

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

18 JUNE 2018 AT 2.00PM

Agenda Item

No.

5

**RELOCATION OF THE PRIMARY SUPPORT BASE AT SPRINGMEAD
PRIMARY SCHOOL, WELWYN GARDEN CITY**

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Report Author: Richard Woodard, Area Manager – Professional Lead for Access and Inclusion, Integrated Services for Learning (Tel: 01442 453224)
Samantha Young, Senior Planning Officer, School Planning, (Tel: 01992 555754)

Executive Member: Terry Douris, Education, Libraries & Localism
Teresa Heritage, Children, Young People and Families

Local Members: Barbara Gibson (Haldens); Lynn Chesterman (Welwyn Garden City South); Stephen Boulton (Hatfield Rural); Margaret Eames-Petersen (Hatfield North); Susie Gordon (Hatfield East); Nigel Quinton (Handside and Peartree); Richard Smith (Welwyn); Paul Zukowskyj (Hatfield South).

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform Cabinet of the outcome of public consultation on the proposal to relocate the Primary Support Base (PSB) at Springmead Primary School in Welwyn Garden City to Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School in Welwyn Garden City from 1 September 2018.

2. Summary

2.1 Springmead Primary School, Welwyn Garden City, when in the process of converting to an Academy, indicated that it would no longer be able to support the PSB, which serves the Welwyn and Hatfield area. It was therefore necessary to relocate it. The Head and Governing Body of Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School, Welwyn Garden City, supported in principle the relocation of the PSB to their school and the Director of Children's Services therefore initiated consultation on the proposal.

2.2 The public consultation for the relocation of the PSB was held over an eight week period, to take in to account the Easter holidays. The consultation began on 16 March 2018 and ended on 10 May 2018.

- 2.3 There have been 46 responses to the consultation, of which 82.6% of respondents have been in favour of the proposal and 13.0% have disagreed. The Governing Body at Springmead Primary School has responded and agrees with the proposal. The Governing Body at Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School also responded to the consultation and gave its approval in principle. Subsequently it has given its full support at its full governing body meeting on 21 May 2018.
- 2.4 A breakdown of the consultation responses is provided in section 5.
- 2.5 Springmead Primary School became Springmead Primary Academy on 1 April 2018.
- 2.6 The Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families has requested that this report be considered at the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel on 5 June 2018. Members of the Children, Young People and Families Cabinet Panel are invited to attend this meeting on 5 June 2018 to express their views on this item if they wish.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Education, Libraries & Localism Cabinet Panel considered a report on this item of business at their meeting on 5 June 2018, at the request of the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families. The Panel recommended to Cabinet that it approves the relocation of the PSB from Springmead Primary School, Welwyn Garden City to Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School, Welwyn Garden City with effect from 1 September 2018.

4. Background

- 4.1 Springmead Primary School, when in the process of converting to an Academy, indicated that it would no longer be able to support the PSB, which serves the Welwyn and Hatfield area. The Head and Governing Body of Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School supported in principle the relocation of the PSB to their school and the Director of Children's Services therefore initiated consultation on the proposal.
- 4.2 The public consultation for the relocation of the PSB was held over an eight week period, to take in to account the Easter holidays. The consultation began on 16 March 2018 and ended on 10 May 2018.
- 4.3 Consultation letters, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, were sent to all parents, governors and staff at both schools, as well as all schools in the area, and to all other statutory consultees. Copies of the consultation letter were sent or emailed to:
- (i) MPs, County Councillors, District Councillors, Parish and Town Councils and Local Authority Chief Executives;
 - (ii) Trade Union representatives;

- (iii) Church Diocese representatives;
- (iv) NHS representatives;
- (v) Parent Governor representatives on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (vi) Libraries and Citizen’s Advice Bureaux.

The consultation letter and response form were also available on the County Council’s website. An estimated total of 1167 letters and emails were sent out for the consultation.

5. Response to the consultation

5.1 Copies of the responses received are available to Members in the Members’ Lounge and will also be available to Cabinet at the meeting on 18 June 2018.

5.2 A detailed analysis of the responses follows which includes:

- (i) a breakdown of the number of responses received, and who they are from;
- (ii) an analysis of the key issues raised and the response to them;
- (iii) a copy of the governing body responses.

5.3 A final summary of the responses are detailed below:

Capacity of respondent	Total responses	Agree	%	Disagree	%	Don't Know	%
Parent/carer	21	14	66.7%	5	23.8%	2	9.5%
Governor	3	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Member of staff	15	14	93.3%	1	6.7%	0	0.0%
Resident	3	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Grandparent	0	0		0		0	
Other	4	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total responses	46	38	82.6%	6	13.0%	2	4.3%

6. Key Issues and responses

6.1 The majority of respondents supported the proposal (38) of which 27 specifically noted the benefit of the work of primary support bases and the need for continuation of provision for the area.

6.2 The following key themes were raised and a response to them provided below:

Concern that there will be an impact on the quality of education for current pupils at Swallow Dell Primary & Nursery School (8).

6.21. The PSB will be provided with additional accommodation on an area of the school site that is not currently in use by Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School pupils. The combination of a designated outdoor space and a purpose built provision, with separation from the main

school, will enable the PSB to develop the type of provision and support given to schools in the area, helping to support mainstream schools in meeting the very complex needs of some of the most vulnerable children.

- 6.2.2 Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School (“the School”) is rated GOOD by Ofsted. Governors support the proposal and have confirmed that the Headteacher has the capacity to oversee the base.
- 6.2.3 The current PSB is also rated GOOD by Ofsted. It is proposed that the current PSB staff will transfer with the base so that the service can continue unaffected.

Concern that there will be a negative impact on the physical environment of the school (4)

- 6.2.4 The School is on a large site and it is proposed that additional accommodation will be provided on an area of the school site not currently used by existing pupils. The additional accommodation will include an outdoor play area, teaching spaces, an office, toilets and storage.
- 6.2.5 Additional parking spaces will be created and the operational times of the base will be staggered so as not to coincide with the school’s opening and closing times.
- 6.2.6 The proposed additional accommodation and associated works required will be subject to a separate town planning process which will include a formal consultation with the local community and the highways authority.

Existing parents of Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School need more information about this proposal (4)

- 6.2.7 The School will positively engage with parents and other stakeholders, through its newsletter and a Frequently Asked Questions information sheet. The School will respond directly to any specific enquiries from parents.
- 6.2.8 The other issues raised, by one or two people each, were that the PSB should be relocated to an alternative location rather than Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School and that the PSB should remain at Springmead Primary School as it is a valuable service for parents (which that institution does not support).

6.3 **Governing Body responses**

Response from the Governing Body of Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School:

- 6.3.1 “On behalf of the Board of Governors, we give approval-in-principle for this proposal. We remain hopeful that on-going discussions with the County Council to address a few issues regarding legal liabilities and some operational matters will allow the Board to give full support by ratifying the decision at our Full Governing Body meeting on 21 May 2018.”
- 6.3.2 Subsequently, at the Full Governing Body meeting held on 21 May 2018, the proposal was fully ratified by governors.

Response from the Governing Body of Springmead Primary School:

- 6.3.3 “As the school is now part of the Spiral Academy Trust, governors have discussed the base provision with the Trust leaders. This type of specialist provision cannot be provided through the Trust. One member of staff is leaving the base this summer and four of the base pupils are in year 6 and would be leaving anyway, therefore to relocate the base at this time will have the least possible impact on staff and pupils. The school would benefit from the additional space provided when the base classroom becomes empty. The relocation of the base to another school in WGC is positive as the town is central within the county and the DSPLs it serves.”

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Revenue funding

PSB's are funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which will be transferred to the Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School with effect from 1 September 2018.

8.2 Capital funding

The cost of the accommodation is estimated at £350,000. It is anticipated that funding for this provision will be met from Capital Grant provided by DfE from its Special Provision Capital Fund.

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the Equality implications of the decision that they are making
- 9.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this

requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) produced by officers.

- 9.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the County Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 9.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out in relation to this proposal, attached at Appendix 2 to the report. Consideration has been given to the likely impact of the proposal, and the current assessment concludes that it is not anticipated that people with protected characteristics will be affected disproportionately. The EIA will be continued to be reviewed and updated as necessary.
- 9.5 The relocation of the Primary Support Base to Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School maintains provision within the local area to the benefit of pupils.

Background Information

None