the authority and the school management team to ensure that standards and the school ethos don't suffer.
Building process must be very carefully managed. How will noise and disruption be managed? Start major works during the summer holidays to avoid disruption.	The detailed construction programme will be developed with the aim of managing the building process to minimise disruption to the school
Have you considered an alternative site to decant to during construction?	There are not any alternative sites available. It will be possible to build the new school on the existing site while the current school remains in operation.
More development will lead to H&S, parking and security issues	The building process will be carefully managed to ensure these issues are fully considered and appropriately managed.
Number of teachers should be increased	The increase in the size of the school will result in additional teachers
Increased numbers of children could mean some will miss out on events	It is the intention of the school management team to ensure that increasing the school size won't result in children losing out.
The school site is not big enough for expansion, build a new school nearby instead. The council is agreeing to building additional flats but not considering the consequent infrastructure needs	Albion school has a site area which is sufficient to accommodate a 2FE primary school.
Could the school stay at 1FE while the building work is undertaken to reduce disruption?	Because of the projected need for the additional school places it would not be possible to leave the school as a single form of entry while the building contract is undertaken. However, the school will not have fully increased its intake until after the building work is complete
What plans have you got for secondary school places?	The need for additional secondary school places will be considered in the light of the forecasts of future need

Bessemer Grange primary school

7. The Bessemer Grange primary school consultation responses were as follows –

- in favour: 35 parents, 15 staff, 2 governor, 1 pupil and a member of the local community.
- Against: 4 parents.
- Unsure: 1 parent.

8. Various comments were made on the consultation responses and these are summarised below with officer comments in response –

Comments about proposed enlargement	Officer comments
Wonderful news that will benefit the school. Important to expand as it will ensure there are enough local places for children	
Outdoor play area needs to be considered equally to additional classroom space. Concern that the school will suffer lack of space for specialist provision and after school clubs	The proposals will bring the former early years site into use again providing both classroom and play space for all the pupils in Years 5 and 6. The proposals also include for a new multi use games area, which will provide a dedicated space for ball and team games for all aged pupils facilities for which are limited on the present main site.
Could the road between the two sites be closed and extra land purchased?	The road between the two sites would not be closed as the current sites are large enough for the proposed expansion.
The implications for car parking of expanding the school must be considered	Car parking will be considered during the scheme design
Crucial school given sufficient support to maintain its excellent standards and need to ensure quality of teaching is not affected	It is hoped that by accommodating the older age pupils on the separate site and giving them some autonomy it will prepare them in a small way for the transition to secondary school and greater independence.

Charles Dickens primary school

9. The Charles Dickens primary school consultation responses were as follows –

- In favour: 13 parents (1 also a governor); 2 staff.
- Against: 11 parents; 1 pupil; 1 member of the local community.
- Not sure: 2 parents.

10. Various comments were made on the consultation responses and these are summarised below with officer comments in response –

Comments about proposed enlargement	Officer comments
Need more good quality places for primary aged children. Charles Dickens is one of most effective and enabling schools in the borough and nature of expansion will not alter the unique characteristics of the school but create opportunities for further improvement without any negative impact on the local non-school community	
Concerns about the limited outdoor space and impact of additional building and overcrowding. Additional pupils will put additional pressure on dining and assembly and increase overcrowding, including at drop off and pick up times. Enlargement should keep the school's outdoor space to the maximum or should provide more open space for sports and play – consider building on the school house or expanding on the roof space. Given the difficulty of getting permission for the temporary classrooms this will also be difficult.	Providing additional permanent teaching accommodation on this limited site will require careful planning, which will be undertaken during the next stage of project development. The newly installed modular classrooms on Lant Street will be removed and the play area reinstated once the building work is complete.
Lant Street closure was for enlarging play area not for additional classrooms. Pupil already suffering from current temporary expansion class – already lost library and outside play space. Increasing the number of children would reduce both the per capita play and exercise space for pupils	The newly installed modular classrooms on Lant Street will be removed and play area reinstated once the additional permanent teaching accommodation has been built, which would include appropriate teaching space for a 2 FE school.
Concern about impact of expansion on school's standards and reputation	It is not anticipated that permanent enlargement to 2 FE will adversely affect school standards. Instead the removal of the half form of entry should be to the school's advantage as it would remove the need for vertical grouping.
Not current need for additional places. Consider other schools for expansion or build new schools	Projections forecast that additional primary places will be needed in this area. Other schools are being considered for future expansion. Given the availability of sites it would not be possible to build a new primary school separately.
The building project needs to be delivered with minimum disruption to the school.	The detailed construction programme would be developed on the basis of minimising disruption to the school
Concern about class sizes.	Class sizes would not increase as a result of the school's expansion
Needs corresponding increase in numbers of teachers.	There would be a corresponding increase in the number of teachers

Comments about proposed enlargement	Officer Comments
Will nursery places increase?	It is not planned to increase nursery places
Give parents the opportunity to feedback on proposed designs.	Parents will have the opportunity to input into the proposed designs

Crawford primary school

11. The Crawford primary school consultation responses were as follows –
- in favour 36 parents and 1 member of staff.
12. Comments were made on the consultation responses and are summarised below –

Comments about proposed enlargement	Officer comments
Good idea; need to maintain academic level	
Gives opportunity to all children to have access to education within their area	

Grange primary school

13. The Grange primary school consultation responses were as follows –
- in favour 18 parents, 8 members of staff and 5 governors;
 - against 2 parents.
14. Various comments were made on the consultation responses and these are summarised below with officer comments in response –

Comments about proposed enlargement	Officer comments
Good idea would get rid of vertical grouping	This is the advantage of removing half forms of entry
Some rooms are overcrowded or at their limit; building needs to be extended	The building scheme will improve the existing accommodation and provide the required additional classrooms
Modernise building and provide a learning experience fit for the 21 st century. Building needs extending with provision of sufficient small group rooms	This is the aim of the building scheme. The scheme will provide the required additional classrooms and group rooms
Provide parking space for all parents who pick up	
Encourage walking/public transport/cycling	

Keyworth primary school

15. The Keyworth primary school consultation responses were as follows –
- in favour 29 parents and 2 staff;
 - against 2 parents.
16. Various comments were made on the consultation responses and these are summarised below with officer comments in response –

Comments about proposed enlargement	Officer comments
Proposed expansion will enhance the school and give more opportunities to the children of the area	
Concern about the impact on the current children's schooling	The detailed construction programme would be developed on the basis of minimising disruption to the school
Classroom is already full how is the teacher going to manage	Additional classrooms would be constructed for the expanded school
Additional accommodation should not reduce the size of the current playground	The detailed design will aim to achieve this.

-
17. The London Borough of Lewisham has responded that they understand the increasing pressure on local authorities to provide additional school places and therefore support the proposals.

Conclusion

18. In conclusion the initial consultation process has resulted in a large number of responses to the proposed enlargements of these schools. Officer comments respond to the issues raised and while there are more concerns about the enlargement of Albion and Charles Dickens schools it is considered that on balance all the proposals should proceed to the next stage.

Statutory proposals

19. If the capacity of a school building is being enlarged by 25% and more than 30 pupils this requires a statutory consultation process. This is the case for these schools.
20. This process requires:
- initial consultation usually of six weeks with parents, staff and governors and local education stakeholders;
 - followed by formal consideration by IDM report of the outcome of the consultation;
 - then publication of a statutory notice along with a statement of case;
 - finally the proposals have to be decided by the Cabinet.
21. The cabinet member is recommended to agree the next stage, viz publication of the statutory notices. Cabinet are then expected to consider the outcomes of the consultation in March 2014.

Policy implications

22. The primary planning and investment strategies are fully aligned to local planning and policy frameworks including the Council Plan, and Children and Young People's Plan. These outline the council's continued commitment to supporting schools to be outstanding, with children and young people able to achieve their full potential, and parents able to exercise real choice in a high-performing local schools system.

Community impact statement

23. The impact on communities of the issues and recommendations within this report has been considered in line with Southwark's Approach to Equality. Generally the recommendations will have a positive impact on communities with increased provision of primary places in areas where they are needed enhancing community cohesion.
24. The proposals are consistent with promoting the safeguarding and well being of all local children and young people by providing sufficient primary school places to meet forecast need. Increasing pupil numbers will foster good relations because it provides for the expansion of existing provision that meets the needs of our diverse communities and promotes the fostering of good relations. The enlargements of schools would provide more choice for parents.

Financial implications of expansion programme

25. The July Cabinet report identified an overall available budget for the programme of £50.6m. The available funding is sufficient to fund all these proposed enlargements.
26. The July cabinet report delegated the authority to the Strategic Director of Children's and Adults' Services to allocate the budgets for individual school expansion programmes from within the existing available resources.
27. The expected budgets for the first wave of schools in this report can be met from existing identified resources. The allocation of the budget will be made at the gateway 2 award of the contract for the construction of the school expansions.
28. The schools will be responsible for the ongoing revenue implications arising from expansion.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Legal Services

29. The Local Authority has school reorganisation duties under the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 in respect of maintained schools. The Local Authority is enabled to consult on proposals to effect changes to maintained schools in its area.
30. The Cabinet Member is asked to agree the publication of individual statutory notices to effect the enlargement of the schools listed in the first recommendation and is enabled to do so under Part 3D, paragraph 20 of the Council's Constitution.
31. The proposed expansions are prescribed alterations under the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007.
32. The Cabinet Member is advised that the notice must include the requirements and timescales set out in the Regulations and summarised in the statutory guidance "Expanding a Maintained Mainstream School by enlargement or

adding a sixth form – A Guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies” updated 1 February 2010.

33. The outcome of the statutory notice proposals will be reported to Cabinet who are enabled to determine final proposals.
34. The Cabinet Member is reminded of the equality duties contained within the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the public sector equality duty under s.149.

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services (CAP13/064)

35. The strategic director of finance and corporate services notes that there are no new financial implications arising from this report. A full financial evaluation will be done ahead of the gateway 2 report to ensure this can be contained within resources.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Documents	Held At	Contact
Primary Strategy for Change	http://moderngov.southwarksites.com/documents/s1106/Primary%20strategy%20for%20change.pdf	Merril Haeusler, London Borough of Southwark
Primary Investment Strategy – Report to Cabinet July 2013	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s39446/Report%20Primary%20Investment%20Strategy.pdf	Merril Haeusler, London Borough of Southwark

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Romi Bowen, Strategic Director of Children’s and Adults’ Services	
Report Author	Martin Wilcox, Education Planning Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	16 December 2013	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Head of Procurement	No	No
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
Head of Home Ownership and Tenant Management Initiatives	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	17 December 2013	