Proposed School Enlargements - Determination of Statutory Proposals

Executive Summary

1. Responses from the statutory proposals and published notices for the enlargement of Belfield Community Primary, Lowerplace Primary, St Lukes CE Primary and Siddal Moor Sports College are reported.

1.1 Following on from the 19th December 2017 report to Cabinet regarding the consultation on the Need for Extra Primary and Secondary Places, a consultation on the enlargement of the above schools was held. This report details the responses to the consultation on enlargement of the schools and requests Cabinet approval for the mentioned enlargements.

Recommendation

2. Consider the responses submitted to the published statutory proposals and taking account of the statutory guidance for Decision Makers to:

2.1 Approve the enlargement of Belfield CP School by providing an additional 15 places in each new admission year group from September 2018. The enlargement of the school would increase the admission number from 45 to 60 permanently.

2.2 Approve the enlargement of Lowerplace Primary School by providing an additional 30 places in each new admission year group from September 2018. The enlargement of the school would increase the admission number from 60 to 90 permanently.

2.3 Approve the enlargement of St Lukes CE Primary by providing an additional 30 places in each new admission year from September 2019. The enlargement of the school would increase the admission number from 30 to 60 permanently.

2.4 Approve the enlargement of Siddal Moor by providing an additional 60 places
in each new year group from September 2019. The enlargement of the school would increase the admission number from 210 to 270 permanently. The school agreed a temporary rise in admission of 30 places from 210 to 240, in its existing space, for 1 year only for September 2018.

### Reason for Recommendation

3. Each Local authority has a statutory duty to secure a sufficient number of school places in their area.

3.1 In central Rochdale Township during the previous few years too few primary school places have been available in the area which has meant extra capacity having to be created in higher primary year groups. This creates instability and unwanted extra moves for children in their primary years. Extra capacity in primary years is needed going forward to accommodate both those children who were born and currently living, and those moving into the area.

3.2 In Heywood Township birth rates have been rising for the last few years and current primary capacity in the area is not sufficient for those children who are due to start school in 2019.

3.3 Secondary schools in the borough do not have capacity for children currently in year 6 in Rochdale Borough primary schools. Extra capacity is being created temporarily in Siddal Moor Sports College for September 2018 and further capacity is needed for September 2019. A new school is needed in the borough for September 2020.

### Key Points for Consideration

4. **Need for Extra Places in Primary Schools**
   
   The need for extra school capacity in Primary schools in Rochdale and Heywood Townships was detailed in the report to Cabinet on the 24th October 2017 and feedback from a 4 week consultation on extra spaces in Primary schools was given in the report to Cabinet on the 19th December 2017.

4.1 Following the consultation the Cabinet approved the publication of statutory proposals for the enlargement of the schools detailed above. Statutory Notices were published in the local press, posted on the Council website and at the schools. The statutory 4 week representation period started on 5th February 2018 and ended on 4th March 2018. Information on the proposals was sent to interested parties as required by Department for Education Guidance.

4.2 Appendix A details the statutory proposals for each school enlargement with current school census numbers, statements on the current quality of provision and 5 year forecasts for Rochdale Township (for Belfield CP and Lowerplace Primary) and for Heywood Township (St Lukes CE Primary).

4.3 Appendix B details the responses to the published proposals.

4.4 St Lukes CE Primary statutory proposals consultation responses: There were 4 responses to the St Lukes Primary enlargement proposal; 3 in
support of the enlargement and 1 against. One of the responses in support raises concerns of increased road traffic during drop off and pick up times. These concerns will be addressed via a Travel Plan for each site and also be subject to Highways scrutiny during the planning application process.

4.5 Belfield Community Primary statutory proposals consultation responses: There were 4 responses to the Belfield CP enlargement all supporting the enlargement. Two of the responses raise concerns of increased road traffic during drop off and pick up times. These concerns will be addressed via a Travel Plan for each site and also be subject to Highways scrutiny during the planning application process. Two responses from prospective parents are very supportive of the school and the good education opportunities it provides.

4.6 Lowerplace Primary statutory proposals consultation responses: There were 2 responses to the Lowerplace enlargement all supporting the enlargement. Both of the responses raise concerns of increased road traffic during drop off and pick up times. These concerns will be addressed via a Travel Plan for each site and also be subject to Highways scrutiny during the planning application process. The second response is in support but raises the issue of the use of modular classroom accommodation currently on the site and its use long term.

Need for Extra Year 7 Places in Secondary Schools

4.7 The need for extra school capacity in secondary schools in the borough was detailed in the report to Cabinet on the 24th October 2017 and feedback from the consultation on extra spaces in Secondary schools was given in the report to Cabinet on the 19th December 2017.

4.8 Following the consultation the Cabinet approved the publication of statutory proposals for the enlargement of the secondary school detailed above. Statutory Notices were published in the local press, posted on the Council website and at the schools. The statutory 4 week representation period started on 5th February 2018 and ended on 4th March 2018. Information on the proposals was sent to interested parties as required by Department for Education Guidance.

4.9 Appendix A details the statutory proposals for Siddal Moor Sports College enlargement with current school census numbers, statements on the current quality of provision and 9 year forecasts for the combined Heywood and Middleton Area.

4.10 Appendix B details the responses to the published proposals for Siddal Moor Sports College. There was one response in support of the proposed enlargement which was in support but raised the issue of extra traffic created at drop off and pick up times. These concerns will be addressed via a Travel Plan for each site and also be subject to Highways scrutiny during the planning application process.

Consideration of the Statutory Proposals

4.11 The statutory guidance for “School Organisation-Maintained schools-guidance for proposers and decision makers” and specifically Annex B Guidance for
Decision Makers sets out the matters to be considered in determining the statutory proposals. A copy of the document is attached as Appendix C to this report (available on the Council website).

**Types of decision**

4.12 In considering the proposals Cabinet can decide to:
- reject the proposals;
- approve the proposals;
- approve the proposals with a modification; or
- approve the proposals subject to them meeting a specific condition.

In making a determination Cabinet, as the decision maker, must give reasons for the decision.

4.13 **Factors to be considered by decision makers**

Consideration of consultation and representation period: The required information and documentation for the proposal is contained within the Prescribed Information in Appendix A. The report to Cabinet on 19th December 2017 evidences that the required consultation was undertaken before the publication of Statutory Proposals. The Published Notices comply with statutory requirements and representation requirements have been met. The notes of comments received and responses to these are summarised in paragraphs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.10 above and are attached as Appendix B.

4.14 Education standards and diversity of provision: Belfield CP and St Lukes CE Primary proposed for expansion were judged ‘Good’ at the last inspection. Lowerplace Primary and Siddal Moor Sports College were both rated ‘Requires Improvement’.

4.15 Demand for places: There has been an increase in the number of children requiring school places in the Borough and particularly in the central Rochdale area as identified in the appendices to this report. These proposals are part of the response from the Local Authority to meeting the need for additional school places in Rochdale. The Local Authority plans school place demand taking account of the number of children born, the pattern of demand comparing the number of children born and the number starting in Reception classes and their transition to secondary school, together with movement into and out of the Borough and the potential effect of new housing developments.

4.16 School size: Not applicable - the context for this section relates to the viability and cost effectiveness of small schools.

4.17 Proposed Admission arrangements: The schools are covered by the Local Authority’s published admission criteria and arrangements will apply to the allocation of places at the school.

4.18 National Curriculum: The schools follow the National Curriculum.

4.19 Equal Opportunity Issues: The provision of extra school places will improve parental preference. Other equality considerations will assessed during the feasibility and planning stages.
4.20 Community cohesion: There are no community cohesion issues arising from the proposals.

4.21 Travel and accessibility: Most children attending the schools live within the statutory walking distances and this will continue to be the case. Concerns over increased traffic and parking were expressed in both the consultation and the representation periods. A school travel plan will be prepared for each school to address these concerns.

4.22 Capital resources will be required to implement these proposals. This report confirms approval of the capital from within current capital allocations.

4.23 School premises and playing fields: In order to accommodate extra children additional teaching accommodation will be required. Under DfE non-statutory guidance (Building Bulletin 103) the areas required have been assessed and there is sufficient space on the sites to accommodate the growth.

Implementation of the proposals if approved

4.24 If the proposals are approved, the Local Authority will be responsible for their implementation.

**Recommended decision**

4.25 In view of the information provided for these statutory proposals and noting the representations made, it is recommended that the statutory proposals for the enlargement of all the proposed schools are approved subject to the granting of planning consent for the required building works.

4.26 The reason for the recommendation is that additional school places are required in the Borough over the next few years. Also, the proposed additional accommodation and increase in numbers means that the Local Authority would meet the threshold for the publication of statutory proposals.

**Alternatives Considered**

4.27 Since 2010/11 academic year 31 of the boroughs 69 Primary schools have either taken extra bulge classes or had enlargement building work. In Heywood 5 of the 10 Primary schools have taken extra children. St Lukes CE Primary is one of the schools that has previously taken 3 years of bulge classes. In Rochdale Township 10 of the 30 schools have taken extra children previously. When choosing which schools to enlarge consideration has been given both cost and feasibility of all schools in the areas needed.

4.28 Since 2014/15 academic year 10 of the boroughs 12 Secondary Schools have either taken bulge classes or had enlargement building work. The borough will need a new school by 2020.

**Costs and Budget Summary**

5. The capital cost of implementing the proposal, if approved, will be met from Capital Grant allocations reported to and approved by Cabinet on 6th March
2017 and 19th December 2017. Revenue Funding Implications will be funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

### Risk and Policy Implications

6. Each Local Authority has a statutory duty to secure a sufficient number of school places in their area. Local Authorities and other relevant bodies have a duty to comply with Infant Class Size Limits. Admission Authorities have a duty to comply with any preference expressed by a parent for a school place except where to do so would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Following the recommendations in this report the Local Authority will be able to discharge those duties.

6.1 The proposal to enlarge the schools requires a statutory process to be followed because there will be an increase in accommodation and the proposed, permanent increase in numbers means that the schools will permanently increase in size by more than the threshold set out in statutory guidance.

6.2 The Council has a duty to fully consider the outcome of the consultation and any representations made to the Council during the consultation period and must also have due regard to equality impact issues to avoid the risk of legal challenge.

### Consultation

7. The report to Cabinet on 19th December 2017 evidences that the required consultation was undertaken before the publication of Statutory Proposals. The Published Notices comply with statutory requirements and representation requirements have been met. Statutory Notices were published in the local press, posted on the Council website and at the schools. The statutory 4 week representation period started on 5th February 2018 and ended on 4th March 2018. Information on the proposals was sent to interested parties as required by Department for Education Guidance. Consultation documents were also sent to Unions and Schools to assess workforce implications.

### Background Papers

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<td>8. There are no background papers</td>
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