

CABINET

14 JANUARY 2014

OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION FOR THE PROPOSED PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS AT BROMPTON WESTBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mike O'Brien, Children's Services (Lead Member)

Report from: Barbara Peacock, Director of Children and Adults

Author: Paul Clarke, Strategic Planning Analyst

Summary

This report outlines the outcomes of the informal consultation period on the Council's proposals to enlarge the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School, by way of statutory prescribed alterations.

1 Budget and policy framework

- 1.1 The proposals to make prescribed alterations to Brompton Westbrook Primary School are consistent with the provisions of the School Organisation Plan 2011-16, which flows from the Children and Young People's Plan (policy framework) and is within budget. This is therefore a matter for Cabinet.

2 Background

- 2.1 On 1 November 2011 the Cabinet considered and approved Medway Council's School Organisation Plan 2011-2016 and the related action plan. Item 2 of the Action Plan committed to addressing the issue of the likely shortfall of places in the Gillingham West area.
- 2.2 On 15 January 2013, under decision 12/2013, the Cabinet agreed that Brompton Westbrook Primary School should be permanently expanded to enable a published admission number (PAN) of 60 to be accommodated.
- 2.3 At the same meeting, under decision 13/2013, the Cabinet agreed to authorise the Director of Children and Adults, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, to commence the statutory processes at the appropriate time for the expansion of Brompton Westbrook Primary School.

- 2.4 The first stage in the statutory process required the council to hold a period of informal public consultation, this took place over a four-week period between 30 September 2013 and 27 October 2013, and the results of this are set out in sections 4 and 5 of this report.
- 2.5 As part of the annual round of admissions consultations, the Cabinet has conditionally approved the increase in the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Brompton Westbrook from 45 to 60 from 1 September 2014.

3 The Proposals

- 3.1 The proposals are, by way of statutory prescribed alterations;

To 'Enlarge the Premises' to provide adequate accommodation for the additional children who will attend the school as a result of the alteration as described.

- 3.2 It is proposed, subject to the outcome of the consultation period and subsequent period of statutory representation, to implement the changes on 1 September 2014.

4 Results of the Consultation

- 4.1 There is a requirement to conduct an informal consultation where the views of all interested parties can be expressed, and all views taken into consideration.
- 4.2 The period of informal public consultation, where proposals were published and made available to interested parties, ran for four weeks from 30 September to 27 October 2013. The process included;
- public consultation documents circulated to the stakeholders and organisations listed in Appendix 1;
 - publication of the consultation document on Medway Council's website, and on the schools' forum website;
 - a press notice placed in local newspaper to notify the public of the consultation period.
 - a public meeting held at the school on 1 October 2013. (Transcript attached as appendix 4).
- 4.3 There were 16 written responses in total to the consultations in the form of reply slips and emails, which were broken down as indicated below.

5 Proposal to 'Enlarge the Premise' to accommodate the additional pupils

- 5.1 The public consultation document (attached as Appendix 3) asked for a ticked response to one or other of the following statements:

"I approve of the proposal to enlarge the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School" or

"I object to the proposal to enlarge the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School"

- 5.2 16 responses were received to this consultation, of which 15 supported the proposal, 1 objected.
- 5.3 Of the responses that supported the proposal, nine were from parents, four from members of staff at the school, one from the Medway Youth Parliament, and one from the ATL union.
- 5.4 The one objection came from a parent.
- 5.5 The response form also provided space for further comment. The comments have been summarised against a series of categories matching the comments and concerns of the respondents in the tables below. *Some respondents offered more than one comment, and some reasons were included in more than one response, which has resulted in there being a higher number of reasons shown, in the tables below, than actual response sheets received.*

Reasons for approval (16 were received which included the following)

7	No reason given
3	Whilst approving of the proposal to expand the school, 3 respondents did state that they felt that parking and traffic management require careful consideration to ensure safety for the children
1	Current school cramped; expansion will help with Health and Safety
1	Important to provide education where and when it is required
1	A good idea
1	Benefit to children
2	Definitely needed to 'cope with the volume of children'
2	Enables children to attend their local school
1	In favour providing green space and trees are preserved

Reasons for objections (1 was received which indicated the following)

1	Would prefer their child to attend a smaller school
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6 Advice and analysis

- 6.1 Brompton Westbrook Primary School is a community primary school, which currently provides education for pupils aged 4 to 11. The school is popular with parents, and at its last full Ofsted inspection in 2012 was rated as 'good'. Leadership and management were rated as 'outstanding'.
- 6.2 Under its current admissions arrangements (PAN 45), the school has in recent years been oversubscribed and for the September 2013 reception class intake received 70 first preferences for the 45 places available.
- 6.3 The proposals to expand the provision at Brompton Westbrook Primary School are demand led, and the popularity of the school is likely to continue due in the main to an increasing local population, with ongoing housing developments likely to continue to produce future demand.

- 6.4 In the last round of school admissions consultations, to take effect from September 2014, consultation took place to increase Brompton Westbrook's Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 45 to 60. That proposal has been approved conditionally, subject to the future approval of the proposals as set out in section 3 of this report.
- 6.5 National policy emphasises that the Local Authority has a key role to support parents and families through promoting a good supply of strong schools and should focus on supplying enough good spaces rather than reducing surplus places. Medway's School Organisation Plan principles state that popular and successful schools should expand.
- 6.6 It is not expected that the proposals will have a detrimental impact upon the numbers or standards at the other primary schools in Gillingham. Forecasts indicate that without expansion of provision in the area, there will most likely be a shortage of spaces in reception classes in Gillingham from 2014, and the expansion of Brompton Westbrook will help to alleviate that pressure.
- 6.7 The remainder of this section sets out officer responses to the issues and concerns raised during the consultation period and highlighted in sections 5 above; not only from the written responses received but also from the public meeting.

School size

Respondent comment

- 6.8 The one written objection from the parent indicated that they would prefer their child to attend a smaller school.

Officer response

- 6.9 In this case, the expansion is a relatively small one, increasing the school by ½ a form of entry (15 pupils per year group), and will be phased year on year into reception class over a seven-year period. Therefore, we would not expect the ethos of the school to change, and fully expect the school to continue to provide a good standard of education but to the benefit of a greater number of local children.

Safety of children

Respondent comment

- 6.10 Three written responses, whilst approving the principle of the expansion, did have some concerns over traffic safety.

Officer response

- 6.11 As part of the expansion project, parking and traffic management have been considered and the Local Authority's Safer Journeys team have been involved as part of the planning consultation, and will continue to have input as the project develops. Road safety was also one of the concerns raised at the public meeting.

Respondent comment

- 6.12 A local resident indicated that she had concerns over the increased number of ex-offenders being re-housed into the area, and the impact this may have on the children's safety.

Officer response

- 6.13 The LA and the school consider that children's safety is paramount. The school will continue to manage the safety of all children vigilantly.

Impact on admissions

Respondent comment

- 6.14 At the public meeting one resident asked about the catchment area for the school, as she was concerned that her grandson may not live close enough when applying for the school as it is so popular.

Officer response

- 6.15 The proposed expansion of the school will ensure that more places are available to meet parental demand for places. The published admissions arrangements for the school ensure that places are allocated in a fair and transparent way.

7 Public consultation meeting

- 7.1 The public meeting was held at the school on the evening of 1 October 2013, where interested stakeholders were invited to listen to the proposals and then to ask any questions and raise concerns. The meeting was chaired by Councillor O'Brien, with an officer panel comprising of; Helen Jones (Assistant Director Partnership Commissioning) and Chris McKenzie (Performance and Strategic Planning Manager). An Observer panel was also in attendance.

- 7.2 The Observer Panel comprised of Members from each of the political groups represented on the Council. These were Councillors Smith, Cooper and Royle. The role of the observer panel was to ensure that all the points and concerns raised at the meeting, and the responses given, are accurately reflected in this Cabinet report.

- 7.3 A drop-in open session took place on Wednesday 13 November 2013 at Gun Wharf. Members of the Observer Panel, Cabinet and the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited to review the written responses to the consultation and the transcript of the public meeting, to ensure that the concerns raised at the meeting are fairly and accurately reflected in this report.

- 7.4 A transcript of the meeting is available as Appendix 4.

8 Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 8.1 Medway Council's Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the outcomes and responses of the consultation period at its meeting of 10 December 2013.

- 8.2 The Committee asked that an amendment to the transcript be made. One of the questions, which had not been attributed to anyone within the transcript, was asked by Councillor Cooper and should be shown as such. This has been actioned and the revised transcript is attached as an appendix. No further comments were made.

9 Diversity Impact Assessment

- 9.1 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) screening form is attached as Appendix 2. The DIA looks at how the proposed changes could impact upon various groups. The report shows that there could potentially be some impact upon certain groups, however it shows that any impacts are expected to be positive ones. The screening form indicates that a full DIA is not necessary.

10 Impact of the proposal on arrangements for looked after children

- 10.1 Looked after children receive the highest priority for admission to all Medway schools. If necessary, the Admissions Code allows the council to place looked after children in schools that would otherwise be deemed to be full. This ensures that the council can secure appropriate provision for children that are looked after by the local authority. This strategy covers both mainstream and special schools and as such includes Brompton Westbrook Primary School.

11 Publication of a statutory notice

- 11.1 If Cabinet accepts the recommendation to progress the proposals further, it would be necessary to publish a statutory notice and formal proposals of the proposed changes to Brompton Westbrook Primary School, by way of prescribed alterations, to provide an opportunity for formal objection. This would run for a four-week period from 3 February 2014 through to 2 March 2014. The process would follow the guidelines set out in "Making changes to a Maintained Mainstream School (A guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies)", and "The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007".
- 11.2 Cabinet are also requested to approve that should no objections be raised during the statutory period, the determination on the proposals be delegated to the Director of Children and Adults in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services. However if any formal objections are received during that time then the decision will revert to Cabinet.

12 Risk management

- 12.1 The following risks arise if the proposals as stated in this report are not implemented. These are:
- A risk that it could undermine the Council's need to ensure the most effective use of resources, and in turn raise standards across all schools.

- The Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient good quality school places will be at risk if additional provision is not made available in the Gillingham area.
- That by not increasing the provision at Brompton Westbrook, more parents will be required to transport their children to schools further a field, which would mean increased traffic in the wider Medway area.
- Parental dissatisfaction at not being able to access their local school, potentially leading to parents having children at different schools and the logistical problems that this would bring.

12.2 The following risks could arise if the proposals are implemented:

- If the expected numbers of additional pupils do not materialise, then the school may find itself having a surplus places as well as larger buildings to maintain without the funding to do so. Current forecasts based upon roll numbers, birth rates and inward migration together with Brompton Westbrook being a good and popular school mean that this risk is likely to be minimal.

13 Financial and Legal implications

13.1 Funding for Medway's maintained schools comes from central Government via the local authority in the form of the dedicated schools grant, which is a ring-fenced sum of money for the provision of education across all of our schools. This money can only be used for schools (and certain specified services to schools), and cannot be used to fund other council services.

13.2 It is intended that the project to enlarge the premises to complement the increase in pupil numbers will be financed using a combination of central Government Basic Need grant and developer contributions from local schemes.

13.3 Additional funding to complete the project will come from the Council's Basic Need capital grant from central government.

13.4 Whilst schools are funded per pupil, this is for a financial year and based upon the January census, and so there would be a transition period between the time the additional pupils start attending the school in September and when this increase is reflected in the funding. The school would require assistance during this period for the additional teaching staff and resources that would be required, and the council would want to support the school at this time. The costs relating to additional pupils starting in September and any additional set-up costs would need to be met from the 2014-15 retained Dedicated Schools Grant.

13.5 The Council has the power under sections 18 and 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to make "prescribed alterations" to a maintained school. The procedure for making prescribed alterations is set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007. Before publishing a statutory notice relating to proposals to make prescribed alterations to a school, the council must undertake the consultation required by Schedule 5 of these regulations.

13.6 The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient good quality school places.

14 Recommendations

14.1 The Cabinet is asked to consider the responses to the consultation together with the advice and analysis from officers, and the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and to instruct the Director of Children and Adults Services to commence the formal representation period, when statutory notices and full proposals will be published.

14.2 The Cabinet is also requested to delegate authority to the Director of Children and Adults Services, in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, to determine whether to approve the proposals at the end of the statutory consultation period, if no objections are received. However, if any objections are received during that time then a report will be prepared and presented to Cabinet for determination. .

15 Suggested Reasons for Decision

15.1 To ensure the council meets its duty to provide sufficient good school places.

15.2 To comply with the actions in the approved School Organisation Plan 2011-16, which highlight the need for additional places in the Gillingham area.

15.3 Approval to proceed to a four-week period of statutory representation will ensure the council complies with its duty to follow the full consultation process when proposing changes to school organisation.

Lead officer contact

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Background papers

1) Making changes to a Maintained Mainstream School (A guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies).

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-30002-2010>

2) The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2007/1289/schedule/4/made>

3) Medway's School Organisation Plan 2011 - 2016

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/pdf/School%20Organisation%20Plan%202011-2016%20revised.pdf>

Appendices

- 1) List of consultees
- 2) Diversity Impact Assessment screening form
- 3) Consultation document
- 4) Transcript of Public Meeting

Consultees - Brompton Westbrook Consultation (1st stage)

An electronic version of the consultation document was sent to:

- All schools in Medway
 - All governors of Medway schools
 - All pre school and nursery settings
 - All Councillors
 - Medway's three MPs
 - All Assistant Directors
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - Various community groups
 - Unions
 - Church of England and Catholic Diocese
 - Kent County Council
 - 90 local residential houses
 - Local Libraries
 - Leisure Centres
 - Contact Points
 - Numerous colleagues throughout the council
 - Local Health Authority
 - Medway Youth Parliament
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- Appears on Medway Council Website
 - On schools forum
 - Added to School Information Bulletin
 - Press notice in Kent Messenger week commencing 23 September

Each parent with a child at the school was given a hard copy; as were all staff and governors at the school

Appendix 2: Diversity Impact Assessment: Screening Form

Directorate Children and Adults Services.	Name of Function or Policy or Major Service Change Enlargement of physical premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School.		
Officer responsible for assessment Paul Clarke	Date of assessment 28 October 2013	New or existing? New	
Defining what is being assessed			
1. Briefly describe the purpose and objectives	The proposals are to enlarge the premises in order to accommodate the extra pupils, which will attend the school as a result of the separate proposal to increase the published Admission Number from 45 to 60 at Brompton Westbrook Primary School. The proposals are in line with the School Organisation Plan 2011-16, which flows from the Medway Children and Young People's Plan. The school is a popular one and therefore there will be a greater percentage of first preference satisfaction amongst parents. In recent years the school has been oversubscribed in reception and these proposals will cater for that level of demand. The enlarged buildings will be designed to improve the learning environment for pupils.		
2. Who is intended to benefit, and in what way?	As a consequence of the proposals it is expected that the outcomes for the children who attend the school will be positive, as more children will be able to be educated in a good local school, and in an environment suitable for enriched learning.		
3. What outcomes are wanted?	To enable Brompton Westbrook Primary School to continue to provide a good education for the pupils who currently attend the school, but also for future pupils including those additional pupils who attend as a result of these proposals.		
4. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Contribute Reassurance of staff, pupils and parents will lead to greater confidence in the schools ability to provide the appropriate level of education for all pupils. A school designed for modern learning will enhance the teaching staff's ability to provide an excellent education for	Detract Resistance from some parents unaware of how the changes could affect their children who already attend the school. One parent believes that by enlarging the school it will have a detrimental impact upon the ethos of the school. Some residents believe that the additional traffic in the area as a result	

	<p>all the children who attend the school.</p> <p>The extra funding the school will receive as a result of taking the additional pupils, will enable the school to provide sufficient and suitable teaching staff, aiding in the organisation of the classes.</p>	<p>of the proposals could create dangerous and difficult conditions for drivers and pedestrians.</p>
5. Who are the main stakeholders?	The pupils, parents, governors and staff of Brompton Westbrook School, and the local community.	
6. Who implements this and who is responsible?	Barbara Peacock- Director of Children and Adults Services	

Assessing impact		
7. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>racial groups</i>?		Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	No pupils are intended to be displaced and numbers of staff will need to increase as part of this proposal. A public consultation has been carried out over a 4-week period when views were expressed and any concerns regarding this issue could have been raised. Of a number of concerns raised and comments made, none related to the potential for any differential impact due to racial groups. Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality and all schools in Medway are responsible for ensuring equality in their schools and for promoting community cohesion.	
8. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>disability</i>?	YES	Brief statement of main issue
What evidence exists for this?	None of the current pupils are intended to be displaced and there will be no reduction to staff numbers made as part of this proposal. There is however likely to be an increase in the number of pupils who attend the school and it is possible that there could be an increase in the number of pupils	

		with disabilities. It is expected that these extra pupils will benefit from the improved facilities that will come as part of the enlargement of the premises, and as such it is expected that the outcomes for these pupils will be positive. A public consultation has been carried out over a 4-week period when views were expressed and comments received however none relating to this issue were raised. Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality and all schools in Medway are responsible for ensuring equality in their schools and for promoting community cohesion.
9. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>gender</i>?		Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?		None of the current pupils are intended to be displaced and staff numbers expected to increase as part of this proposal. Pupils and staff will be able to attend the school irrespective of their gender. A public consultation was carried out over a 4-week period when views were expressed and any concerns regarding this issue raised. There were no concerns highlighted where there could be a differential impact due to gender. Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality and all schools in Medway are responsible for ensuring equality in their schools and for promoting community cohesion.
10. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>sexual orientation</i>?		Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?		None of the current pupils are intended to be displaced and staff numbers expected to increase as part of this proposal. Pupils and staff will be able to attend the school irrespective of their sexual orientation. A public consultation was carried out over a 4-week period when views were expressed and any concerns regarding this issue raised. During the consultation no concerns were raised regarding the impact there could due to sexual orientation. Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality and all schools in Medway are responsible for ensuring equality in their schools and for promoting community cohesion.
11. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>religion or belief</i>?		Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?		None of the current pupils are intended to be displaced and staff numbers expected to increase as part of this proposal. Pupils will attend the school on the basis of need irrespective of their religion or

		belief. A public consultation was carried out over a 4-week period when views were expressed and any concerns regarding this issue raised. No concerns were indicated during the consultation that there could be a differential impact due to religion and belief. Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality and all schools in Medway are responsible for ensuring equality in their schools and for promoting community cohesion.
12. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to people's age?		Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?		None of the current pupils are intended to be displaced and staff numbers are expected to increase as part of this proposal. The age range of the school will not alter as part of these proposals, and therefore no impact due to people's age is expected. A public consultation was carried out over a 4-week period when views were expressed and any concerns regarding this issue raised. Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality and all schools in Medway are responsible for ensuring equality in their schools and for promoting community cohesion.
13. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>being transgendered or transsexual</i>?		Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?		None of the current pupils are intended to be displaced and staff numbers expected to increase as part of this proposal. Pupils and staff will be able to attend the school irrespective of any transgender or transsexual issues. A public consultation was carried out over a 4-week period when views were expressed and any concerns regarding this issue raised. No concerns were highlighted during the consultation that there could be any differential impact due to people being transgendered or transsexual. Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality and all schools in Medway are responsible for ensuring equality in their schools and for promoting community cohesion.
14. Are there any <i>other</i> groups that would find it difficult to access/make use of the function (e.g. young parents, commuters, people with caring responsibilities or dependants, young carers, or people living in rural areas)?		If yes, which group(s)?
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	N/A	

15. Are there concerns there could have a differential impact due to <i>multiple discriminations</i> (e.g. disability <u>and</u> age)?		Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	All aspects of the policy described above will address the needs of children/young people who may have multiple issues affecting them.	

Conclusions & recommendation

16. Could the differential impacts identified in questions 7-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact?		
	NO	
17. Can the adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or another reason?		Please explain N/A
	NO	
Recommendation to proceed to a full impact assessment?		
NO	This function/ policy/ service change complies with the requirements of the legislation and there is evidence to show this is the case.	
NO	What is required to ensure this complies with the requirements of the legislation? (see DIA Guidance Notes)?)
N/A	Give details of key person responsible and target date for carrying out full impact assessment (see DIA Guidance Notes)	

Action plan to make Minor modifications		
Outcome	Actions (with date of completion)	Officer responsible

Planning ahead: Reminders for the next review		
Date of next review		
Areas to check at next review (e.g. new census information, new legislation due)		
Is there <i>another</i> group (e.g. new communities) that is relevant and ought to be considered next time?		
Signed (completing officer/service manager)	Date	
Signed (service manager/Assistant Director)	Date	

Consultation on the expansion of Brompton Westbrook Primary School



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learning environments*

30 September - 27 October 2013

www.medway.gov.uk

Enlargement of the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School, Kings Bastion, Brompton ME7 5DQ

This document is designed to:

- Notify you of Medway Council's proposals to make statutory prescribed alterations at Brompton Westbrook Primary School with effect from 1 September 2014, which will result in the enlargement of the premises at the school to allow for the expected increase in pupil numbers
- Explain why these changes are being proposed
- Invite your comments on these proposals
- Inform you of, and invite you to, a public meeting to be held in Brompton Westbrook Primary School's hall on Tuesday 1 October 2013 at 6.30pm where this proposal will be discussed and questions answered.

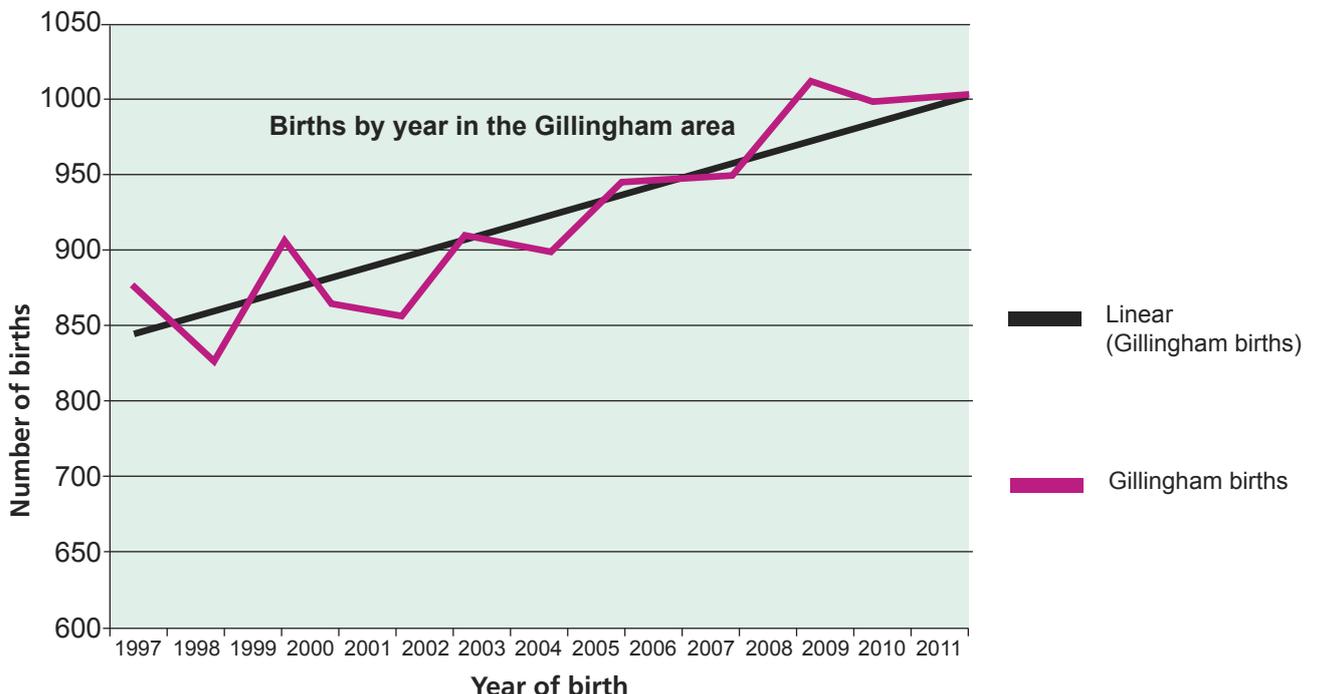
Why is there a need to expand schools in the Gillingham area?

In Gillingham, as the graph below shows, the past four years have seen the highest birth numbers on record and the trend overall is increasing. These children will enter reception classes over the next four years.

As these increased numbers progress through the schools, they will replace the current smaller year groups in the older primary years. We expect there will be an overall shortfall of 98 places across all year groups in Gillingham from September 2016.

Some spare capacity is expected in the neighbouring area of Rainham and some of the excess demand could be met here. However, the distances involved between central Gillingham and Rainham could make the use of Rainham less practical and admissions arrangements difficult.

Birth rates



The uncertainty surrounding future births and inward movement of families with children means that the council needs to be cautious when deciding how much, and when, additional provision is required. However, the recent trend of higher birth rates, together with ongoing new housing developments in the area, does suggest that the increase in children requiring a reception place will continue for the foreseeable future, with a potential shortfall of 51 places by 2016 unless additional provision is planned.

The proposed expansion of Brompton Westbrook Primary School is one of the measures planned to address the expected pressure on primary school places in the Gillingham area.

Why is the enlargement of the premises to Brompton Westbrook Primary School being proposed?

Brompton Westbrook Primary School currently provides Key Stage 1 and 2 education for children from the age of three until they transfer into secondary schools at 11. It has been one of the most popular and oversubscribed schools in Medway in recent years.

Brompton Westbrook Primary School is currently a 1.5 Form of Entry (FE) school with a published admission number (PAN) of 45. This means that the school admits 45 pupils into the reception year group each year. Following the proposed expansion, in September 2014 the school will admit 60 pupils into reception; the school will then grow year on year.

As a 1.5FE primary school the pupil capacity is currently 315 plus the nursery children and as a 2FE primary school pupil numbers could rise to 420 when all year groups are full.

In November 2012 Ofsted carried out an inspection at the school, and gave a rating of 'Good' overall; highlighting that leadership and management was outstanding. This has further added to the popularity of the school as shown by the demand for places in September 2013's reception intake, when 70 parents named the school as a first preference. The proposals are, therefore, in line with current local and national policy, which allows good schools to expand to meet the preferences of parents.

We are consulting on the proposal, by way of a statutory prescribed alteration, to enlarge the premises to give the school sufficient capacity to provide for the additional pupils. A feasibility study to explore the options for the physical expansion of the school has been undertaken. The feasibility study considered the requirements for the additional accommodation, the suitability of existing accommodation, and the access arrangements to the site, including the management arrangements for additional staff, pupils and parents. To minimise disruption to the education of pupils it is likely that the building works will be phased in line with expected demand.

The expansion will be funded using the Government basic need grant, which is a fund from central government for the creation of additional school capacity to ensure that sufficient school places are available in each local area. Further funding as required will come from developer contributions from new housing schemes in the area. This is where developers of new housing schemes pay a contribution to the Council to assist in the enhancement and expansion of essential community facilities.

The next stages

Following the four-week consultation period, Medway Council's Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee may request that a report on the responses and comments to this proposal be presented to them on 10 December 2013.

On 14 January 2014 Medway's Cabinet will consider the responses to this consultation and the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. They may then decide not to proceed with the proposal, or to authorise a four-week period of statutory representation when notices will be published to give interested parties the opportunity to formally object or comment.

If there are no objections to the statutory notice period in February 2014, Medway Council can decide to go ahead with the proposals. If there are one or more objections, Medway Council as Schools Commissioner, under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, will consider the objections before determining the outcome.

Consultation timetable

Four week Public Consultation period 2 July to 23 September 2012	30 September 2013 – 27 October 2013
Public Consultation meeting in Brompton Westbrook School Hall	Tuesday 1 October 2013 at 6.30pm
Report to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Outcomes of Consultation	10 December 2013 (TBC)
Report Outcome of Consultation to Cabinet	14 January 2014
Four week Statutory Notice period	3 February 2014 – 2 March 2014
Council decision on proposals	April 2014
Implementation of expansion proposals if approved	1 September 2014

No decisions will be made until the consultation has been completed and local views have been carefully considered.

How to make comments

We would like to hear your views on these proposals. Please let us know by completing the reply slip at the end of this leaflet or by writing a letter to:

Engagement and Strategic Planning

Medway Council
FREPOST RRUY-ZBTJ-CZZC
Level 4, Gun Wharf
Dock Road
CHATHAM ME4 4TR

Alternatively hand the form or letter in to the School Office at Brompton Westbrook Primary School, who will forward it on your behalf.

You may also email your comments to prim.reorg@medway.gov.uk

All responses must be **received by Sunday 27th October 2013**.

Unfortunately it will not be possible to acknowledge receipt.

Enlargement of the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School, Kings Bastion, Brompton ME7 5DQ

REPLY SLIP

Please complete this form, and add any comments you wish below.
Forms and letters should **reach us by Sunday 27th October 2013**.

Please return to:

Engagement and Strategic Planning

**Medway Council
FREEPOST RRUJY-ZBTJ-CZZC
Level 4, Gun Wharf
Dock Road
CHATHAM ME4 4TR**

Alternatively hand the form or letter in at the School Office at Brompton Westbrook Primary School, Kings Bastion, Brompton ME7 5DQ who will forward it on your behalf.
It would be helpful to have the following information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

I am (please tick)

- Parent / Guardian Governor None of the above (please specify)
 Member of Staff Local Resident

With regard to the proposal to enlarge the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School, to enable the school to increase its numbers in line with demand for places;

Please tick one box

- I approve of the proposal to enlarge the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School
 I object to the proposal to enlarge the premises at Brompton Westbrook Primary School

Comments

Please give your reasons as fully as possible. This will help careful consideration to be given to the arguments in favour and against the proposal.



Who to contact

✉ Engagement and strategic planning, Medway Council, Level 4, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR

✉ Email: prim.reorg@medway.gov.uk Website: www.medway.gov.uk/educationlearning

📞 Minicom: 01634 333111

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PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEETING
FUTURE OF BROMPTON WESTBROOK SCHOOL

HELD ON 1ST OCTOBER 2013

Chaired by: Cllr Mike O'Brien

Listening Panel: Cllr Pat Cooper, Cllr Diane Smith, and Cllr David Royle
Chair of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

Officers: Helen Jones, Assistant Director for Commissioning Strategy
Chris McKenzie, Performance, Intelligence and Strategic Manager

Welcome by Cllr Mike O'Brien who chaired the proceedings.

Thank you for coming out and welcome to this public consultation on the future of Brompton Westbrook Primary School.

My name is Mike O'Brien, I will be chairing the meeting and hopefully facilitating all the way through. You will have the opportunity to ask questions later and everyone will get the opportunity to ask their questions.

The observation panel is here to observe, so that they can give a true reflection of what goes on this evening when the matter is reported to the O&S committee.

Chris McKenzie will be starting off with explaining the proposal, giving a presentation. At the end I am summarising the key points, check with the observer panel and ask questions that they want and then I'll open the floor for questions from you.

Chris McKenzie

Thank you Cllr O'Brien. Good evening everybody and thanks for coming this evening, it's really good to see you here and I hope you do have some questions for me after the presentation. Hopefully you have all seen the consultation documents, which have been passed out. We do have some spare copies at the back. If we don't have sufficient copies for people that need them we can always take your details and make sure that you are sent a copy of the consultation document.

What I will do this evening is just take you through the proposals that are contained in the consultation document. This is to ensure that you understand what has been proposed and why and to explain what the process is as well, so what happens next and why we have the consultation in the way that we do. Following the presentation we will then invite questions and comments on the proposals, it's really important that I make the point that nothing has been decided as of yet. The Council's cabinet will carefully consider the points that are made at this evening's meeting and also the responses that are submitted via the consultation response forms as well, they will consider those before making a decision on how to proceed with the proposals, so do please make sure that your comments are heard and that your questions are noted as well.

I will give you a bit of context and some background first of all. A few years ago in 2011 mc consulted on and published what is called a school organisation plan. Within this plan, this is a plan that sets out how mc plan to organise its schools within Medway and what we intend to do over the course of the 5 years from the point at which the plan was written in 2011. Within this plan there are a number of measures identified to address the issue of an increase in pupil

numbers pupil numbers across Medway in a number of areas of Medway including the Gillingham area and the solutions and the way we intend to approach this within Medway are based on what are called our school organisation principles. These principles include the points that are listed on the screen. So our school organisations are based on the principle of promoting high standards, so we want high standards in schools. We want to ensure that all of our schools are viable, so we want to ensure that our schools have the right number of pupils and enough pupils to make sure they are viable, that they get the funding that they need to ensure that they can run effectively. The final one of those principles is that we would support the principle of successful and popular schools expanding, and the reason we do that is to ensure that more parents have the ability to send their children to good and popular schools.

As I said on the previous slide, we have seen in Medway an increase in births within Medway, so we have seen a significant rise in the number of children born in the Medway towns in recent years, particularly in certain parts of Medway and one of the areas where we have seen a significant increase in the number of children born is within the Gillingham area. What we have also seen in Medway particularly in the last couple of years, and in fact since the school organisation plan was written, is that we have significant movement of families into the Medway area as well. So we've had an increase in the birth rate and at the same time we have also had a significant increase in the number of families moving into the Medway area. What this has done is put pressure on the number of places available within Medway to meet the demand for places that we are expecting over the next few years.

We have also got housing developments in Medway and they are continuing in all parts of Medway but also within Gillingham area specifically so there are developments just along the river for example a short distance from Brompton Westbrook. So one of the measures we are proposing to meet this increase in demand is an expansion of Brompton Westbrook Primary School.

The graph here really just gives some further information based on what I have just said about the increase in births that we have seen in recent years. So this takes us from 1997 up to 2011 and you can see, although it has been a bit up and down from year to year, the overall trend is one of an increasing births in the Gillingham area and that is equally true of other parts of Medway as well.

So, a bit about Brompton Westbrook as well. Brompton Westbrook Primary School was rated as good in its last OFSTED inspection and was also found to have outstanding leadership and management.

If we go back to the school organisation principles that I set out earlier, one of our principles is about supporting good schools to expand, Brompton Westbrook is certainly a good school and therefore would meet our school organisation principles in that respect. It is also a popular school, increasingly so in recent years. So for reception places for this September, there were 45 places available that is what we call 1.5FE. So, typical we categorise schools in terms of the numbers of forms of entry where 30 pupils is a form of entry, so for Brompton Westbrook that is 1.5FE and for those 45 places the school received 71st preferences, so that is the number of parents that listed Brompton Westbrook as the school that they would most like their child to go to for reception this year. So clearly there is demand for places at the school, the school has a good Ofsted and therefore the school does meet our criteria for a good and popular school that we would like to support with expansion.

So the proposal that we are here to talk about this evening is to expand the admission number of the school from 1.5FE, 45 pupils up to 2FE to allow 60 pupils to attend the school in each year group. This will ensure that more children can access the good education that is provided at Brompton Westbrook.

The technical proposals that we are consulting on are the enlargement of the premises. The legal framework around this is that when we are proposing to expand a school and to do that by expanding its premises, there is a requirement for us to consult on that proposed expansion.

Some of you may be aware that we have actually already consulted on an increase to the published admission number which we did through our admissions consultation at the end of last year, we consulted on that increase for the PAN to go up from 45 to 60 in time from September 2014. This is a separate legal process and this relates to our proposals to expand the physical premises to accommodate those additional pupils. The way the school will expand will be gradually, by admitting additional pupils into reception classes and therefore the school will fill gradually over a period of 7 years. The school currently has capacity for 315 children overall aged between 4 and 11 years old and when full the school will be able to take 420 children overall.

This is a statutory process, there is a legal framework around it, there is consultation and a certain process that we have to go through. This part of the process is what is called the informal consultation period. When we run an informal consultation period we always publish consultation papers and make sure they are widely available. We always invite interested people to come to a consultation meeting so that people have an opportunity to ask any questions. Once the informal consultation period has finished Medway Council officers will write a report which will first be reported to the Children and Young People's O&S Committee, we have the chair of that committee here this evening, Cllr Royal is on the observer panel and two other representatives of that Committee are also sitting on the observer panel and their job is to ensure that the views put across this evening are accurately reflected in that report that we take forward to that meeting.

Following that meeting, Medway Council's Cabinet who are the decision makers in this case will receive a report in January 2014, which will set out the responses to the consultation. That will include the number of actual response forms we receive back as well as a summary of the questions and issues that are raised at this evening's meeting. As Cllr O'Brien said the meeting is being recorded and a full transcript will also be available for both the O&S meeting and cabinet meeting to review as well.

Having taken all of the points raised into consideration, the Cabinet will then need to make a decision. They can either decide to stop the proposals there and then or they can approve the next stage of the statutory process, which is known as the statutory representation period. This is the more formal part of the process, but typically a part of the process where we would typically tend to have less interaction, that is because this informal part of the consultation is where we present the proposals and take those into account, the statutory representation period is where we publish some statutory notices, we publish notices in the newspapers and also around the school to give people a final opportunity to raise any formal objections to the proposals that the Cabinet are proposing and again that is a four week period where those objections can be raised.

If no objections are raised during that formal statutory period, typically then the final decision will be taken by the Director of Children and Adult Services along with the portfolio holder for Children's Services which is Cllr O'Brien. If there are objections at that stage though, a further paper needs to come back to the Council's Cabinet for them to reconsider the proposals.

This slide shows and summarises the timeline. We are in the public consultation period at the moment and that runs until 27th October. If after this meeting you think of a further point you would like to make or further things you think the Council need to consider, then you will still have opportunities to put those across to us. You can either complete the reply form on the back of the consultation form or you can write to us at the Council and we will take those views into account.

On 10th December we will report to the O&S Committee and then in January we will report to Cabinet before undertaking the statutory notice period. Implementation of the proposal subject to those approvals being given is September 2014.

In summary the proposals are coming forward because we believe Brompton Westbrook is a good school, it is a popular school with parents we want to offer more parents the opportunity to send their children to Brompton Westbrook and at the same time it would help provide additional places in the Gillingham area where we know we have got an increase in birth rate and also movement of families into the area as well. We think this is a good proposal both in terms of supporting parents

to ensure their children are educated at a good school but also in terms of helping make sure the Council fulfils its statutory duty to make sure there are sufficient places available for all children in the area as well.

Cllr O'Brien

Can I ask the Headteacher, Mrs Heyes have you got anything you would like to add before we open the floor to questions?

Mrs Heyes

Only that, we have been consulted all the way along through this process, it is nothing new to us and we have a full picture of what the proposals are in terms of buildings and are very keen for this to go ahead because clearly, we are very sad at having to turn parents away when they want their children to join us. In the long term of course, the more children we have, the bigger the school, the more opportunities you provide, economies of scale for the school as a whole. So we are very pro and the governors are too.

Cllr O'Brien

Is the chair of governors here? Vice Chair, is there anything you would like to say before we open the floor to questions?

John Jones – Vice Chair of Governors

All I can do is reiterate what the Headteacher has said. We have been kept excellently well informed and have been involved in the rather laborious process naturally speaking, of ensuring that education for our children continues at the same time as the building plan. It has been most excellently well conducted and we thank you.

Cllr O'Brien

If we now pass over to you to ask any questions we have.

NC - Resident

My eldest grandson was here 20 years ago, educated and is a very successful lawyer. Having said that, I am all for the school being increased, I think it is wonderful. The only thing I do worry about is that we have a large number of ex-prisoners waiting to be homed and things like that and we have got a large increase in Brompton and I am a bit worried that the increase in children coming to the school and encouraged to walk, that we have a lot of problems, there will be problems, that's all I can say.

Chris McKenzie

Unfortunately it is not an issue I am particularly aware of. My responsibilities are around school planning, so I am not aware of the plans in relation to prisoners in the area but it will be something I can take back and discuss with officers in other parts of the Council...

NC - Resident

... I don't know if they're on bail or what they are but there is a large increase, either on bail or remand or whatever they are, in Brompton.

Cllr O'Brien

Even in my previous capacity as chair of the community safety partnership, I am actually not aware of that, not wishing to take you up on it but I am certain that is something we will certainly take that into account.

PM - resident

With all the increases, my grandson has just started in the nursery division of the school. I have not had a lot of dealings with the school personally but I have through lots of other people. When you say that all the extra people are coming into Brompton, we know there are new houses being built and we are quite happy with that obviously. Could you tell me if there is an area that you actually work to when the children are coming to school, is it like a two mile area, or.....the reason I am asking is that I have got to fill a form in and obviously I want this school as number one but I have been told that he might not be able to come to this school because of the extra people that are coming into Brompton or into Gillingham.

Chris McKenzie

There is not a set area. What every school has is admissions arrangements and criteria for entry, which determine how we rank children and their applications for places at the school. So Brompton Westbrook, in common with a number of other schools in Medway, use the distance that a child lives from the school as the final determiner of whether a child will gain entry to the school. Now clearly the distance that is therefore applied will depend on how popular a school is and how many children apply from one year to the next. So if a school is very popular it may mean that the distance you need to live or how close you need to live near the school is closer than in years than when it's not quite so popular for example. So there isn't a definitive distance or a final distance by which we say a child will or won't gain entry to the school.

My advice would be if Brompton Westbrook is the school that you want your child or grandchild to go to then you should list that school as your first preference. Make sure you list other preferences as well though, so the other schools you would consider a place for your child for if you can't gain your first preference and the child will be ranked according to that criteria.

PM - resident

I have actually already done that, so obviously, as we have got all this time between.... The only thing is we know there is a lot of military in the area which we are happy with and we love them but if there are more people coming in, new houses would that make a difference on the numbers?

Chris McKenzie

Well it will and that is why we are proposing to expand the school because we recognise the school is becoming more popular, it is in an area where the number of families moving to it is increasing and the birth rate is also increasing so therefore we want to make sure that the school is able to offer as many places as possible so that all of the families in the community can access an excellent provision.

PM – resident

Okay, so really just wait and see?

Cllr O'Brien

Do make sure you put three choices down.

Cllr O'Brien

Any other questions?

LM, current parent at Brompton Westbrook

My concern is and I think I have brought it up with the school previously, is about the parking arrangements in the area with young children coming out of school. If we are talking about a school that is going to increase in volume by 50%, you try getting children of a young age out of school, which is already totally influxed with vehicles. Is it only a matter of time before we have an accident? Are there any provisions for parking if we have got a school, which is going to be substantially bigger in the next few years?

Jane Heyes

We are incredibly fortunate as somebody said earlier, to have military personnel by the school and also even more fortunate to have Adam Foley as a governor who, I think teaches the MA on civil engineering and in doing so they need to do a project and with amazing good timing, their project will involve making a better entrance to the playground area if of course planning goes through, for some parking in the mornings to ease the flow of traffic.

LM

It just seems that could be a major issue, if you are trying to get your children into school, the last thing we want to see is one of the kids being knocked over. That would be my major concern if the school is getting that much bigger.

Jane Heyes

Well we do hope that the proposal goes through and we have that parking.

Cllr O'Brien

The army has come to the rescue, again.

J

I am secretary to the local pact as you will recall Councillor and that's the police and community together, partners in the community together and the issue of the school increases in scale has been brought to us and one of the most exciting propositions is the possibility is the new school hall will be much more open for use by the community, this is the proposal so far. We applaud that and look forward to it and hope very much that the planning of the school can take that into account.

Cllr O'Brien

I think that is a statement rather than a question and I agree with it. There are things being proposed but obviously it has to go through the due process.

I need now to ask my colleagues on the observation panel, first of all do you have any questions.

Cllr Cooper

I realise that there are serving personnel parents in this school, I know they are doing other things, but will they get a chance to have their say, even if they are overseas?

RSME Representative

As for all parents, we all got the various communications and were told where to look and the date of the meeting, so if they are unable to attend it's not through work.

Cllr O'Brien

So we have to assume they are content.

So if I can sum up then, it seems to me that you appear content with the proposals. The question has been raised about the school entrance and quite rightly about the parking and I think the answer you have been given by Mrs Heyes and the army I hope will overcome that. We have the question raised about people coming into the area, ex-offenders but I think of course that is another issue that I don't want to get into here.

Jane Heyes

Just to say children come in all shapes and sizes and when you are a community school and you don't have any form of entrance examinations or screening, you take them all and you do your very best with them. Some of the children who come here will be from ex-offenders and drug users, all sorts of people. For example last year at the end of age seven, every single one of those got to the appropriate standard in Reading and in Maths at the school. At the other end of the school as well, they have done exceptionally well and are better than national standards. So it is about making the right provision for whoever the child is. Mostly we do it, sometimes we can't, but clearly what you are worried about is a large influx in one go could cause problems if the children were experiencing personal difficulties at home which of course is not always the case. Clearly if there were such a change, clearly we would need to know that so that we can make provision. But we must presume that we can provide for everybody, otherwise there is no point being here.

NC - Resident

Can I just say, you have got the wrong end of the stick completely. I am on about the children's safety, there is going to be an increase in numbers, that's what I'm worried about, the children's safety. I've lived in Deptford, Bermondsey, so that doesn't make any difference at all, what I am worried about is the safety of a larger number of children being encouraged to walk to school.

Cllr O'Brien

Okay I did misunderstand you. Obviously safety is a concern to all of us, both on the Council and of course in the school, and of course Medway police. But I am here as Portfolio Holder for Children Services not as community safety but I do know as John will know, that I firmly believe that Gillingham and Medway particularly is a fantastic safe, clean and green place to live and we will keep it that way, I am sure.

And you raised the point about catchment. Is that a fair summing up now?

Meeting closed.

