

Report to:	STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CAPITAL MONITORING
Date:	21 September 2020
Executive Member:	Cllr Leanne Feeley - Executive Member (Lifelong Learning, Equalities, Culture and Heritage)
Reporting Officer:	Richard Hancock - Director of Children's Services
Subject:	UPDATE ON EDUCATION BASIC NEED CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROVISION
Report Summary:	The report provides and update on the Education Basic Need Capital programme. It provides background on the work undertaken since 2009 to increase places in the borough by 5564 in primary and secondary phases and outlines the work that is currently being undertaken to expand the specialist estate to meet the needs of our children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans who need specialist provision.
Recommendations:	That the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel recommend to Executive Cabinet that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Negotiations continue with Rayner Stephens High School and the Stamford Park Trust to identify accommodation that would enable Cromwell High Sixth Form provision to be established on a permanent basis and the relevant statutory school organisation processes are followed (ii) An appraisal of the options to expand Hawthorns Primary School is undertaken by officers and an outline business case is developed for consideration by members (iii) That officers develop an outline business case to implement additional resourced provision in the borough once the outcome of the space utilisation survey is known and schools have had the opportunity to express an interest.
Corporate Plan:	The proposals contained in this report will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan.
Policy Implications:	In line with approved policy.
Financial Implications:	High Needs Funding Pressures:
(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	School funding is provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant, which is allocated in four blocks to cover central services, schools, early years and high needs. The high needs block is to fund Special Schools, additional support in mainstream schools for Special Educational Needs (SEND) and other SEND placements / support. The Council is facing significant and serious financial risks on the high needs block funding, with a forecast deficit in 20/21 in excess of £4m due to continued and significant increases in the number of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The Council's revenue budget for Education is also facing significant financial pressures due to the increase in demand for SEN Home to School Transport, which is driven by the increase in pupils with EHCPs. Whilst no detailed financial modelling has been undertaken, it is likely that any significant

increase in the availability of specialist provision within the borough will result in some cost savings both on the High Needs block and in respect of Home to School Transport.

Funding for Capital Investment:

The Council receives two primary funding streams for school capital works – Basic Need funding and School Condition Allocation. Additional funding is also received for SEN provision through the Special Provision Fund. Basic Need funding can only be used for the purpose of creating additional places in schools – such as building works to create new classrooms and extend school buildings to create additional spaces which enable the school to admit additional places. The Special Provision Fund is ring fenced for the improvement and enhancement of Special Educational provision and can only be used for enhancements to specialist provision.

As at 1 April 2020 the Council had a balance of £12.010m of basic need funding available to spend with budget commitments of £11.095m, leaving an unallocated balance of £0.915m. An allocation of £12.232m of basic need funding has been awarded for 2021/22. Special Provision Funding of £0.841m is available to spend in 2020/21 with budget commitments of £0.736m, leaving an unallocated balance of £0.105m. When the unallocated funding balances are combined with the 2021/22 basic need allocation and unspent section 106 monies, there is a potential total funding pot of £13.287m for further investment in the school estate to create additional capacity subject to options appraisals and business cases, in line with the recommendations set out in this report.

Legal Implications:

(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

This report is intended as a briefing for Members to outline the progress that has been made to date and the progress still required in order that the Council will continue to meet its Statutory Duties in relation to the provision of appropriate school places.

The progress still to be undertaken will be subject to further governance and decision making in due course and will be managed as part of the overall capital programme.

Risk Management:

Risk management is addressed within the body of the report. The Council has a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996, to secure sufficient and suitable places for pupils in primary and secondary schools in its area. Failure to deliver sufficient school capacity places the Council in breach of its statutory duties.

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Catherine Moseley



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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet demand in their area. Planning for fluctuations in demand for school places is an important function which needs to be carried out at a local level and will differ depending on the phase of learning, for example, pupils will travel further to secondary schools than primary schools. The compact geography of the borough and the mix of types of school, for example, single sex means that place planning happens at a level higher than wards or towns.
- 1.2 School place planning is a complex process that takes account a range of factors including the number of births in the borough, in year movement and cohort survival rates (how many children move from one year to the next) as well as parental preference and planned housing development. With rapid shifts in economic conditions for families and changing patterns of migration, planning for basic need for school places requires a proactive approach to best respond to both short and medium-term demand for places.
- 1.3 The Council has been proactive in tackling the issue of a 27% rise in births and a 24% increase in pupils starting primary schools over the last few years whilst also managing to maintain high levels of meeting parental preference.
- 1.4 The Published Admission Number (PAN) has been increased at many primary schools and overall by almost 18% from 2734 places in 2009/10 to 3195 places currently and we are now increasing secondary school places. In 2010, there were 2582 pupils in Year 7 and for September 2020, we have allocated 2993 places, a 16% rise in demand. There are still more places needed in the secondary sector for September 2021 to September 2023.
- 1.5 As the numbers of pupils in mainstream schools increases, so does the number of pupils in specialist provision. In 2014/15, there were 519 children with a statement of special educational needs. As of end of July 2020, there were 1773 children with an Education, Health and Care Plan. There has been some expansion of specialist provision in the borough but more is needed to ensure that needs are met appropriately and within the borough if possible.
- 1.6 The Council's strategy and plans to meet future forecast demand are approved by Executive Cabinet at least on an annual basis when school admission arrangements are also determined. The latest approval was on 12 February 2020. Progress on all education capital projects is reported to Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel.
- 1.7 Most of these increases in pupil numbers and admission numbers have necessitated capital work to expand the accommodation available in some of our schools. This has been funded through the Basic Need Grant from the Department for Education. Between 2011 and 2019, the Council received a total of £42,745,350 to fund additional places in the borough. A further £12,231,816 has been allocated for 2021-22. In addition to Basic Need Funding, the Council has also received an allocation of £1,075,921 for the period 2018 – 21 from the special capital fund for provision in specialist settings.
- 1.8 The Council and other responsible bodies in the borough receive separate funding to address school condition issues.

2 PRIMARY SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 2.1 The increases in primary school places began in 2009 when the birth rate began to rise. Over the years, an additional 3334 places have been created in 36 of our primary schools.

- 2.2 This increase has been achieved through a mixture of permanent and temporary increases. For example at Holden Clough a new school was built through the Priority Schools Building Programme and increased the intake of the school from 30 per year group to 60; or at Ashton West End where remodelling of the accommodation enabled the school to increase their admission number from 45 to 60 per year group on a permanent basis.
- 2.3 We have also been able to open two completely new schools; Inspire and Discovery Academies in Ashton and Hyde respectively which can accommodate up to 120 pupils per year group.
- 2.4 There have also been some temporary increases where schools have taken a bulge class, a one off temporary increase in the admission number of the school, and this has been achieved through remodelling internal space, for example, making an IT suite into a classroom or adding temporary demountable classrooms. The pupils in the first four bulge classes that we put into primary schools in September 2013 have now just left Year 6 and are heading into secondary schools this September.
- 2.5 There are still two projects to expand primary schools that are not yet complete. They are at Aldwyn Primary School where we are increasing the Published Admission Number from 45 to 60 and St John's Primary School where we are increasing the Published Admission Number from 30 to 45. Both of these projects are going into their final stages once governance has been agreed subject to reports being presented setting out the project, contractual arrangements, programme delivery, costs and any associated risks and how they will be mitigated managed particularly in light of Covid.

3 SECONDARY SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 3.1 As with primary schools, the Council has worked with our secondary school headteachers to increase places as the numbers come through from primary schools. The first increases in secondary school admission numbers took place in 2012. Since that time, an additional 2310 places have so far been created across all year groups in 10 of the 16 secondary schools. This represents an 11% increase with plans for further increases over the next three years.
- 3.2 As the number of places has risen, so has the number of children starting at secondary schools in September. In 2010, there were 2582 pupils in Year 7 and for September 2020, we have allocated 2993 places, a 16% rise in demand.
- 3.3 Again, the additionality has been achieved through some internal remodelling of space, temporary demountable classrooms and the opening of Laurus Ryecroft School.
- 3.4 There are several on-going capital projects with our secondary schools including at Alder High School, Hyde High School and Audenshaw School.
- 3.5 In partnership with our secondary schools, we have been able to close the gap for additional places in September 2021. Work still remains to be done to accommodate the predicted additional pupils in 2023 but we continue to work with schools to achieve this.

4 SPECIALIST PROVISION CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 4.1 As with primary and secondary schools, there have been some permanent increases in places across the special school estate. For example, an additional 60 place ASC unit was built at Samuel Laycock School and Oakdale Primary School has expanded provision through remodelling of nursery space and the Children's Centre. Following the fire at

Cromwell School in 2016, some additional accommodation was provided as part of the rebuild.

- 4.2 However, there has been a significant increase in children requiring specialist provision over recent years. The SEND Forward Plan 2019-22 was developed with parents and carers, schools and other education providers and professionals working in the area of SEND, and children and young people to set out what the Council will do to develop and improve education provision for children and young people with SEND in Tameside. The plan will also develop and be refined as time goes on so, if needed, the actions in it are the right ones.
- 4.3 One of the intentions clearly set out in the Plan is that the Council wants all children and young people with SEND in Tameside to be able to attend a school or provision, as close to their home as possible.
- 4.4 There are around 568 children and young people in Tameside special schools. If things stay the same, the plan predicts that there will be a need for around 120 extra special school places by 2024, with over 200 specialist places in mainstream and independent schools to meet the needs of Tameside children and young people with EHCPs. In addition, there are some particular issues linked to the overall special school offer in the Borough.
- 4.5 There are currently 181 pupils attending schools and colleges outside of Tameside. These are attending other local authority special schools, independent, non-maintained schools or special free schools or special academies outside of Tameside. This means a number of pupils are often not being educated close to their home. This puts more pressure on the budget, both for special school provision and for transport particularly for more complex needs including ASC. The remainder of these children and young people attend a range of establishments such as further education colleges and other local authority mainstream schools.
- 4.6 During consultations with parents on developing the forward plan, it became clear that there was a gap in post 16 provision for young people with complex needs. Parents put forward the need to develop additional choice at the end of year 11. The forward plan agreed that some young people with complex needs are not ready to transition to specialist college provision at the end of Year 11 and there needs to be more Post 16 places in special schools for those that need that provision. Attention needs to be given to the provision to meet the needs of certain students as they move into adulthood.
- 4.7 The Forward Plan has identified the following priorities for additional provision:
- Develop sixth form provision at Cromwell High School
 - Increase special school places for primary aged children at Hawthorns Primary School
 - Create a short term nurture provision for Key Stage 1 pupils within Thomas Ashton School
 - Increase the amount of resourced provision across the Borough with a focus on the main areas of need: SEMH, ASC and the prevalence of MLD so that there are at least three Resource Bases, capable of supporting 10 pupils, in each Neighbourhood. This would entail either having existing space refurbished, or extensions built.

Sixth Form Provision at Cromwell High School

- 4.8 The school, colleagues in Education and Rayner Stephens High School have worked over the last two years to identify how sixth form provision could be established at Cromwell High School in line with the priorities outlined in the SEND Forward Plan. The project has been a priority for parents as they felt there was a gap in post 16 provision of this type within the borough.

- 4.9 Whilst the site of the co-located schools is big and shares boundaries with two other schools (Yew Tree Primary School and Oakdale School), there are restrictions which means that building additional accommodation is extremely difficult and therefore, likely to be high cost. Alternative options were therefore explored.
- 4.10 Classrooms that the Schools Library Service had rented from Rayner Stephens were identified as suitable for sixth form accommodation as they are next to existing Cromwell School classrooms. A lease has been agreed with Rayner Stephens High School for these rooms and they have been remodelled to allow a pilot sixth form scheme to be established in September 2019. This pilot has been successful and additional sixth form learners will be joining the provision in September 2020.
- 4.11 The next steps for this provision is to engage with Rayner Stephens High School and the Stamford Park Trust to identify if further accommodation can be leased from the school to permanently establish sixth form provision on site.

Increase Special School Places for Primary Aged Children at Hawthorns Primary School

- 4.12 Hawthorns School is an outstanding primary special school located within the Audenshaw area of Tameside and caters for pupils with a range of complex special educational needs aged between 4-11 years old. As a result of growing pupil numbers and to meet expected need for additional places, there is a need to provide additional teaching accommodation to accommodate both the current number of pupils enrolled at the school and the increases in admissions forecast over the coming years.
- 4.13 The main school building was originally constructed in 2006/07, the main building and site is shared between Hawthorns School and Aldwyn Primary School, a mainstream primary school.
- 4.14 The area of the school building designated as Hawthorns School was originally designed to accommodate 60 pupils. In 2015, it was identified that additional accommodation was needed and so a joint scheme to expand both Hawthorns and Aldwyn Primary School was developed. The scheme for Hawthorns included internal remodelling to create an additional classroom and a new build classroom. The internal remodelling work was completed. However, for a number of reasons, the whole external build scheme has not progressed as quickly as would have been ideal and so the opportunity has arisen to reconsider the scheme given the significant increase in pupil numbers at the school.
- 4.15 There will be 136 pupils on site in September 2020, more than double the number the school was originally built for. A four classroom demountable extension is currently on site to help the school accommodate the additional pupils but this is not a permanent solution and does not reinstate staff space already utilised for additional pupils.
- 4.16 This position cannot be allowed to continue and so a number of potential options are being considered to accommodate both the current number of pupils enrolled at the school and the increases in admissions forecast over the coming years to enable a total of 220 pupils to attend the school.
- 4.17 It is proposed that a formal options appraisal is now undertaken, and an outline business case developed for consideration by members. This will be completed at pace.

Short Term Nurture Provision for Key Stage 1 and 2 Pupils Within Thomas Ashton School

- 4.18 There has been a significant increase in the number of primary age children requiring specialist provision from Thomas Ashton School. In the summer term of 2018, 57 pupils were on roll with Thomas Ashton and this has increased to 86 pupils currently on roll. Figures from the January 2020 census identifies 23.24% of 1575 education health care

plans maintained by Tameside are those with a primary need of social emotional mental health compared to 15.66% of 977 plans in 2018.

- 4.19 In order to address the significant increase in children requiring specialist SEMH provision, and in conjunction with the school, the Inclusion Team have been looking to identify suitable accommodation for additional primary nurture provision in the borough but not on the same site as the main Thomas Ashton School. At the same time, the SEND Behaviour Support Services were looking for an appropriate teaching space to support children across Tameside at risk of exclusion. The SEND Behaviour Support Service had considered their current base on Birch Lane for this provision but it was unsuitable as it was not secure for children and had adults from other services visiting staff who were also based at the building.
- 4.20 After extensive exploration, the only suitable site that could be identified for additional Thomas Ashton nurture provision and Behaviour Support Services provision was space at Discovery Academy. Due to the age of the children, Thomas Ashton want specialist nurture provision away from their main site and the opportunity to co-locate with a mainstream primary school opens up opportunities for joint work and possible reintegration into mainstream provision for this group of children. The two large, additional classrooms at Discovery Academy will allow Thomas Ashton to accommodate up to 16 additional learners from September 2020.
- 4.21 A lease was agreed in July 2020 for space that would accommodate this additional provision and also the SEND Behaviour Support Service.

Increase the Amount of Resourced Provision Across the Borough

- 4.22 The SEND Forward Plan identifies the need to develop additional resourced provision across the borough to meet the needs of pupils identified as requiring enhanced provision but not a special school place.
- 4.23 Targeted provision is provision that is more specialist than mainstream schools, providing a higher level of support for children and young people with SEND, but not a special school. This may be shorter term provision to support a child into the most appropriate provision, or a longer term placement attached to a mainstream school. Tameside resource bases do not all provide a longer term option for placement, which means that children and young people may move straight from mainstream to special school when their needs could be met in a longer term targeted mainstream placement. This is a gap in the borough's provision.
- 4.24 There are currently resource bases in the borough at St John Fisher Primary School and St Thomas More RC College for ASC provision; Linden Road Primary for Hearing Impaired Provision; Russell Scott Primary, The Heys Primary School and Oakfield Primary School for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD).
- 4.25 The Forward Plan identifies that the Council will begin to commission new targeted mainstream provision model with a greater emphasis on highly supported resource based provision for a small number of children. This will:
- Be related to the level and type of need in different neighbourhoods across the Borough
 - Be small group focused provision, for both boys and girls, attached to mainstream schools,
 - Be provided for primary and secondary pupils,
 - Include a higher level of specialist staffing to meet need, linked with social care and health provision where appropriate,
 - Prioritise the two greatest areas of need: Communication and Interaction (including autism) and SEMH, (however, consideration needs to be given to lower levels of need that are currently in Special Schools in order to free up places.)

- Provide a small number of 'flexible' places at primary level to support the specific needs of identified groups of pupils who may require shorter term placements. 'Flexible' places would provide a quick response and short term placements would give pupils enhanced support to be included in mainstream school or to assist in identifying appropriate provision to meet their needs.

4.26 To do this, a review of accommodation in all schools across the borough is taking place. This will identify where there may be additional space in a school to establish resourced provision and where there is also interest from schools in hosting this provision, recommendations will then be made on where provision can be made.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 The gap in primary school places has now largely been met and the Council is well on its way to meeting its statutory duty in relation to secondary school places but there is now a need to move forward on addressing the gaps in the specialist provision available to our children and young people who need specialist provision. Plans are beginning to form to address these gaps and members are requested to endorse the recommendations set out at the front of the report to move these plans forward.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 As set out at the front of the report