

**Report to the Cabinet**

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 8 June 2023

**Report of the Director of Strategy and Performance**

**Part I**

Electoral Division affected:  
(All Divisions);

**Corporate Priorities:**  
Delivering better services;

**School Place Planning Delivery Programme 2023-25: Update**

(Appendix 'A' refers)

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**Brief Summary**

In October 2022, Cabinet approved the School Place Planning Delivery Programme 2023-25, which sets out a series of projects that aim to provide additional places in existing schools, and proposals to consult on the establishment of two new primary schools and a new secondary school in Preston.

This report proposes to progress projects to address the additional place requirements identified in the School Place Planning Delivery Programme 2023-25, including an updated position on the new school requirement on the former Whittingham Hospital site.

In February 2023, Cabinet approved an amendment to the School Place Planning Delivery Programme 2023-25, to allow for an increase in the number of additional primary places to be provided in Preston North, West and Rural primary planning areas. In relation to this increased provision, Cabinet approved a statutory consultation on the proposal to permanently expand Cottam Primary School by 1 form of entry from September 2024. This report summarises the findings of the public consultation. Also in February 2023, Cabinet was advised that the proposed expansion by 23 places per year group of St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School, Longridge was under review with Salford Diocese, the proposal has subsequently been agreed and this report seeks approval of the capital project.

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



## Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the proposal to permanently expand Cottam Primary School by 1 form of entry, by increasing the published admission number from 30 to 60 with effect from 2024/25, gradually increasing the school's capacity from 210 to 420.
- (ii) Approve an amendment to the School Place Planning Delivery Programme 2023-25, in relation to the proposal to establish a new primary school on the former Whittingham Hospital site, increasing the provision from 1 form of entry to 2 forms of entry.
- (iii) Approve the proposal to permanently expand St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School, Longridge, by increasing the published admission number by 23 places per year from 2024/25, gradually increasing the school's capacity from 485 to 600.
- (iv) Approve the capital allocation for the St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School project set out at Appendix 'A'.

## Detail

In October 2022, Cabinet approved the School Place Planning Programme 2023-25, which sets out a series of projects to provide additional primary and secondary school places where projected shortfalls have been identified. The programme proposed that the additional places should be provided through the expansion of existing schools and the establishment of new schools.

This report provides an update on the School Place Planning Programme 2023-25 and requests approval of enlargement proposals and of the related capital schemes.

Full details of the capital scheme projections are provided at Appendix 'A'. These are deemed to be exempt from publication as they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## Primary Provision

### **Preston North, Preston West and Preston Rural planning areas Additional permanent 1 form entry from 2023/24 at Cottam Primary School**

Lancashire County Council has proposed a 1 form entry expansion at Cottam Primary School from 2023/24, initially through temporary expansion for 2023/24 and becoming permanent from 2024/25.

It is intended that the additional 30 places for 2023/24 can be provided within existing school accommodation with additional provision on the existing school site



required to address demand from 2024/25. The capital funding requirement for this will form part of a future Cabinet report.

A public consultation was conducted between 27 March 2023 to 7 May 2023. Details of the public consultation are provided in the 'Consultations' section below.

**Goosnargh & Grimsargh (Preston) and Longridge (Ribble Valley) primary planning areas**  
**Former Whittingham Hospital site, new primary school proposal**

Further to Cabinet's approval of the School Place Planning Programme 2023-25 in October 2022, a further update of the pupil projections identified that the proposed new school provision on the former Whittingham Hospital site of 1 form of entry, would not be sufficient to address the projected shortfall of places in the Goosnargh & Grimsargh and Longridge primary planning areas.

Lancashire County Council proposes to increase the provision from 1 form of entry to 2 forms of entry from 2025/26.

Details of the public consultation are provided in the 'Consultations' section below.

**Secondary Provision**

**Ribble Valley West planning area**  
**St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School, Longridge**

An expansion proposal to increase the published admission number of St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School by 23 places per year from 2023/24 has been agreed by St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School, the Diocese of Salford and Lancashire County Council.

The capital project will provide an additional four classrooms block and external play area. The project will be delivered through the Diocese of Salford in accordance with the terms and conditions of a grant agreement between Lancashire County Council, The Governing Body of St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School and Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees.

In line with Department for Education guidance, the scale of this expansion proposal means that a public consultation is not required.

**Consultations**

**Goosnargh & Grimsargh (Preston) and Longridge (Ribble Valley) planning areas**  
**Former Whittingham Hospital site, new primary school proposal**

Department for Education Guidance for establishing a new school ['The free school presumption, Guidance for local authorities and new school providers'-January 2023](#) requires the publication of a statutory proposal and consultation with stakeholders.



A public consultation will take place for a 4 week period from Monday 5 June 2023 to 2 July 2023, on the proposal to establish a new 2 form entry primary school at the former Whittingham Hospital site from September 2025. This proposal would provide capacity for 420 primary school pupils.

### **Preston North, Preston West and Preston Rural planning areas Additional permanent 1 form entry from 2023/24 at Cottam Primary School**

Department for Education Guidance ['Making significant changes \(Prescribed Alterations\) to maintained Schools – 2023'](#) prescribes that significant enlargements to a maintained school requires the publication of a statutory proposal and consultation with stakeholders.

The guidance advises that:

The statutory process should be followed to enlarge premises as set out in the Prescribed Alterations Regulations if:

- the proposed enlargement is permanent (longer than three years) and would increase the capacity of the school by: more than 30 pupils; and
- 25% or 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser)

The county council's proposal to expand Cottam Primary School meets the criteria for the statutory process.

On 27 March 2023, the county council published a statutory notice in relation to the expansion proposal for Cottam Primary School. In accordance with the statutory process, the notice invited representations (objections or comments) within the statutory notice period, i.e., from 27 March 2023 to 7 May 2023.

In response to the published proposal, the county council received 58 responses, a summary of which is provided below.

26 respondents supported the proposal and 32 did not. The Department for Education guidance advises that decision makers should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal – especially parents of children at the affected school(s). 10 of the respondents in support of the proposal were identified as a parent/carer of a current pupil at Cottam Primary and 6 respondents in support were identified as parents of future pupils at Cottam Primary School. In contrast, 12 of the respondents who did not support the proposal were identified as parent/carer of a current pupil of Cottam Primary School; none of the respondents were identified as parents of future pupils and 16 of the respondents were identified as an interested member of the local community. Furthermore:

- 7 respondents agreed that there were growing pupil numbers and 1 disagreed.
- 17 respondents agreed that the need for extra places was in Cottam and 2 disagreed.
- 8 respondents agreed that Cottam Primary was well located and 0 disagreed.



- 9 respondents agreed that Cottam Primary was an excellent/good school and 0 disagreed.

Key concerns raised by respondents related to:

### **Limited Parking (14 responses)**

Of the 14 responses, 12 respondents who expressed concerns about parking were identified as a parent/carer of a pupil of Cottam Primary or a future pupil.

Parking arrangements will be reviewed as part of the planning application and implementation of the proposal. Parking and school access have been discussed with the school.

### **Volume of Traffic and Road Safety (18 responses)**

Of the 18 responses, 11 respondents who expressed concerns about volume of traffic and road safety were identified as a parent/carer of a pupil of Cottam Primary or a future pupil.

Traffic management has been discussed with the school as part of the development of the proposal, although it must be recognised that this increase in pupil numbers is likely to lead to increased traffic.

### **Concerns expansion could affect educational standards (12 responses)**

Cottam Primary School currently has a 'Good' Ofsted rating. The school are committed to continuing to deliver a high standard of education.

### **Concern that proposed expansion is too much for one school (11 responses)**

There are a significant number of 2 form entry (420 pupil) primary schools in Lancashire. Expanding a school by a full form of entry is likely to be more easily managed than a smaller scale expansion, due to class size legislation requirements. The school is committed to maintaining the school's current ethos and standard of performance.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 'A', which is exempt from publication, is attached to this report. For clarification it is summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report.

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 'A'	Financial Implications – St Cecilia's Roman Catholic High School, Longridge

### **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:



## **Risk management**

If additional primary and secondary school places are not created, there is a risk that the authority would fail in its statutory responsibility to make sure that a school place is available to all Lancashire children of the appropriate age range that want one.

Providing additional school places increases the overall capacity in the area and, if demand falls, there may be surplus places. However, the scale of projected new housing across the Preston primary planning areas strongly indicates that action is needed.

Providing any additional accommodation for an increased number of pupils will always need to be carefully managed, to improve traffic congestion and community facilities at the same time as delivering modern teaching and learning facilities.

With regards to the expansion at Cottam Primary School, Department for Education guidance specifies that a decision on the proposal must be made within 2 months of the end of the representation period, i.e. 6 July 2023.

## **Legal**

A Statutory Notice for the Cottam Primary School proposal was published in accordance with Department for Education guidance 'Making significant (prescribed alternations) to maintained schools – 2023'.

## **Financial**

### **Capital Funding**

Appendix 'A' provides details of the capital funding requirements and anticipated costs in relation to the capital schemes identified within the report, and funds have been set aside for these from the Basic Need allocation, based on current estimates. The schemes will be partially funded from housing developer contributions, agreed as part of the Section 106 agreement, although specific details are yet to be finalised. This is due to the Section 106 legal agreements detailing requirements around recalculations of the position, once accurate bedroom information becomes available, trigger points for payments not yet being reached and indexation calculation requirements. Some of these monies have already been received and the remainder will be payable in stages, as the various phases of the housing development are occupied.

Cost estimates are immature, still require detailed design, procurement and a firm agreed price with suppliers.

Future levels of Basic Need grant are as yet unconfirmed and may rise with increased housing in the area.

Future reports will update on the consultation processes as well as detailed delivery plans and funding sources for any further schemes to be committed.



## Revenue Funding

In year expansions will be funded via the Dedicated Schools Grant through the county council's expansion policy for the first 2 terms. This policy will ensure the schools have the appropriate level of funding.

October Census data will then drive the Dedicated Schools Grant budget for the following financial year and incorporate all revised pupil numbers each year. This will provide Lancashire with the full year funding for these pupils through the Dedicated Schools Grant Schools Block, which is increased in line with the rising pupil numbers.

## Equality and Cohesion

As part of the statutory decision-making process, the county council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires 'due regard' to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The proposals included in this report will not disadvantage any group and will benefit current and additional future pupils of Lancashire.

## List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

Appendix 'A' - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. Appendix 'A' 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.

