

**2 February 2017**

**Agenda Item:3**

**Children's Trust Board Sponsor: Colin Pettigrew**

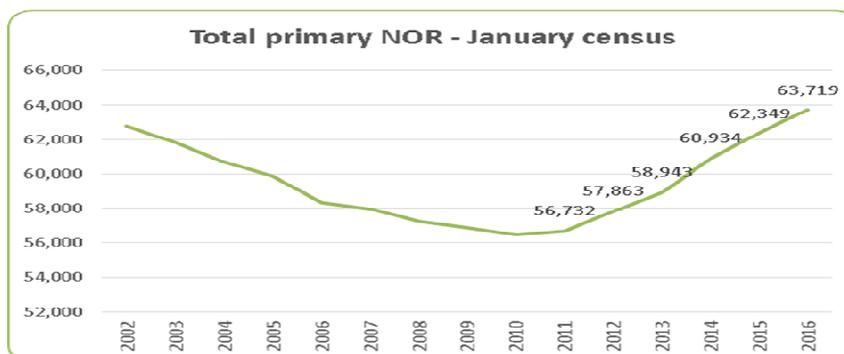
## **SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides the Children's Trust Board with an update relating to Nottinghamshire County Council's place planning strategy

### **Information and Advice**

2. The Education Act 1996 dictates that Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) has a duty to secure school places for all children of statutory school age (5-16 years old) whose parents want them to be educated in a state-funded school. Subsequent Education Acts have built upon this but the obligation placed on local authorities has not changed.
3. In line with the underlying national trend, Nottinghamshire has seen an increase in birth rates across the county since 2007. This is reflected in the overall school population but is particularly well illustrated in the numbers of primary age children (Figure 1).



**Figure 1 - Total number on roll primary age**

The total primary Number on Roll (NOR) had seen a steady decline in numbers between 2001 and 2010 but subsequent years have seen a sharp increase in total numbers to the current school year (2015/2016).

- Analysis of district level data (Figure 2), broadly presents the same trends possibly with the exception of Rushcliffe Borough, whose total primary school numbers started to increase from 2006.

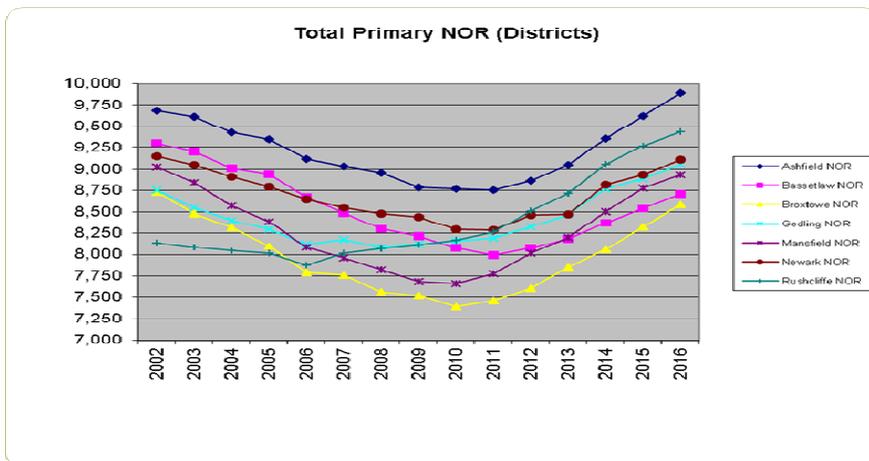


Figure 2 - Total number on roll primary age (district level)

- The numbers of 4 year olds entering the school system shows a sharper increase (Figure 3). Across the whole of the county, the number of 4 year olds began to increase around 2006.

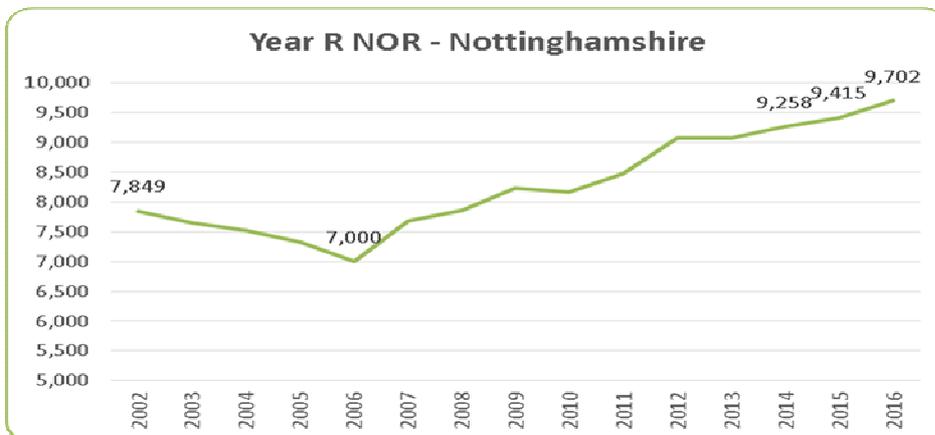


Figure 3 - Total number of children in reception year

6. As smaller cohorts of older children are replaced by larger cohorts of young children, overall pressure on places increases. Figure 4 shows the sizes of cohorts in January 2016:

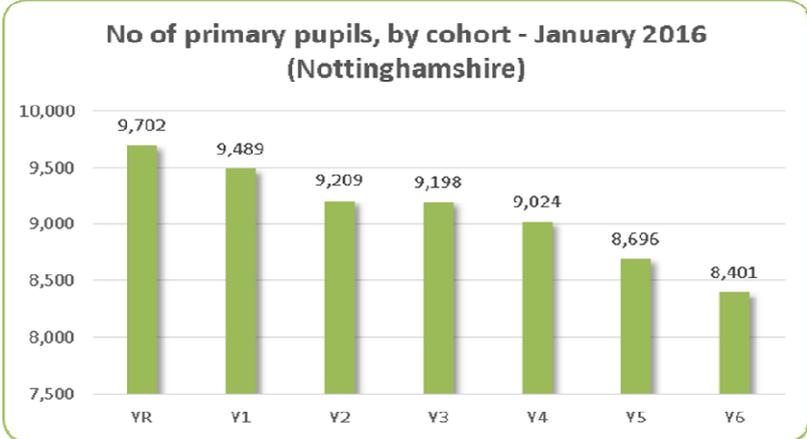


Figure 4 – January 2016 size of cohorts - Reception to Year 6 – Whole County

7. When the same data is examined for individual districts, it can be seen that some areas experienced a sharper growth in 4 year olds than others (Figure 5)

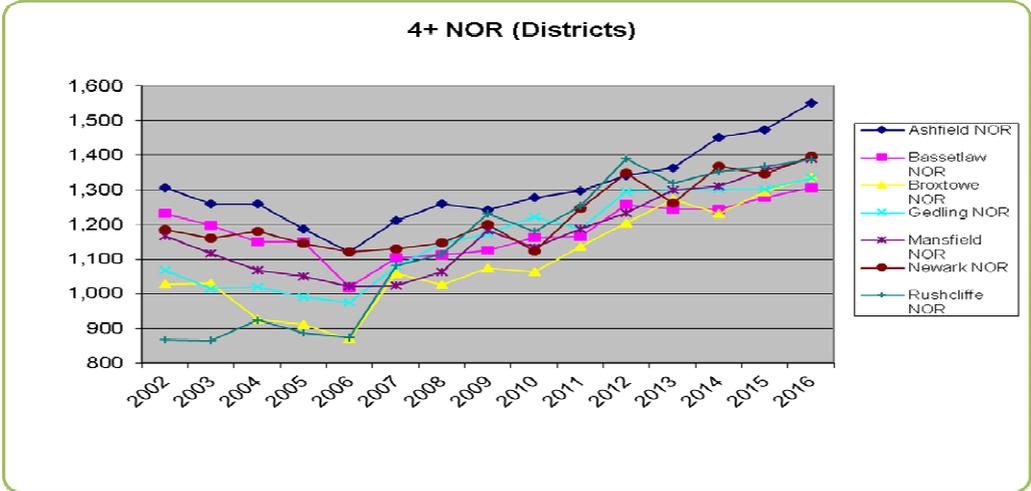


Figure 5 - Total number of children in reception year (district level)

8. Given the falling rolls of previous years, this sharp increase in numbers of 4 year olds did not initially impact on the county’s overall ability to provide pupil places where they were needed. However, in order to meet this increased demand for primary school places since 2013, Nottinghamshire County Council has accessed £70 M to fund the creation of 5,064 permanent primary school places. **Appendix 1**, provides a summary overview of where these school places have been created.

9. Primary Basic Need for 2017 is currently funding feasibility studies in 7 primary schools with a view to creating a further 364 permanent primary places for phase of consideration. It should be noted, that the expansion of current primary schools in areas where there is a demand for further expansion has reached its capacity. Looking to the future, should new primary places be required as a result of either Basic Need or as a result of housing developments, new primary schools will be required. A map showing the location of the proposed new schools is attached as **Appendix 2**.
10. The total number of pupils attending Nottinghamshire schools, including special schools, as of the January 2016 statutory school census, was 110,900. The breakdown of pupils in the sector reflects the increases in demand for primary school places at this time. However, as this increase in primary, moves into secondary, there will be a need to ensure sufficient secondary capacity across the county. Analysis suggests that this increase in demand for secondary school places will begin to appear from 2020 onwards.

		Primary						Secondary					Post-16			
		YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11			
All Schools		9719	9512	9234	9234	9066	8743	8457	8332	7991	7738	7748	7923	3958	3174	71
		<b>63965 (58%)</b>						<b>39732 (36%)</b>					<b>7203 (6%)</b>			
		<b>110900</b>														

11. The Basic Need funding allocation for 2018 is £20,467,135 with approximately half designated to fund the expansion of secondary school places. This will be the first year in which NCC has received secondary basic need funding. This aligns with NCC’s own analysis that there will be increased demand for secondary school places from 2020. Secondary schools are currently reviewing their Planned Admission Numbers (PANs) and NET capacities to inform and determine where additional secondary places will be required. Analysis suggests that we do not envisage the same level of development in the secondary sector as the majority of additional places are already available. Most secondary schools currently admit a significant number of out of catchment pupils. A basic need will not be evident until secondary schools are unable to meet their catchment demand. Early analysis suggests that there is likely to be a need for the further expansion of secondary schools in particular hot spot areas of the county. At this time, the likely need for additional secondary places will be in the West Bridgford area from 2020.
12. There is national funding and a commitment to build 500 new Free Schools by 2020. Some of these new schools will be funded by developer contributions when the school is located in a new housing development. Other new schools, including special schools will be centrally funded to meet the on-going demand for good and better schools. It is of note that this funding does not appear to be for the expansion of existing good and better schools. This is because the ongoing expansion of these good or better schools would not

necessarily meet the wider need for new school places in high pressure areas of the country.

13. Legislation dictates that all new schools will be Free Schools and the Children and Young People's committee on 19 December 2016, agreed that NCC's Schools Policy would be revised in order to enable Nottinghamshire to benefit from the opportunity to encourage new school sponsors to open new schools in areas of need. This is called the 'Direct Route'. A joint ministerial letter - **Appendix 3**, sent to Local Government Chief Executives and District Councils jointly from the Department for Education and the Department for Communities and local Government, suggests that the government would be prepared to forward fund section 106 agreements to allow for the early build of new schools in housing developments. Whilst this is an attractive option in Nottinghamshire, to date, no such forward funding has been secured.
14. The Children and Young People's Committee report of the 19 December 2016 – **Appendix 4** also outlined the need for an information sharing event with national and local stakeholders to ensure that new housing developers and potential sponsors understand where new schools are required. This event took place on 23 January 2017 attended by over 60 sponsors, developers and other key partners. The event also raised the need for new special schools and alternative provision for some vulnerable learners.
15. As a result of the Children and Young People's Committee report of the 19 December 2016, the Schools Policy is currently to be reviewed to acknowledge the changing landscape in relation to Free Schools. In addition, NCC's School Place Planning and Capital Strategy will be revised in line with national legislation and local priorities.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) The Children's Trust Board notes the updated report

**Mike Sharpe**  
**Team Manager, Pupil Place Planning**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Mike Sharpe 0115 9772803**