

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION REPORT

Published on 21 May 2014

Approval to permanently expand Lakeside Primary School (Cheltenham) from its current two form entry to a three form entry primary school from 1 September 2015

Dates between which decision will be taken	Earliest date: 30 May 2014 Latest date : 2 June 2014
Children & Young People	Councillor Paul McLain
Key Decision	No
Background Papers	Commissioning Director : Children and Families Decision Report –October 2013 Lead Cabinet Member Decision report – February 2014 Statutory Notice, published 3 rd March 2014 Due Regard Statement
Location/Contact for inspection of Background Documents	Background papers can be found on the following web link: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/lakesideprimary
Main Consultees	Elected members, Headteacher, Chair of Governors, staff and parents/carers of children at Lakeside Primary School and members of the local community. Gloucestershire Association of Primary Heads, Gloucestershire Association of Primary Headteachers Premises Committee and Gloucestershire Association of Secondary Headteachers.
Planned Dates	Revised Admission for 1 st September 2015
Divisional Councillor	Cllr Simon Wheeler
Officer	Any representations should be sent to: Tracy Eales, Education Planning & Development Officer telephone 01452 328677 tracy.eales@gloucestershire.gov.uk by 5.00pm on Thursday 29 May 2014
Purpose of Report	To report on representations received following publication of the statutory notice published on 3 March 2014.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Strategic Commissioning should approve the permanent expansion of Lakeside Primary School from its current two forms of entry to three forms of entry starting in September 2015.

Reasons for Recommendations	Additional places are required in order to fulfil the local authority's statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places.
Resource Implications	A planned, phased build programme will be required to provide additional accommodation. If this proposal is approved, capital costs will form part of the schools' element of the capital programme that is for basic need and be subject to the schools' capital approvals process. There are no revenue implications to GCC arising from this report; revenue costs associated with transition are DSG funded.

1 Background

In order to address demand for additional primary school places for September 2014, an additional form of entry has already been introduced on a temporary basis at Lakeside Primary School. From September 2015, additional permanent primary places are required in the Hatherley and Leckhampton planning area.

Analysis of parental preference data, feasibility studies of school sites in the area and discussions with headteachers and governors led to the proposal to permanently expand Lakeside Primary School by one form of entry (30 pupils).

A statutory consultation on this proposal was carried out between 25th November and 20th December 2013. A total of 83 responses were received and of these 80% agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal, 7% neither agreed or disagreed and 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed. 17 respondents expressed concern about the increase in volume of traffic and congestion at drop off and pick up times.

Traffic at the school was observed and officers met with local elected members, representatives from Lakeside School and a representative from County Highways to discuss the findings. Improvements to parking and travelling routes to schools were identified for further exploration.

On 20th February 2014, the Lead Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Strategic Commissioning considered the response from the consultation, the suggestions for improved traffic management and advice from officers, before taking the formal decision to publish a statutory notice.

2 Publication of statutory notice

The statutory notice seeking approval to increase the Published Admission Number of Lakeside Primary School to 90 for the September 2015 intake was published on 3rd March 2014.

A four week period of representation ended on the 28th March 2014. (Recently introduced legislation has reduced the representation period from six weeks to four.)

3 Representations

Two representations were received, one from County Councillor Simon Wheeler and the other from Cheltenham Borough Councillor Roger Whyborn.

The objections re-iterated the concerns about traffic management and road safety raised during the statutory consultation period and Cllr Whyborn also raised additional concerns about the turn-over of staff at Lakeside Primary School.

4 Response to the Representations

i. Traffic Management

Design Consultants, Stride Treglown, considered the design carefully to support the opportunity to improve current and future traffic at peak school times.

A second means of access into the school site has been introduced on the left side of the school site which can be accessed by the roads to the rear of the school. This will provide children living in Denbigh Road and Hazebrock Close with a more direct route into the school avoiding the main Hatherley Road and parents can drop off and pick up at this point rather than parking along Hatherley Road.

The school will encourage parents to use both access points.

The consultants have also increased the number of safe and secure cycle storage areas within the school site to encourage parents to cycle/walk their children to school. In addition the school are looking into staff cycling schemes that support the purchase of a bicycle for work purposes.

ii Staff turn-over

Senior Officers met Cllr Whyborn on 7 April 2014 to discuss his concern about the level of staff turn-over at the school.

Officers explained that in March 2013 Lakeside Primary School was judged to be “good” by Ofsted. The report praised the improvements made in the school since the last inspection led by the ambition and drive of the governing body.

An analysis of standards shows that the school is well above all floor targets for achievement and progress. Before her appointment at Lakeside School, the headteacher was previously head of another Gloucestershire primary school which was judged to be “good” by Ofsted under her leadership in May 2010.

Education officers from the county council who have visited Lakeside School have found no evidence that staff turn-over is as a result of a decline in standards or leadership. The school continues to be popular with parents and is currently expected to fill all of the additional temporary places for the September 2014 intake.

Following the meeting with officers Cllr Whyborn confirmed that, in the absence of factual evidence to the contrary, he wished his objection 27th March to the proposal to permanently expand Lakeside School to stand.

5 Officer Advice

Additional places are required in order to fulfil the local authority’s statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places. When providing additional school places, the council has a duty to take parental preference into account and to expand schools which are rated either good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Officers considered six schools in the area. Schools were ranked after analysis of site areas, school standards and admissions preference data. Some schools were ruled out due to the impact on the school site and loss of playing field areas and some schools did not wish to expand. Lakeside Primary School had both the site area and agreement from the Governing Body to expand.

The proposal to expand Lakeside Primary School is supported by parents, the headteacher and school governors. 80% of respondents to the statutory consultation agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal.

The actions outlined above are already in progress to address the perceived risks arising from the potential increase in traffic.

The local authority has no evidence to support concerns about standards at Lakeside School.

The correct statutory process for expanding a school has been followed, including a statutory consultation, publication of Statutory Notices and a four week representation period. The objections received have been carefully investigated, discussed and taken into account. The lead cabinet member has been fully informed throughout the process.

The council has assessed the impact of this proposal in the Due Regard Statement which accompanies this report (appendix 1). The proposal does not impact adversely on any of the protected groups.

6 Recommendation

That the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Strategic Commissioning should approve the expansion of Lakeside Primary School from its current two forms of entry to three forms of entry starting in September 2015.

7 Risk Assessment

Risk: Failure to provide sufficient school places to meet demand without children being allocated places some distance from their homes.

Mitigation: The shortfall of places in the areas of need has been calculated using GP patient registration data. Lakeside Primary School has been identified as the school most suitable to meet local need. Officers have worked closely with the school to ensure full cooperation with this proposal.

Risk: Safety is at risk because of increased traffic

Mitigation: Careful consideration of design to incorporate an additional access point into the school to ease the flow of traffic on the main road to the front of the school. The provision of additional bicycle storage that will provide the opportunity to encourage pupils to cycle to school.

Risk: Standards in the school decline because of the increase in pupil numbers

Mitigation: Local Authority officers will closely monitor standards at the school and take appropriate action if necessary

8 Performance Management/Follow-up

Subject to Lead Cabinet Member approval

- a) Progress building works to accommodate the additional pupils.
- b) Open the school as a three form entry Primary School with effect from September 2015.