

# **Final determination report for the Executive Director of Children's Services and Chairman of Children's Services Committee from the School Organisation Team.**

## **The Proposal: Proposed changes to primary phase education in Attleborough**

### **Background**

NCC has a duty to ensure a sufficient supply of school places to respond to housing growth and other demographic changes. A number of housing sites are under construction in Attleborough and others have planning consent. In the longer term there are plans to build some 4000 houses in the town, which will be provided for by additional schools.

This proposal establishes an all-through primary system as a foundation for future growth and at the same time provides an additional 345 primary phase places to accommodate children from housing currently under construction.

Under the regulations for making significant changes to school organisation, the requirement to hold a statutory consultation when extending the age range of a school no longer exists. However, during the second half of the autumn term 2015, with the agreement of governors, we held an information consultation with a meeting for parents and stakeholders on 7 December 2015.

Following this process, the Executive Director of Children's Services agreed to proceed to statutory Public Notice. This was published on 16 September 2016. The four week representation period ended on Friday 14 October 2016.

9 representations have been received and these are attached at **Appendix A**.

In coming to a decision on school organisation proposals, the decision maker is asked to address the following factors:

- Consideration of consultation and representation period
- Education standards and diversity of provision
- A school-led system with every school an academy
- Demand v. need
- School size
- Proposed admission arrangements
- National Curriculum
- Equal opportunity issues
- Community cohesion
- Travel and accessibility
- Funding
- School premises and playing fields

This report, to be read in conjunction with the prescribed information already published (**Appendix B**), and the report prepared for the Executive Director of Children's Services requesting permission to proceed to Public Notice (**Appendix C**), will address each factor in turn.

### **1. Consideration of consultation and representation period**

All statutory requirements in relation to the statutory consultation, publication and decision-making were complied with.

As well as issuing a consultation document to each parent at the school, two open events to display the plans for the proposed new building to replace and relocate the infant school, and the extension and remodelling works at the junior school, were held on 24 February and 9 March 2016.

Copies of the consultation document were sent to the local Town Council and other stakeholders as outlined in the school organisation guidance.

The local County Councillor and the Norwich Diocese were informed along with other stakeholders and copies of the notice have been displayed at the school gates in line with regulations.

### **2. Education standards and diversity of provision**

The most recent inspections by Ofsted in 2010 (Infant) and 2013 (Junior) judged the schools to be Good. Attleborough Infant and Attleborough Junior Schools are community schools, the designated catchment school is an academy (TEN Group) and so the diversity of provision in the area will not change.

### **3. Demand**

A number of housing sites are under construction in Attleborough and others have planning consent. In the longer term there are plans to build some 4000 houses in the town, which will be provided for by additional schools. This proposal establishes an all-through primary system as a foundation for future growth and at the same time provides an additional 345 primary phase places to accommodate children from housing currently under construction.

### **4. School size**

This proposal will relocate and expand the infant school from 295 places to 630 places and the junior school from 410 to 420 places.

### **5. Proposed admission arrangements**

Both schools will grow year on year from September 2017.

### **6. National Curriculum**

All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum.

## **7. Equal Opportunity issues**

Equal opportunities have been considered as part of this proposal and did not identify any impact.

## **8. Community cohesion**

The new school will be a community asset as the housing develops, providing opportunities for wider use and build a sense of community in this new area of Attleborough.

## **9. Travel and Accessibility**

Norfolk County Council will continue to provide transport to those eligible under their statutory requirements, but there is no public funding for a shuttle bus to run between the two schools at drop-off or pick-up times. Norfolk County Council is liaising with bus operators to investigate any alterations to existing local services at these times.

In order to minimise the impact to the 40 families with children at both sites, the schools will offer flexible school days during the transition period of 5 terms. This means extending the dropping off and picking up times between 0830-0900 and 1500-1530 respectively. Children affected by this would be supervised by a suitably qualified members of staff to enable parents to best manage the school runs with reduced time pressure. Both schools would also apply discretion in regards of acceptable degrees of lateness during this transition period.

## **10. Funding**

The approved capital budget (November 2015) makes provision for the Attleborough project as follows:

- a. Land acquisition: £1.7m
- b. New school building: Phased build 630 primary £11.863m, all-in-one 630 primary £11.238m
- c. Enlargement of junior school: £2.495m

Available developer contributions signed up to at present are in the region of £700,000. Given the number of developments in the area, a substantial amount more should be available in the future.

## **11. School premises and playing fields**

Suitable outdoor space will be available at both school sites to enable children to play safely outside.

## **Conclusion and recommendation**

- That the Decision Maker approve the proposal to extend the age ranges of Attleborough Infant and Attleborough Junior Schools to create all-through primary schools, and relocates the current Infant school to the south of the Town.

## **The Proposal: Proposed changes to primary phase education in Attleborough**

### **Determination Notice**

I hereby **approve** this proposal to extend the age ranges of Attleborough Infant and Attleborough Junior Schools to create all-through primary schools, and relocates the current infant school to the south of Attleborough Town. The reasons for this decision are that:

- The statutory procedural requirements under section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 have been met;
- The proposal meets the criteria laid down in statutory guidance in relation to the likely impact of the proposal on standards and school improvement, local choice and diversity, surplus places, community cohesion and race equality;
- The views of all interested parties, including those most likely to be affected, have been considered.

Signed:



Date: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Michael Rosen, Executive Director of Children's Services, Norfolk County Council