

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
<b>Date:</b>	23 January 2013
<b>Title:</b>	Proposed New Voluntary Aided Primary School in Whiteley
<b>Reference:</b>	4568
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

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### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to determine a proposal by the Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses to establish a new, voluntary aided one-form entry primary school in Whiteley on land in the ownership of Hampshire County Council.
- 1.2. This paper sets out the background to the proposal following a public consultation by the Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses.
- 1.3. The Local Authority is the final decision maker on the proposal.
- 1.4. This report recommends that approval be given to establish a new one-form entry voluntary aided primary school in Whiteley.
- 1.5. The cost of the provision of the school buildings and the site set up costs would be met from the Children's Services Capital Programme for 2013/14 at a cost of approximately £2.2m.

### 2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The Children's Services Department has noted that children living in Whiteley are having to leave the development to access school places.
- 2.2. The number of pupils living within the catchment area of Whiteley Primary School has been in excess of 140 albeit the number of pupils seeking a place within Whiteley Primary School has ranged between 109 and 121 over the last five years with 90 places being available.
- 2.3. Table 1 below shows the number of 4 year old pupils forecast to be living in Whiteley in the future:

Table 1

Area	Published Admission Number	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Whiteley	90	142	137	133	124	121

The actual level of applications for school places will be fewer than the figures above but it is anticipated it will continue to exceed the present 90 available places.

- 2.4. The temporary school will provide an additional 30 places per year group which, in the longer term, should be sufficient to accommodate the number of Year R pupils living in Whiteley.
- 2.5. Since 2007 those pupils not able to secure a place at Whiteley Primary School have either attended schools to the south of the M27 motorway or independent schools.
- 2.6. The proposal by Winchester City Council to bring forward the north Whiteley development area in the next few years has prompted this proposal to establish the school, in the first instance in temporary accommodation on land owned by the County Council. In the longer term as one of the school sites is released as part of the north Whiteley development a new three-form entry primary school will be built and the proposed 1fe voluntary aided primary school will move and expand into the new buildings. At that point, a further decision will be required to approve the expansion of the school.
- 2.7. It is anticipated that the admissions criteria for the school will be those for all County Council schools, with no faith-based places.

### **3. Finance**

- 3.1. The capital funding required to establish the proposed new school would be met from the Children's Services 2013/14 Capital Programme at a cost of approximately £2.2m.
- 3.2. Revenue funding for the school will be met through the school funding formula.

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1. As the proposers the Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses commenced consultations on 11 September 2012 and these ran until 23 October 2012. A consultation letter was sent to all Whiteley residents setting out the proposal to establish a new primary school in temporary accommodation, and over 90% of those responding supported the proposal (see table 2 below).
- 4.2. Two open meetings were held 25 September and 11 October together with a drop-in session on 5 October 2012. A further drop-in session was held on 10 December 2012 which fell within the statutory notice period.

- 4.3. A full list of consultees is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.4. The attached questionnaire (appendix 2) was widely distributed as part of the consultation process and asked recipients to indicate whether or not they agreed with the proposal to establish a new voluntary aided school in Whiteley. Set out in section 6 of this report is a précis of the comments received during the original consultation period together with officers' responses to the comments on the points raised. A breakdown of the questionnaire responses is set out in Table 2 below:

Table 2

Number of responses	Create new 1 FE primary school	Leave existing provision and provide places elsewhere	Other viable option	Parent of child at another school	Parent of pre-school child	Member of Whiteley community	Member of wider community
241	221	9	11	29	90	55	18

- 4.5. Following the consultation period and after due consideration of the consultation process the Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses published a public notice on 9 November setting out the intention to establish a new one-form entry primary school with effect from 1 September 2013. A copy of the public notice is attached as Appendix 3.
- 4.6. The statutory public notice expired on 21 December 2012. As is required, the County Council was named in the public notice as the appropriate body to whom representations on the notice should be made. No such representations were received.

## 5. Site for temporary school

- 5.1. A number of sites (nine) were considered on which to establish the new primary school but each of them, with the exception of one, brought with it additional challenges. Some of the reasons that these other sites were not pursued included the inaccessibility of the site, the health and safety of parents and pupils accessing certain sites within commercial areas, third party owners wishing to secure other development on their land holding, some sites being too small to accommodate the new school and third party owners wishing to secure alternative uses for their sites in return for allowing a school to be established on part of their site.
- 5.2. The site proposed for the establishment of the school is in the County Council's ownership and has recently secured planning permission for residential development. The site sits in the south-east corner of Whiteley with boundaries adjacent to Lady Betty's Drive and Leafy Lane and within an established residential development.

**6. Issues raised by consultees (in the section below the consultees responses are shown as R and the Dioceses' and the County Council's comments are shown as C)**

6.1. R - Rookery Avenue would be the best site for the school and would allow both schools to work together.

C – The site was considered but, ultimately, discounted as agreement on the use of the site with the third party owner could not be achieved.

6.2. R – If the site of the new school is to be Leafy Lane/Lady Betty's Drive then the additional traffic likely to be generated by parents dropping off their children at the new school will put an unacceptable demand on the road infrastructure.

C – It is acknowledged that the roads in that part of Whiteley could become more congested but it is proposed to take parents cars off the highway on to the school site to allow drop-off. The existing traffic will, therefore, be able to use the road network as it does at present.

6.3. R – The entrance to the proposed school site needs redesigning to ensure safe access and egress to the site.

C – Hampshire County Council has set the layout for the access point on land within its ownership. The access point is at the same point in the road as proposed for the residential dwellings for which planning permission has recently been granted. Fewer cars are likely to be using this access point, certainly in the short term.

6.4. R – Whiteley is a fast growing community and needs more school places.

C – The purpose of the proposal is to achieve more school places in Whiteley to meet present demand with the provision of more places within Whiteley in the future to meet demand from new housing development.

6.5. R – Due to the organic growth of the Whiteley community more of the infrastructure needs to be put in place to support the house building programme.

C – New schools will be provided as Whiteley grows.

6.6. R - Why are you not considering a 2FE primary school?

C – The pupil forecast for Whiteley shows a steady reduction in pupils living in the area within current housing which reduces to approximately the number of places that will be provided by the existing primary school and the proposed voluntary aided school.

6.7.R - It is not fair that we have to drive past a school when we could walk to a local school.

C – The provision of the new school will allow more parents to access a school within walking distance and on the Whiteley development.

6.8.R - My choice would be to have a non-religious primary school in Whiteley.

C – The Local Authority is obliged to consider the proposal brought to it by the Dioceses and consider its desirability as a whole. To turn down the proposal would delay significantly any ambition to establish a new school in Whiteley.

- 6.9. R – New schools will be required as north Whiteley is developed so why not build the school on the “Bunney” land which is both large enough for a bigger school than a 1FE school and is likely to be one of the sites for a new school.  
C – Hampshire County Council recognised the need for additional primary places in 2006 but was unable to secure an appropriate site at that time. The “Bunney” land was explored but discounted owing to the cost of the road infrastructure required to access the site. The “Bunney” site is not being considered as one of the sites in the north Whiteley development.

- 6.10.R – Why doesn't the church build a school on the site adjacent to the Meadowside playing fields?

C – The church site adjacent to the Meadowside playing fields was one of the sites considered but discounted as it is too small.

- 6.11.R - I am a parent of a child who will be going to school in 2014 and I am aware that my child is unlikely to secure a place at Whiteley Primary School due to the location of our house to the school which is only 0.6 miles away.  
C – The provision of additional places in Whiteley through the proposed new school will increase the likelihood of Whiteley families being able to access a school place on the Whiteley development.

- 6.12.R - Extend the existing Whiteley Primary School to provide more places until a school is built.

C – Whiteley Primary School site is already at capacity as a 3FE school. It is not possible to add more school places on to the site.

- 6.13.C – Why not build the new school on it's permanent site now?

R – The site is not yet accessible and the road infrastructure associated with the north Whiteley development needs to be put in place prior to any new primary provision being built on the site.

- 6.14. C - Strongly agree that another school in Whiteley is best. I expect my child to go to school in her local community. That is why we moved to Whiteley as it was such a lovely small family orientated community.

R – The proposed new school will give pupils more opportunity to attend a school in Whiteley.

- 6.15. C - To allow Whiteley children to be educated in Whiteley is the best option for all. Less traffic problems leaving Whiteley. Children from Whiteley walking to school. Less trauma for very young pupils who otherwise would be put on buses and transported to their school.

R – A number of respondents were concerned about additional traffic generation associated with the new school but the suggestion by this respondent that this could reduce traffic movements within Whiteley is noted.

- 6.16. R - I have a child at a school outside of Whiteley and a pre-school child. My concerns are that the youngest will not get into Whiteley or the same school as her sibling.  
C – The provision of the new school in Whiteley should, at least, allow parents to have their children in a school in Whiteley with both schools sharing the existing Whiteley catchment area.
- 6.17. R - My daughter had to attend a school outside of Whiteley at the beginning of her schooling. Luckily we were subsequently offered a place at Whiteley Primary - but the whole experience has stayed with me and I hate the thought that other parents are also going through this still.  
C – A number of respondents have commented on their children attending a school outside Whiteley and have then moved the child to Whiteley when a place became available. This has a destabilising effect on the school from where the child is taken. Educational stability within Whiteley and for other local schools will be beneficial for both children and their schools.
- 6.18. R – The provision of the new school is the best way to avoid multiple children at multiple schools as there is little provision/guarantee for this. Perhaps some common sense will prevail in this instance.  
C – It is recognised that some Whiteley families have children in a number of schools outside of Whiteley. The provision of a new school should help provide the families with more stability and less travel to schools outside Whiteley.
- 6.19. R - The destruction of local green fields and the impact on the local wildlife vastly outweighs the need for schools. People must have taken the rural setting and lack of schools into consideration when moving to the area. Other rural areas manage fine so there is no reason to act any differently here. Open up Yew Tree Drive and the problem is gone.  
C – The siting of the temporary school is on land on which planning permission for residential development has recently been obtained.
- 6.20. R - Where will this temporary school be set up? If it is on land at Leafy Lane, this was ruled out on air quality grounds.  
C – It is the case that the site at Leafy Lane was ruled out as a permanent site for a school owing to the close proximity of the M27 motorway. The current proposal is to provide a school in temporary accommodation on the Leafy Lane land. As this is not a permanent school the close proximity to the M27 motorway whilst relevant is, in the longer term, not an issue.
- 6.21. R - Year 1 entry should be provided in 2013 to cater for those children who were displaced in 2012.  
C – The proposal is to set up a 1FE primary school and, as routinely happens when establishing a new school, it will fill from the bottom up when a Year R intake is established. For other year groups the school's governing body, liaising with the local authority, will need to consider all applications and review the provision that can be provided for other year groups.

- 6.22. R - I feel Whiteley does need more primary places, but I am against providing these via temporary accommodation. I would not want my children to go to a temporary school. A far better option in my opinion is to wait until a permanent school can be built within the North Whiteley development. However, this would need to be quite big to enable it to cope with the existing overflow from Whiteley Primary and all the new housing.  
C – The temporary school will be set up with the appropriate facilities for a primary school to operate including hard play area and a playing field. In the longer term the school will move on to a new permanent site within the north Whiteley development.
- 6.23. R - We cannot trust the building of a new school with private companies whilst our children will be in portacabins for years. My daughter is nearly three and I would rather travel outside of Whiteley or move than school her in a temporary school.  
C – The Dioceses and Hampshire County Council recognise that the provision of the permanent school is dependant upon the north Whiteley development being built and this was shared as part of the consultation exercise. It is clear from the responses to the consultation document that the greater majority of respondents are in favour of another school in Whiteley. Should parents still wish to seek a place for their children in schools outside Whiteley that option will still be available.
- 6.24. R - Paying for the expansion of different schools until the north Whiteley sites are available could mean extra large schools sitting empty when the Whiteley children can be educated in Whiteley.  
C – One advantage to establishing a new school in Whiteley, albeit on a temporary basis, means that when the new schools are built within north Whiteley the school will move as an established school and expand as additional numbers from the north Whiteley development appear.
- 6.25. R - We currently have one child at Whitley Primary school and another due to join in three years. Until my wife and I receive guarantees that both our children will be educated at Whiteley Primary School, we will always object to the creation of a new primary school.  
C – No guarantees can be given about siblings being able to access the same school and this is dependant upon the admission arrangements in place at the schools. However, the provision of additional primary places in Whiteley coupled with the high priority given to siblings in the admissions policy of the schools means that the likelihood that the younger sibling will follow the older into the same school is very high.
- 6.26. R - If over 3,000 new homes are going to be built they will require a school so why not build now as the need is here already and the new children who move to the area can then attend a school which is already up and running.  
C – Two new primary schools are proposed for the north Whiteley development and the first of these will be established as soon as the site becomes available.

- 6.27. R - Open Yew Tree Drive and Whiteley is joined to Park Gate together with all the facilities available in that area.  
C – Opening up Yew Tree Drive is not within the gift of Hampshire County Council but Fareham Borough Council is aware of this suggestion and is considering a trial where this route is opened up to give access on to Botley Road, hence giving access to other schools within the Western Wards area.
- 6.28. R - Doing nothing is not desirable, but since HCC have made such a mess of Whiteley, it may be the only course to wait for the North Whiteley development.  
C – As reported earlier Hampshire County Council tried to establish another primary school in Whiteley a number of years ago but a site could not be secured. The Dioceses are now seeking to provide additional primary places in Whiteley so that Whiteley parents have a better chance of accessing a primary place.
- 6.29. R – A number of respondents suggested that as there was no definitive site for the proposed school it was not possible to comment on the proposal.  
C – The consultation was about the provision of additional primary school places in Whiteley rather than being specific about the site. Since the start of the consultation the site now proposed for the temporary buildings is at Leafy Lane/Lady Betty's Drive.
- 6.30. R – One respondent suggested that the existing Whiteley Primary School should become an infant school and to build a corresponding junior school.  
C – As north Whiteley develops the proposal is to build two more primary schools to accommodate the number of pupils anticipated from the development.
- 6.31. R – A respondent suggested that a primary school the same size as Whiteley Primary School be built to make sure all pupils can access a school place in Whiteley.  
C – When north Whiteley is built it is likely that two new primary schools the same size as Whiteley Primary will be built. If there was a site large enough to build a 3FE primary now there would be insufficient primary pupil numbers in Whiteley and the possibility of attracting pupils into Whiteley from outside the area putting a greater strain on the existing road network and destabilising other local schools.

## **7. Other key issues**

- 7.1. During the consultation process several respondents raised the issue of additional traffic generation in the area around the school. It was pointed out that the roads in that part of Whiteley being considered for the new school are quite narrow and used as an alternative access and egress point to Whiteley by people who know the road network. A number of concerns were raised that adding to the existing traffic would make movement in the area dangerous for both car drivers and pedestrians alike.

- 7.2. It is intended that any temporary school will be designed in such a way that any parents bringing their children to school in a car will be able to use the drop-off facilities on the school site, thus removing their cars from the main highway rather than creating a traffic bottle neck.
- 7.3. A school travel plan will be produced by the governing body of the proposed new school in conjunction with the local community.
- 7.4. The number of pupils living in Whiteley in the longer term is forecast to drop to approximately 120 and, therefore, a 1FE school together with the existing primary school in Whiteley will be able to cope with future numbers. Table 1 at 2.3 refers.

## **8. Views of the Local County Councillors**

- 8.1. Whiteley is split across two district boundaries (Fareham and Winchester) which means that there are two County Councillors from which comments were sought.
- 8.2. Councillor Sean Woodward has expressed unreserved support for the establishment of a one-form entry primary school as "...all Whiteley children, both primary and secondary, have a right to be educated in Whiteley if they choose".
- 8.3. Councillor Patricia Stallard commented "...I am mindful of the need to provide good educational facilities for all young people in Whiteley and therefore endorse the recommendation to establish a one-form entry primary school off Lady Betty's Drive. The proposed school will benefit both the children and the wider community of Whiteley."

## **9. Conclusion**

- 9.1. Notwithstanding there are some concerns regarding the establishment of a new voluntary aided 1fe primary school within Whiteley it is clear from the responses to the questionnaire that there is overwhelming support for the proposal (Table 2 refers).
- 9.2. Forecast pupil numbers for the number of 4 year olds living within Whiteley and looking to secure a local school place demonstrate the need for an additional 1fe worth of primary provision.
- 9.3. There are concerns regarding the impact any new school would have on traffic within the vicinity of the school. Plans to mitigate this impact through the provision of a drive-in/drop-off area within the school site are already drawn.
- 9.4. Whilst it is not possible to be precise as to how long the 1fe school will be in place before moving to a new permanent site within the north Whiteley development it is the case that this is a temporary measure designed to enable local children to attend a local school.

**10. Recommendation(s)**

- 10.1. That a one-form entry voluntary aided primary school be established by the Portsmouth and Winchester C of E Dioceses in temporary accommodation on land adjacent to Leafy Lane and Lady Betty's Drive in Whiteley, with effect from 1 September 2013.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Maximising well-being:</b>	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

**Other Significant Links****Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

Document

Location

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

A full Equalities Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 4.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

The proposal has no impact on crime and disorder.

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No impact has been identified.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No specific measures have been identified.