



Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee

Secondary Phase Place Planning

1.0 Background

The increased demand for school places is moving from the primary phase into the secondary phase. City secondary schools have historically run with a significant surplus capacity. However, the growth in both birth rate and new arrivals to the city has resulted in a projected overall deficit of secondary school place provision. The primary phase demand has seen the Council deliver an additional 4000 primary school places, though a capital programme of approx. £40m. This has been achieved through a combination of adding capacity to existing buildings, refurbishment of mothballed premises and delivery of 3 new build schools sites. The delivery of the required secondary capacity is potentially far more challenging and complex.

Ensuring that the supply of school places meets demand is, and remains, a statutory duty of Local Authorities, even though LAs are no longer able to open new schools. Nottingham City is striving to meet school place needs in a way that promotes parental choice and diversity. However, the requirement for strategic place planning within the context of a fragmented education system and limited financial resources is hugely challenging.

2.0 Requirements

Forecasting projections based upon the numbers of pupils currently in the primary system suggest that there is a need for the city to provide between 15 – 17 additional forms of secondary entry, by the time demand peaks in 2022.

A further consideration, however, is the potential impact of demands on capacity in academies located in the county council areas of the conurbation. Historically there is 15% to 20% net loss of pupils from city secondary schools to county schools. As by definition these city pupils are not in the catchment area of the schools they apply to in the county it is highly probable that over the projection period, fewer city pupils will be successful in gaining entry to preferred schools in the county. Whilst this is not modelled in our projections data, unless there is an increase in capacity in these county schools the additional demand needs to be factored into to growth forecasting. Notionally if we see a 5% decrease in city pupils accessing county academies this would require a further 6 forms of entry.

3.0 Options identified for delivery of additional capacity

The formula that determines the allocation of Basic Need Funding to Local Authorities has resulted in a nil allocation to Nottingham in the last funding round.

This is primarily because there remains capacity in a small number of our 16 secondary schools. These are all, however, schools at the geographical extremes of the city – so not necessarily helpful when allocating places to pupils for whom they are inaccessible. But also, as the projections demonstrate this current surplus capacity will be filled, if no further places are added.

For September 2017 secondary school admissions, in the face of increasing demand, 89% of pupils were offered their first or second choice secondary school. The Local Authority's ambition strives to ensure that all pupils in Nottingham attend a good school, close to home. More secondary places are required across the city to achieve this goal.

The 2019/20 Basic Need allocation has been announced on the 3rd April 2017 resulting in an allocation of £3.8m. Whilst this is welcome it falls well short of enabling the identified demand to be met.

With no current available capital to add capacity the Council has pursued the following options:

- Commissioned a review of secondary estate – to provide and assessment of sufficiency.
- Supported Fernwood Academy to submit a bid for expansion capital funding to add 3 additional forms of entry.
- Supported the proposal to alter the age range of NUAAT from 14 -19 to 11-19. This will add 4 forms of entry from September 2018
- Trinity school has added 1 additional form of entry from Sept. 2017 following rebuilding work.

Therefore five additional forms are available in 2018 with a potentially 3 further forms identified.

Discussion with other Good/Outstanding secondary schools and Multi Academy Trusts have been held and options for additional capacity are being identified and discussed. Where current capacity can be utilised without additional capital expenditure being required, good and outstanding schools will be encouraged to expand provision. If capital works are required, the Local Authority will explore with academies how this may be supported. However, capital funding to meet the requirements needs to be supplied by central government

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