

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel      **DATE:** 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR INFORMATION, COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

#### **SCHOOL PLACES**

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to provide information on:

- The increasing demand for primary school places and steps taken to meet this demand
- The increasing demand for secondary school places and future plans to meet this demand including the impact of academies
- The James review
- Future funding

##### **2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

It is recommended that members note the actions being taken to meet the increasing demand for places.

##### **3 Community Strategy Priorities**

###### **Celebrating Diversity, Enabling inclusion Prosperity for All**

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, so that all children resident in the area can attend school. Local Authorities should also ensure as far as possible that children are offered places at their preferred schools.

##### **4 Other Implications**

###### **(a) Financial**

###### **i) Primary**

Cabinet agreed the Primary School Places Action Plan 2011-13 at a meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010. This plan is currently being implemented using capital grant allocated for school places.

Currently £25.3m has been committed to creating 2760 new primary school places plus a further 350 places have been created at the new Langley Hall Primary Academy. This investment created 9 new forms of entry for September 2009 and 2010 and 5.8 new forms of entry for September 2011, including the new free school. It assumes a further 2 forms of entry will be provided immediately to accommodate new arrivals and includes the Town Hall conversion. This is summarised in the tables below:

Places required for 2008-10	1530	9 forms of entry
Places required for 2011	920	6.8 forms of entry
Places required for 2012	660	4 forms of entry
<b>Total Cost of Places</b>	<b>£25.3m</b>	

<b>To be funded from:</b>	
Basic Need Safety Valve funding (grant)	£9.0m
Primary Capital Programme funding (grant)	£8.4m
Section 106 developer contributions	£3.0m
Modernisation 2011-12 (grant)	£2.2m
Basic Need 2011-12 (grant)	£5.1m
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>£27.7m</b>

The balance of the funding (£2.4m) has been 100% allocated to funding existing schemes replacing council borrowing wherever possible.

A key solution for creating places quickly and affordably proposed within the Primary Place Action Plan was to add infant annexes at schools across the town, as and when they are required. To date 4 of these have been completed using modular annexes installed over the summer break and 3 more are planned over the next 12 months. In order to ensure that places are available at these schools, when pupils move into year 3, the Local Authority (LA) will need to fund junior annexes, to complete the expansion project. A sum of £800,000 has been agreed for creating infant annexes to fund the modular classes, highway works and any required infrastructure improvements. It is proposed that a sum of £850,000 is allocated for adding junior annexes, on the basis that infant annexes required 3 classes, while junior annexes will require 4 classes.

Education and Children's Services took part in the recent exercise to revise the council's capital programme to reduce the overall level of funding to meet the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The funding levels and schemes referred to within this report are in line with the details presented to members as part of the MTFS.

The primary expansion programme is fully funded based on the assumption that Slough receives at least £6m income for the next 3 years (2012-13 to 2014-15). This seems reasonable given that the DfE has suggested LAs plan a capital programme on the basis they will receive a similar allocation in future years, as was received for 2011-12. For Slough this was £7.2m. The proposed schools' capital programme fully allocates all available and assumed income.

## ii) Secondary

The scale of funding required to expand the secondary school estate over the next 5 years is considerable. Between 2008 and 2012, Slough will have added 3000+ new primary places and equivalent growth will be required in the secondary sector once pupils move up the system. Over the next 5 years the following funding will be required to provide the secondary places required (note this excludes post-16 provision which will also need to expand).

Places required for 2011-2016 (11-16) (Over the next 5 years)	1500	10 forms of entry
Total cost of places (assuming £2.5m per form of entry)	<b>£25m</b>	

All sources of income will need to be explored for expanding secondary school provision. As well as the LA continuing to submit data to the DfE to secure new Basic Need allocations, academies and free school promoters will be encouraged to apply for funding for new school places from the DfE, where separate funding streams are available.

## iii) New Capital Grant Allocation

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011, Slough was allocated £9.461m of grant funding as part of a one-off Basic Need allocation by the DfE. Central Government allocated £500m to 100 authorities with pressure on school places for 2012 and 2013; Slough received the 17<sup>th</sup> highest allocation. This funding has been allocated to Slough in recognition of pressures in both the primary and secondary sectors following submission of our school capacity and pupil forecast data earlier this year.

## (b) Risk Management

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Risk/Threat/Opportunity</i>	<i>Mitigation(s)</i>
<i>From section 2 above</i>	<i>Risk: There is a shortfall of primary school places</i>	<i>Actions proposed within this paper continue to be implemented.</i>
	<i>Risk: There is a shortfall of secondary school places</i>	<i>All avenues for providing additional secondary school places are explored with Slough schools making use of new grant allocations.</i>

## (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

Local Authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. They must ensure that there are sufficient schools in their area and also promote diversity and increase parental choice. The actions proposed in this report must be designed to comply with the human rights of the clients.

#### (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

An impact assessment was carried out in 2008 for the initial expansion projects. This may need to be reviewed in light of the continued expansion of primary schools.

The purpose of the plans outlined below are to ensure that Slough Borough Council can meet its duty to provide suitable education for all Slough resident pupils regardless of age, race, gender, ethnicity or disability.

### 5 **Supporting Information**

#### **(a) Primary School Places**

5.1 For admissions to reception in September 2011, Slough received 2034 applications by the closing date of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011, compared to 1948 for September 2010, 1855 for September 2009 and 1711 for September 2008. There were 2120 places available for September 2011 so all applicants who applied on time were offered a place on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2011. Around 98% of applicants were offered one of their preferred schools and 87% were offered their first preference. This compares to 93% and 83% last year.

5.2 After the offer date the LA usually receives late applications from families who failed to apply on time and new arrivals to the borough. Contingency plans were made to provide additional places at short notice if necessary and an additional 30 places were provided at Penn Wood Primary School, bringing the total number of places currently provided to 2150. Slough Borough Council continues to receive reception applications and discussions are being held with two further primary schools to offer places during this half term.

5.3 For other primary year groups there is a surplus of places. The latest data is shown below. This is a snapshot and varies from month to month depending on the number of leavers when compared to new arrivals.

<b>Current Year Group</b>	<b>Places Available</b>
Reception	-23 (Shortfall)
Year 1	40
Year 2	51
Year 3	24
Year 4	37
Year 5	66
Year 6	52

5.4 Since 2009 the following projects have been agreed and are being implemented:

Permanent Expansion Projects for 2008, 2009 and 2010	Budget	Total new places to be created	Permanent reception places added
Expand and modernise Wexham Court Primary Sch	£4,000,000	210	30
Expand Western House Primary School	£3,020,000	210	30
Expand and modernise Parlaunt Park Primary Sch	£4,000,000	210	30
Change Cippenham Junior to a Primary School	£880,000	300	60
Refurbish former school building - Willow Primary	£4,350,000	420	60
Increase admission number of Priory School	£100,000	90	30
Expand Castlevew Primary School	£800,000	90	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>£17,150,000</b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>9FE added</b>
<b>Additional expansions for 2011</b>			
Expand Claycots Primary School (similar amount funded by school)	£750,000	210	30
Expand Ryvers primary School	£800,000	90	30
Expand Lynch Hill Primary School	£800,000	90	30
Expand Godolphin Infant School	£900,000	90	30
New Free School	£0	350	50
Expand Penn Wood Primary School	£800,000	90	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,050,000</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>6.8FE added</b>
<b>Additional expansion for 2012</b>			
Convert Town Hall for use by Claycots Primary Sch	£1,500,000	360	60
Expand 2 further primary schools	£1,600,000	180	60
Complete expansion of Priory School (phase 2)	£850,000	120	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,100,000</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>4FE to be added</b>

5.5 The following table shows the growth in the number of reception classes available in Slough schools (including academies). It also shows the forecasts for demand expected over the next 4 years and the number of new forms of entry that would be required to address the demand and create a small surplus for in year growth.

		Demand	Availability	Bulge classes	Growth required
<b>Previous years</b>	<b>Jan-07</b>	52	54		
	<b>Jan-08</b>	54	56		
	<b>Jan-09</b>	56	56		
	<b>Jan-10</b>	61	59	2	
	<b>Jan-11</b>	65	65	2	
<b>CURRENT</b>	<b>Sep-11</b>	72	72		
<b>Future years – forecasts</b>	<b>Jan-13</b>	75	76*		
	<b>Jan-14</b>	77	76		1FE
	<b>Jan-15</b>	78	76		2FE

\* assumes Town Hall conversion goes ahead and 2 further schools agree to expand as planned

5.6 It should be noted that LA forecasts have proven to be accurate and demand continues to rise in line with the forecasts provided to members over the last 3 years. It should be noted that where single figures (rather than a range) are provided they have tended to underestimate demand as actual figures continue to be at the top end of expected ranges.

5.7 Demand for places is monitored through the School Admissions Team. Information on the demand for places is presented to the School Organisation Group (SOG) and SOG considers which schools should be expanded to meet the demand. SOG agrees a priority list and this is reviewed regularly to ensure that the list takes account of the most recent data.

## **(b) Secondary School Places**

5.8 The number of applications for year 7 places for September 2011 from Slough residents was 1591 compared to 1582 for the previous year. All 1591 Slough resident parents who applied for a place received an offer on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011. The proportion receiving their first preference (46%) was low by national standards because Slough is a fully selective area and many parents use their first preference to apply to a grammar school but many children are not successful reaching the qualifying mark in the test. Overall 93% were offered one of their preferred schools. Where none of their preferred schools could be offered, applicants received an offer at the nearest school with vacancies. There are still vacancies at schools in neighbouring boroughs for September 2011, such as Churchmead, Desborough and Burnham Upper.

5.9 For other secondary year groups (8-11) the position changes each month due to movement of families in and out of Slough and the highest demand tends to be at the beginning of the school year. There are currently no places available in Slough schools and Slough Borough Council is relying on places being available in neighbouring boroughs to place Slough residents. This includes Churchmead, Burnham Upper and Desborough. Details of the most up to date figures on the demand and supply of places in other year groups for newly arrived pupils, will be available for the Scrutiny Panel meeting, after the next secondary schools admissions panel, which meets on the 21<sup>st</sup> November.

5.10 There will be a significant increase in the demand for secondary school places as the large cohorts from the primary sector begin to transfer to secondary schools from September 2014 onwards. Slough's school place planning assumes that pupils will continue to use the surpluses available in out-of-borough schools, although growth in demand in Windsor and Maidenhead suggests that eventually fewer Slough pupils than at present will secure a place in their schools.

There are a number of options for creating the capacity needed in Slough, these include:

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Expand existing schools - | This option has worked well in the primary sector. If new schools can't be built then every secondary school would need to expand to meet the forecast in demand. Expanding grammar schools require careful consideration of admission arrangements to avoid funding places for out of borough pupils. |
| Build new schools -       | Possible sites are limited, although we will continue to explore options as they arise. This would include new Free Schools or academies in or near to Slough as these would be funded by central government.  |
| Alternative models -      | This might include turning primary schools into all-through schools, or building a post-16 facility on another site to free up space in existing   |

schools. All options will be explored particularly where they offer good value for creating school places.

5.11 Discussions with secondary Headteachers have been taking place this term to look at options and to decide how schools should be prioritised for expansion. The process has involved all secondary schools, including Academies, so that expansion is progressed in a co-ordinated way. At the meeting it was agreed to start early discussions with one secondary school to explore the possibility of the school increasing its admission number by 45 places. This school would provide places that were accessible to Slough pupils. As discussions have yet to be held with the governing body of the school it is not appropriate to name the school in this report. This would be the first expansion and further expansion plans will need to be considered and agreed in order to provide the 500+ new year 7 places required by 2017/18.

## 6 **The James Review**

Following the publication of the James Review earlier this year a consultation ran from July to October seeking views on the government's proposals. The key proposals are:

- the DfE will collect information on the building condition of the education estate, and will hold robust data on where additional school places are needed;
- the capital funding available should be used efficiently, allocated by a funding formula that addresses greatest need;
- there should be flexibility in how best to deploy the available funding locally, with partners working together strategically to agree priorities;
- there will be benefits from using a more centralised approach for procurement and building project delivery;
- the DfE will provide a set of standardised designs for school buildings;
- the DfE will review and consolidate the school premises regulations.

## 7 **Comments of Other Committees**

There are no comments from other committees

## 8 **Conclusion**

This report provides information on the current demand for primary and secondary school places, forecasts for future demand and steps being taken to meet this demand. It is recommended that members note the plans to meet the additional demand for school places and also that these plans will be reviewed regularly to take into account the latest information on new arrivals.

## 9 **Background Papers**

None