

# Children, Sports and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	14 March 2016
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2016
<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 is required to implement the proposals are detailed in the Strategy, funded by external grant and planning obligations
<b>Report Author and Contact Details:</b>	Alan Wharton, extension 2911 <a href="mailto:awharton@westminster.gov.uk">awharton@westminster.gov.uk</a>

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The City Council has up-dated the School Organisation and Investment Strategy 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. There are likely to be opportunities to work with existing academy sponsors to assist in making more efficient use of the existing portfolio and deliver additional places where needed.
- II. Where schools are to be expanded, budget constraints arising from the absence of further Basic Need grant allocations and rising tender prices in the construction industry could be challenging.
- III. The Council will seek financial contributions from developers to reflect the number of new dwellings creating a need for more school places, and for this demand to be factored into regeneration proposals throughout the City.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide a school place for every child who needs one in their area. The Council has successfully delivered new places in the primary sector during the last 5 years, however in order to meet the forecast deficit in secondary places, the Council is now working on the expansion of four schools. In the light of further discussions with the schools, the expansions have been divided into two phases: Phase 1, comprising St George's Roman Catholic School and Westminster City School, is due to complete in September 2017, and Phase 2 comprising Pimlico Academy and King Solomon Academy will be deferred until 2018 or later.
- 3.2 In Westminster, detailed school population projections for 10 years are provided by the GLA School Roll Projection Service. The Council further analyses the data in order to work out whether new places are required, and the best delivery route. As the GLA projections do not take account of uncommitted regeneration or major development schemes, the Council's strategy adds this information where it is known, alongside data from the Admissions Team, and any other relevant factors.
- 3.3 The draft SOIS 2016 therefore notes that major development is expected at Church Street (including further residential units in Phase 2 of the regeneration from 2019-25), West End Green, Chelsea Barracks, and a number of schemes in the Paddington area which are at early stages of planning. Using the formula adopted for calculating the 'child yield', Children's Services believes that this may 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. In responding to private-sector planning applications, the Department seeks to maximize the potential financial contribution, so that this can be applied to expansions of existing schools.
- 3.4 The current expansion programme of secondary schools is funded by a combination of Basic Need grant and s106 contributions. It was anticipated that this would be sufficient for the programme. The two schools planned for

expansion in Phase 2 (Pimlico Academy and King Solomon Academy) have been deferred until 2018 onwards in order to consider opportunities to use the existing portfolio more effectively, in discussion with the relevant academy sponsors, and will be re-costed in the light of resources available.

- 3.5 It is expected that further demand for primary places can be met in the existing portfolio where the population is declining for other reasons. However, pressure for secondary places is expected to remain acute, mostly as a result of earlier large cohorts coming up through the system.
- 3.6 Westminster continues to 'import' nearly 1,400 primary and 2,500 secondary pupils more than it 'exports' to other boroughs. These numbers have been rising steadily for the past 5 years. Schools in Westminster are high performing and popular. Wherever possible, the Council will expand schools to benefit the highest number of resident pupils.
- 3.7 The Council has always adopted a flexible approach to providing new school places. It has done this by working with the DfE to open new free schools in areas of greatest need, e.g. ARK Atwood and Marylebone Boys School, both of which have contributed significantly to the place planning strategy.

#### **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.
- 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**  
[awharton@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:awharton@westminster.gov.uk)

#### **APPENDICES:**

Draft School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2016

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None