

# Children, Environment and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	13 March 2017
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2017
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Schools
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Children's Services
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	City for All <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choice – a choice of excellent schools for Westminster residents</li><li>• Heritage – a well maintained school buildings portfolio</li><li>• Aspiration – high performing schools</li></ul>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	Capital expenditure required to implement the proposals are detailed in the Strategy, funded by external grant and planning obligations
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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The City Council has up-dated the School Organisation and Investment Strategy (SOIS) based on projected pupil numbers and opportunities for providing new school places.

## 2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 Key questions and issues on the School Organisation Strategy include:

- I. As a result of the surplus of primary school places, the Council will work with the Diocesan authorities and Academy sponsors as well as community schools to identify opportunities to make more effective use of the school portfolio and consider changes in school management arrangements.
- II. The Council is obliged to make additional provision for secondary places in order to fulfil its statutory duty, and the approved expansion programme which responds to this requirement is underway.
- III. The Council will seek financial contributions through the planning system to reflect the impact of new dwellings which create a need for more school places, and this demand should be factored into regeneration proposals throughout the City.

### **3. Background**

#### **3.1 Projections**

Detailed projections of pupil numbers for a 10 years period are provided by the GLA School Roll Projection Service. As the GLA projections do not take account of proposed regeneration or major development schemes which do not have planning permission, the SOIS adds this information where it is known, alongside data from the School Admissions Team, and any other relevant factors.

The DfE recommends that local authorities maintain 5% surplus places; in Westminster primary sector has a surplus of 15% but the secondary sector has no spare capacity. The SOIS updates the projections annually.

The draft SOIS 2017 notes that major development is expected in the Church Street and Paddington areas which are at early stages of planning, and at Chelsea Barracks in the south. Using the formula adopted for calculating the 'child yield', Children's Services believes that this will result in the additional need for the equivalent of 1 Form of Entry at both primary and secondary level in the Church Street area, 1 Form of Entry at primary level mostly in other areas in the north of the Borough, and slightly less than 1 Form of Entry at secondary level across the City as a whole. The GLA projected demand of places continues to show a downward trend but this would be revised upwards when these new developments are confirmed.

#### **3.2 Primary**

At primary level, forecast demand can be absorbed within existing schools. There is no justification for expanding schools or creating new ones at present. Because of the prevailing surplus, the Council is talking to governing bodies, both diocese and academy sponsors (with the Regional Schools Commissioner) about developing a collaborative approach to ensuring future

viability, including shared staffing, shared sites, partial letting of sites, and other efficiency initiatives. This also includes short term capping of numbers in certain primary year groups, alongside longer term plans to reduce Published Admission Numbers, e.g. from 2 to 1 Form of Entry or 3 to 2 Forms of Entry.

Westminster continues to 'import' nearly 1,400 primary pupils more than it 'exports' to other boroughs. This trend has remained consistent for many years and is in the main attributed to Good or Outstanding schools located near borough boundaries that are in close proximity to neighbouring borough residents. Approximately 90% of Westminster residents choose to send their child to a Westminster primary school at the first point of entry (Reception).

### 3.3 Secondary

The Council is proceeding with a programme to expand four secondary schools to deliver a total of 600 additional places. The principle justification for the expansions is to accommodate the additional pupils for whom the extra primary places have already been provided. The Council has sought to expand schools to benefit the highest number of resident pupils, although this is constrained by the location of schools and the physical capacity to expand.

The four schools are divided into two phases:

Phase 1 for 2018: Westminster City School and St George's RC School

Phase 2 for 2019: King Solomon Academy and Pimlico Academy

Westminster continues to 'import' over 2,500 secondary pupils more than it 'exports' to other boroughs. Between 75% and 80% of Westminster residents choose to send their child to a Westminster secondary school at the first point of entry (Year 7). This trend has been consistent for many years and, as for primary, is in the main attributable to schools rated Good and Outstanding that are desirable to parents, the proximity to schools that are located near the borough boundaries, and schools with religious affiliation that offer to applicants beyond borough boundaries in accordance with their 'oversubscription' criteria. The Council must take account of the import trends when looking at place planning and ensure it is still able to meet its legal obligation to its residents.

Regardless of the fact that Westminster imports more than it exports, which is common for many inner London boroughs at the secondary phase, the Council has a legal responsibility to ensure its residents have access to a school place within a reasonable traveling distance. Even though some Westminster residents choose not to apply to schools where they could have been offered a place, the duty remains to offer these residents a school place on National offer day (1<sup>st</sup> March). It is at this point in the process that the Council has had insufficient capacity to meet its statutory duty and is the underlying reason why the expansion of schools is necessary.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 All capital costs for new school provision will be met from Basic Need grant and s106 contributions. The Council will seek financial contributions from developers of new residential schemes in accordance with planning legislation towards the cost of expanding schools. The development of permanent facilities for new free schools, such as Minerva Academy and Marylebone Boys School, both in the Paddington Basin area, is funded by the Education Funding Agency.
- 4.2 Revenue costs will be met from Dedicated Schools Grant and will be agreed by Schools Forum.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Alan Wharton, ext: 020 7641 2911**  
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#### **APPENDICES:**

Draft School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2017

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None