

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BASIC NEED ALLOCATION FOR THE RUSHCLIFFE SCHOOL

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Member approval for the investment of £500,000 towards the next phase of the planned expansion of Rushcliffe School to ensure a sufficiency of secondary school places for September 2019).
2. To update Members on the emerging proposal to secure a medium to long term plan to ensure a sufficiency of secondary school places in the West Bridgford planning area by September 2025 in partnership with the Spencer Academies Trust.

Context

3. The quality of schools and education provision is a key priority in our Council Plan and in investing in Nottinghamshire. Nottinghamshire County Council has continued to invest significantly in the provision of schools across the County. Between 2013 and 2019, approximately 5,500 primary school places were created at a cost of £65m. The County Council continues to invest in school places provision and new schools are currently being built in Bestwood, Hawthorne Primary School at a cost of £5.75m, in Rushcliffe, Sharphill Primary School at a cost of £5.3m and Hucknall the Flying High Academy at a cost of £3.7m. The County Council is making significant progress in the rebuilding of The Orchard Special School in Newark alongside a new Day Service at a cost of £15.5m. In addition to these investments in Nottinghamshire, the Council has also committed to the rebuilding of The Bramcote School at an estimated cost of £14m.
4. Across the County, 85.1% of schools are rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted, which means children and young people are well served by education providers. This is particularly the case in Rushcliffe. On 1 March 2019, which was national secondary offer day, there were 1,334 applications processed from residents within the Rushcliffe area. 1,277 (95.7%) received their first preference with 1,326 (99.4%) receiving one of their 4 preferences. This was delivered through a strong partnership with the Rushcliffe School and West Bridgford School who have remained committed to working positively with the County Council to secure a long term plan for this planning area.

Information

5. There are two schools in this planning area: West Bridgford School (East Midlands Education Trust) and Rushcliffe School (Spencer Academies Trust). These are high performing popular secondary schools in a densely populated area. The large housing development at Sharphill has contributed to the need for an additional four secondary forms of entry over the next five academic years (by 2025) across this planning area.
6. A report was taken to Children and Young People's Committee in December 2017 and permission was given to pursue plans that would result in the expansion of both secondary schools in the planning area to meet increasing need for school places. Negotiations have successfully concluded the following agreements:
 - The Rushcliffe School (SAT) has agreed, in principle, to initially expand to 12 forms of entry and to work with the Council to increase capacity further if required;
 - The West Bridgford School (EMET) has agreed to 9 forms of entry once the school secures Section 106 funding from Rushcliffe Borough Council.
7. In the short term, Rushcliffe School has agreed to admit significantly over its Published Admission Number (PAN) in 2018/19 academic year and agreed again to admit to 330 Year 7 pupils for September 2019. This has ensured that in September 2019, linked and catchment children, who expressed a preference for the Rushcliffe School have secured a school place. As a result, immediate work on the site is necessary to provide the necessary classroom and specialist areas over the summer 2019 period before welcoming pupils in September.
8. Officers have been working with the Trust to identify the immediate short-term costs to accommodate the additional intake in September 2019. Plans for the future are being developed in partnership with the Trust and proposals, including cost estimates and will be brought forward for consideration by Policy Committee in due course. This will offer further confidence to families that their children will continue to have access to school places in our good and excellent schools across the County.
9. To deliver the required property activities, it is recommended that Members approve a budget of up to £500,000 basic need funding to the Spencer Academies Trust to undertake the immediate building and renovation required at Rushcliffe School to accommodate the September 2019 intake.

Other Options Considered

10. There are no other options at this time that would provide the additional places for September 2019.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

11. The County Council has a statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places across the County. The West Bridgford planning area is an area that will require additional school places by 2025.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public-sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

13. The £500,000 capital investment required to fund the next phase of the Rushcliffe School expansion will be funded from within the School Places Programme which is already approved in the Council's capital programme.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Committee:

- 1) Approves the investment of £500,000 to the Spencer Academies Trust to fund the next phase of the planned expansion of Rushcliffe School to ensure a sufficiency of secondary school places for September 2019.
- 2) Requests further updates on the medium to long term plan to ensure a sufficiency of secondary school places in the West Bridgford planning area by September 2025 in partnership with the Spencer Academies Trust.

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE
Leader of the Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

David Hughes
Service Director - Investment & Growth
T: 0115 9773825
E: david.hughes@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LW 10/04/19)

14. Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (GB 03/04/19)

15. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proposed Basic Need Programme of School Expansions 2018/19 – report to Children and Young People’s Committee on 18th December 2017

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All