

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 8 September 2022

Report of the (Acting) Director of Education, Culture and Skills

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Cleveleys East; Cleveleys
South & Carleton; Fleetwood
West & Cleveleys West; Fylde
East; Fylde South; Fylde West;
Lostock Hall & Bamber Bridge;
Lytham; Poulton le Fylde;
Preston Central East; Preston
Central West; Preston City;
Preston East; Preston North;
Preston Rural; Preston South
East; Preston South West;
Preston West; Skelmersdale
Central; Skelmersdale East;
Skelmersdale West;

Corporate Priorities:
Caring for the vulnerable;

**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency Strategy
Implementation - Increase in the Number of Special School Places**
(Appendices 'A' to 'E' refer)

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

This report provides an overview of proposals to expand and increase the number of places at three different special schools in Lancashire. Final approval is being sought to expand and increase the number of school places at Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School: Willow Campus and Lostock Hall Moor Hey School, following the formal consultation processes. A summary of the outcomes of these consultations is provided within the report.

The report also provides information about a proposal to expand and increase the



number of pupil places at Kingsbury Primary School, Skelmersdale. This is the first time a proposal to expand this school has been put forward for consideration by Cabinet, and approval is therefore being sought to initiate feasibility studies and the informal consultation process..

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Consider the results of the formal consultation and give final approval for the expansion and increase in the number of places at Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School: Willow Campus.
- (ii) Consider the results of the formal consultation and give final approval for the expansion and increase in the number of pupil places at Lostock Hall Moor Hey School.
- (iii) Approve the initiation of a feasibility study and informal consultation to expand and increase the number of pupil places at Kingsbury Primary School, Skelmersdale.

Detail

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency Strategy 2019-2024 was developed in response to the increase in demand for specialist provision for children and young people in particular areas across Lancashire, and within the context of increased pressure on the high needs block funding. The implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency Strategy enables the county council to fulfil its statutory duties in relation to the provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The proposals in this report are consistent with the principles and priorities identified within the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency Strategy. In September 2021, Cabinet gave approval to initiate informal consultation processes to expand and increase the number of special school places through the creation of satellite units across the county.

In November 2021, Cabinet gave final approval for the creation of the first separate 'satellite' provision, which was for the initial expansion of Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School, leading to an increase in the number of special school places at the school from 94 to 124. This 'satellite' provision, located 2.3 miles away in an unoccupied school building, is on the same site as Northfold Community Primary School. It is now referred to as the Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School: Willow Campus.

Following on from this, another two informal consultations were completed in relation to proposals to further expand and increase the number of pupil places at Thornton



Cleveleys Red Marsh School: Willow Campus and also to expand and increase the number of pupil places at Lostock Hall Moor Hey School. The outcomes of these informal consultations, which were completed in May 2022, were considered by Cabinet on 9 June 2022. Approval was given to initiate formal consultation processes for both schools on the same date.

Lostock Hall Moor Hey School will change its name to Applebee Wood Community Specialist School with effect from 1 September 2022, following the governing body seeking to amend the Instrument of Government, in line with regulation 30 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012. Any reference to Lostock Hall Moor Hey School in this report and the Appendices thereto are to be read as also referring and applying to Applebee Wood Community Specialist School.

Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School

Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School is a school for children and young people between the ages of 2 and 19 years with learning difficulties. In November 2021, Cabinet gave final approval for the creation of separate 'satellite' provision to expand Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School, by increasing the number of special school places from 94 to 124. There continues to be a need for special school places in the north of the county, and approval is now being sought to expand this satellite provision further, by increasing the total number of places at the Willow Campus site by another 20, thereby increasing the total population of the school to 144.

Consultation

The formal consultation was conducted in accordance with the statutory guidance for making prescribed alterations to schools, provided by the Department for Education.

The consultation was publicised in the Lancashire Evening Post. The consultation booklet and questionnaire were posted on the Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School and Northfold Primary School websites, together with publication of the consultation booklet and questionnaire on the Lancashire County Council 'Have your Say' website. The formal consultation period took place between 20 June and 17 July and included a meeting at Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School: Willow Campus for all interested parties on 15 July 2022. A representative from Lancashire Council attended this event.

There were 7 responses to the questionnaire on the Lancashire County Council 'Have your say' website, all of which supported the proposal. The very limited number of comments that were provided made reference to the benefits of expanding existing provision to provide high quality education for all pupils.

A summary of the consultation response is set out at Appendix 'A'.

Cabinet is asked to give final approval to expand the satellite provision at Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School: Willow Campus by 20 additional places.



Lostock Hall Moor Hey School

Lostock Hall Moor Hey School is a special school for pupils between the ages of four and 16 years with generic learning difficulties. The proposal is to increase the number of special school places at the school by 20, through the creation of additional classrooms built on the existing school site; this would enable an increase in the number of pupils on roll from 127 to 147. These increases equate to an increase in the number of places by more than 10%, which is subject to statutory consultation processes as this is considered to be a significant change to the school.

Consultation

The formal consultation was conducted in accordance with the statutory guidance for making prescribed alterations to schools, provided by the Department for Education.

The consultation was publicised in the Lancashire Evening Post on 20 June 2022. The consultation booklet and questionnaire were posted on the school website, together with the publication of the consultation booklet and questionnaire on the Lancashire County Council 'Have your Say' website. The formal consultation period was held between 20 June and 17 July and included a meeting at the school for all interested parties on 4 July 2022. A representative from Lancashire County Council also attended the event.

There were 68 responses to the questionnaire on the Lancashire County Council 'Have your say' website. Most respondents agreed with the proposal. Fewer than 5% of respondents disagreed with the proposal. These respondents identified concerns about the potential for adverse effects on existing pupils in the school and for increased disturbance within the community.

Almost all of the comments provided by respondents agreeing with the proposal made reference to the need for more special school places and the benefits of expanding good quality specialist provision.

A summary of the consultation response is set out at Appendix 'B'.

Cabinet is asked to give final approval to expand Lostock Hall Moor Hey School by 20 additional places based on the existing school site.

Kingsbury Primary School, Skelmersdale

Kingsbury Primary School is a co-educational primary special school in Skelmersdale and continues to be an 'Outstanding' school following a short Ofsted inspection in March 2017. The proposal is to increase the number of places at Kingsbury Primary School from 89 to 100. This equates to an increase in the number of places by more than 10%, which is subject to statutory consultation processes as it is considered a significant change to the school.

The school is proposing to create additional teaching space by installing a modular building on the main school site. The school is funding the cost of this expansion in its entirety and there are therefore no costs to the county council in relation to this expansion.



Cabinet is asked to approve the initiation of a feasibility study and informal consultation to increase the number of places at Kingsbury Primary School.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

The county council and partners across education, health and care are required to work together to plan for and meet the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities, in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2014.

If the decision was not to proceed with the proposals contained within the report, the risk would be insufficient places and potential for increased costs out of area. This proposal mitigates the risk of this and the county council failing in its duty to provide sufficient school places.

Human Resources

If the expansion of Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School satellite provision at Willow Campus is approved staff may be required to move between the main school site and the satellite site. It is not envisaged that this would be problematic for staff affected. The distance between the two sites is 2.3 miles. Staff have been consulted on the proposal so that any concerns raised can be addressed.

Equality and Cohesion

The Equality Impact Assessments in respect of Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School and Lostock Hall Moor Hey School are set out at Appendices 'C' and 'D' respectively.

This proposal impacts on both the age (young people) and disability protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and is designed to contribute positively to the Public Sector Equality Duty's general aim of advancing equality of opportunity and its related aim of increasing participation in public life for these children and young people, their families and carers.

The initial review of provision in Lancashire that informed the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency Strategy and the further review in June 2021, indicated there were fewer children and young people educated in mainstream schools in Lancashire than nationally. There were also more children educated in specialist provision and secondary alternative provision in Lancashire than nationally, and therefore the demands on high needs block funding are significant.

The lack of access to supported provision in mainstream schools and to local specialist provision of particular designations and for those with the most complex needs is resulting in some children and young people travelling to schools outside their community.



Financial

High needs funding within the dedicated schools grant supports provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This revenue funding enables local authorities and education providers to meet their statutory duties under the [Children and Families Act 2014](#).

The provisional allocation of high needs provision capital allowance from the Department for Education has been announced at £12.1m for 2022/23, together with the £400,000 capital funding approved by Cabinet in February 2022. This gives a funding programme of £12.5m, from which a programme can be developed following the consultations for suitable projects. The approval of the projects within the programme will be the subject of future reports to Cabinet.

The expansions of Lostock Hall Moor Hey School and Kingsbury Primary School require no capital commitment from the capital programme.

Financial implications in relation to Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School: Willow Campus are set out at Appendix 'E' and are deemed to be Part II for the reason set out below:

This section of the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Property Asset Management

The Lostock Hall Moor Hey School project is funded from within the school's own resources and managed by the school. To note, the school has also been identified as one that will benefit from the third round of the Department for Education School Rebuilding Programme which is understood to impact on a different part of the premises. The asset management service is liaising with the Department for Education on this matter.

The development and use of a 'satellite' site associated with Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School was approved by Cabinet in November 2022. The building is on a school site, has previously been used as a school, and the accommodation would be provided within the current footprint of the building, therefore no planning permission will be necessary.



List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

Appendix 'E' is not for publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The appendix contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

