

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

To update Members on current school expansion projects, the latest pupil projections and proposals for meeting future demand.

2. Recommendation

That the Panel note the projects in progress and endorse the approach to school places planning as set out in the report.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3a. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy

Slough's approach to school places reflects the following wellbeing priorities:

- Economy and Skills
- Health
- Regeneration and Environment

3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

Slough's approach to school places will contribute to the following 5 Year Plan Outcomes:

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.

4. Other Implications

a) Financial

There are no financial implications to the information in this report. However, the cost implications of the expansion programme are outlined in section 5.

b) Risk Management

There are no risk management issues to the information in this report. A full summary of risks around school place planning will be presented to Cabinet in June 2018. The key risks are:

- Mismatch of supply and demand and the pressures and destabilising effects on the school community.
- Funding pressures over the next 5 years.

c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications to the information in this report.

d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The preparation of this report has not necessitated an Equalities Impact Assessment.

e) Land and Property Implications

There are no site implications as a consequence of the data in this report.

However, there are property and land implications of the expansion programme:

- Grove Academy has opened on the former TVU site and subject to planning will move to a site in Chalvey
- Expansions of existing schools and bulge classes will generally use existing school land and not impact other council plans
- The Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) and Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) expansion programme agreed by Cabinet in March 2017 affects a number of council sites.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 The council has a legal obligation to ensure sufficient school places for all Slough resident children. In broad terms the strategy involves developing high quality new places which will best satisfy the needs of the children and young people of the borough, to take the opportunity of free schools where they satisfy those needs and to plan for a flexible supply of expansions and new schools to match the dynamic environment of school place demand.

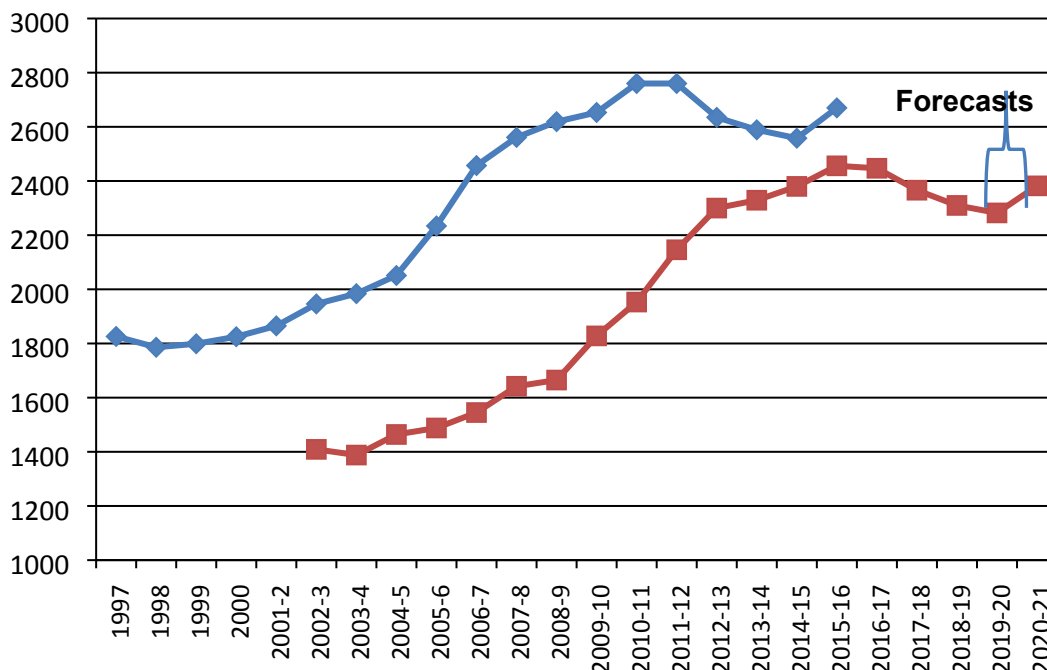
- 5.2 Population profiles, supply and demand are kept under regular review and in particular emerging risks are recognised and tackled. Place planning follows the adopted strategy and in the face of fluctuating projections takes both a planned and opportunistic approach.
- 5.3 This report seeks to bring all the elements of forecasting, place planning, free schools and council-funded projects and the financial plan together for members.
- 5.4 School place predictions are based on birth rate, known pre-school children, current school population statistics and an estimate of growth based on inward movement. In addition to population pressures, Slough also has high demands on particular schools from outside the borough, most notably on selective secondary schools. Overall Slough is a net exporter of pupils with more pupils travelling outside the borough for school places than come in each day.
- 5.5 In a dynamic population, forecasting beyond three years remains extremely uncertain. The relatively small number of pupils with individual Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) makes forecasting accurately for this sector challenging.

Place Planning Summary

- **Primary Places:** Grove Academy is expected to provide the medium term capacity required by Slough. There is a need to manage a small surplus of Reception places before demand rises again in 2020. Some bulge classes in upper year groups may be required if the in-year reduction seen over the last 12 months does not continue.
- **Secondary Places:** If the current pattern of reduced in-year growth continues then the opening of Grove Academy together with the expansion of 2 existing schools provides the capacity needed in Slough in the long term. It is likely there will be a period of pressure starting in 2021 when bulge classes may be required before demand starts to reduce 3 years later.
- **Early Years Provision:** A large expansion programme is required in this sector.
- **SEND and PRU Places:** A large expansion programme is underway. A further refinement of forecasting is being undertaken to ensure that provision is aligned with demand for the longer term.

Primary Places

- 5.6 Slough's key source of data for forecasting reception demand is birth numbers received from the Office of National Statistics. Births numbers peaked in 2010-11 and 2011-12 at 2760 births. For the next 3 years numbers reduced before going back up again in 2015-16 (latest data available). The graph below shows how the number of Reception pupils (lower red line) closely mirrors the pattern of births 5 year's before (higher red line). It also shows forecast demand for the next 3 years.



5.7 Current forecasts suggest that Slough has sufficient Reception places available and no further growth is planned beyond the bulge classes shown in 6.14. Since 2008-9 when Slough had 56 forms of entry available across all schools capacity has been expanded by more than 50% with the opening of Grove Academy.

5.8 The table below summarises the current position for 2017-8 and the next 3 years. Slough aims to have a surplus of 2 classes in each year group for unexpected growth, new arrivals and to ensure as far as possible that parents are offered a place at one of their preferred schools.

Year	Reception demand	Available	Reception surplus	Grove Academy	New Reception surplus
2016-17	81.6	83.4	1.8		
2017-18	78.9	82.4	3.5		
2018-19	77.0	81.4	4.4	+2	6.4
2019-20	76.1	81.4	5.3	+2	7.3
2020-21	79.5	81.4	1.9	+4	5.9

5.9 As a result of the forecast surplus of reception places Foxborough Primary School has reduced its Planned Admission Number from 60 to 30 and from 2019 James Elliman will reduce their admission number from 120 to 90. These reductions have already been assumed in the table above. Where further reductions are agreed by the Local Authority this will be on the basis that if demand rises in future years the classes will be reopened.

5.10 While there is a surplus of places in Reception at the same time there is pressure on places in other primary year groups due to new arrivals to Slough. To ensure the planned surplus of 2 classes were available for 2017-18 in every year group, 4 bulge classes were opened; 3 at Grove Academy and one at Priory School. The table below shows the surplus places available as at January 2018.

Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6
Surplus at Census date	165	79	117	75	59	53	34
Planned surplus	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Surplus Places	105	19	57	15	-1	-7	-26

- 5.11 **In-year growth:** On average there is a net increase of over 25 pupils into every primary year group during each curriculum year. This means that Slough needs to plan for growth of 5 classes as pupils progress upwards from Reception to Year 6. If this trend was to continue then having 7 surplus classes in Reception, 2 for planned surplus plus 5 for in-year growth, would be ideal. This level of surplus however can cause financial difficulties at some schools as it is often the case that large surpluses will be concentrated at a handful of schools rather than spread across the estate.
- 5.12 The latest school census data has shown a very different picture for the last 12 months. In-year growth has changed to an in-year reduction for the first time. On average each primary year group reduced by 13 pupils between January 2017 and January 2018. If this pattern were to continue in future years then it would remove the need to plan for any growth between Reception and Year 6.
- 5.13 Due to the pressure on places in other primary year groups a number of bulge classes have been planned. The current in-year reduction in demand may mean that these classes will have delayed openings or may not be required. Given the long lead-in time for building or installing new classrooms and the uncertainty around future trends it is prudent to continue with current plans with the risk that these classes may not ultimately be required.

	Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2017/18		Grove Academy	Grove Academy	Grove Academy		Priory School	+2s
2018/19						Priory School	+2s
2019/20				Marish Primary		Marish Primary	+2s
2020/21						Marish Primary	+2s
2021/22						Grove Academy	

Open or agreed

Under discussion

- 5.14 The School Places Project Board continues to explore possible further bulge class options should the anticipated reduction in demand not arise.

Secondary Places

- 5.15 The rapid expansion seen in the primary sector since 2007 has been impacting on secondary schools since 2012. Since then 4 secondary free schools have opened in Slough providing 22 new forms of entry once Grove Academy opens all its classes. Slough is expanding 2 existing secondary schools adding 4.5 forms of entry plus 3 grammar schools are increasing their admission numbers adding 3 forms of entry. Forecasts suggest that 2 further forms of entry will be required before the demand peaks in 2022-23 and 2023-24 then dips for 3 years reflecting the latest birth data.
- 5.16 Forecasting Year 7 demand is not straightforward due to the effect of grammar schools and cross border movement. Also demand for places is affected by parental preference which can change each year. Note that unlike the primary sector there has always been an in-year reduction in secondary year groups, this reduction however has accelerated over the last 2 years.
- 5.17 The table below shows a long term view of the demand for secondary school places. Looking this far ahead means secondary forecasts are dependent on in-year growth factors which as discussed above seem to be changing. The forecasts below are based on a weighted 3 year average which means that data from the last 3 years is averaged but extra weight is to given more recent years.

Year	Forms of Entry (FE) available	FE required	Projected Surplus	Assumptions:
2016-17	69.5+1	69.9	0.6	Schools continue to admit above PAN increasing the FE available in future years by 2 classes
2017-18	77.8+2	75.5	4.3	Lynch Hill increases PAN to 180, + 3FE Grove Academy opens with + 4FE Langley Grammar expansion + 1FE Slough Grammar expansion + 1FE St Joseph's does not admit over PAN for future years - 1FE
2018-19	82+2	80.8	3.2	Westgate + 2FE Wexham + 2.5FE
2019-20	84+2	83.7	2.3	Grove Academy + 2FE St Bernard's expansion by 1FE – no net impact assumed
2020-21	84+2	86.0	0	
2021-22	84+2	86.5	-0.5	Slough schools full but some surplus out of borough- bulge provision may be required
2022-23	84+2	87.6	-1.6	
2023-24	84+2	87.8	-1.8	
2024-25	84+2	85.2	0.8	
2025-26	84+2	83.2	2.8	
2026-27	84+2	82.2	3.8	

- 5.18 Forecasts suggest that supply and demand reach equilibrium in 2020-21 assuming all current projects complete as expected and assuming that schools continue to admit 2 classes above their collective total Planned Admission Number.

5.19 In the longer term we predict a small shortfall of places by 2021. One option would be create new bulge classes to deal with this short term pressure although this would not be necessary if more pupils opt to choose schools outside the borough.

5.20 Grove Academy: The new free school is ranked as a Gold Project by the council due to its strategic importance and the value of the scheme. Slough is contributing £5m towards the site assembly for the school but the total value of the project is likely to exceed £40m, with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding the remainder of the cost. A separate Project Board has been established to ensure the successfully delivery of the project.

Early Years Provision

5.21 Members were provided with a full update on the Early Years sector at a Cabinet meeting in February 2018. In summary, government changes and demographic pressure will require the following expansions:

- 1,520 total number of early years places required between 2017-22
- 280 places required for 2 year olds
- 814 places required for 3 & 4 year olds
- 445 places required for under 5 year olds for childcare purposes.

Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) and Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Places

5.22 Slough's strategy for delivering High Needs education is based on a mixed-economy model that allows for all but the most specialist needs to be catered for within Slough facilities. In March 2017 Slough agreed a large SEND and PRU expansion programme and work continues to complete these projects by 2020.

Type of Places	Project	Additional Places	Re-provided Places
Pupil Referral Unit Places	Thomas Grey refurbishment for Haybrook College	20	20
	Haybrook College annex	40	0
Resource Base Places	Priory SEND unit	10	50
	Marish SEND unit	27	18
	Grove Academy SEND unit	15	0
Special School Places	Arbour Vale annex	up to 90	0
	Haybrook College extension	10	0
Total capital cost		212	88

5.23 Forecasting future SEND and PRU demand is primarily based on the assumption that the current proportion of the population requiring such places will remain constant. A more detailed analysis of past patterns and trends is underway to further refine the forecasting work that has been carried out over the last few years. This work will also finalise the number of places required at Arbour Vale School.

Financial Planning

- 5.24 Slough's main source of funding for creating new school places has been Basic Need grant, an allocation for which the council bids annually on the basis of forecast need. Slough's allocations are based on the shortfall of statutory age places only (Reception to Year 11) and excludes nursery, post-16 and SEND places all of which need to be funded by the LA. The LA also needs to fund any shortfall in funding if projects cost more per place than the funding received.
- 5.25 In recent years, the Basic Need grant has reduced dramatically. In the period from 2013-17, the Council received £30m of Basic Need Funding, however in the period from 2017-20, the funding allocation was only £3.8m.
- 5.26 Appendix A summarises the full draft capital programme for school projects including contingency sums. Assuming that the Council will fund all the new school places required to 2023 and no new income is received, the projected **deficit** at the end of the 5-year period of the current capital programme is expected to be in the region of £39m.

6 Comments of other Committees

This report has not been considered by any other SBC Committees.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This report updates Panel Members on the current pupil forecasts and projects being delivered to provide the capacity needed by Slough in the medium and long term. Slough appears to be experiencing further demographic change with falling primary rolls for the first time in a generation creating new challenges. Slough's strategy is to take a flexible approach with a series of projects that can be brought forward or delayed in response to changing demographics.

8. Appendices

'A' - Draft Education Capital Programme 2017-23

9. Background Papers

None