



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Date of decision: 18 October 2013

Delivery of the Council's Schools of Choice agenda:

Proposed amalgamation of New King's Primary School and Sullivan Primary School

Results of consultation and proposal to publish statutory notice

Report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Cabinet Member for Education

Open Report

Classification: For Decision

Key Decision: No

Wards Affected: Town, Sands End, Parsons Green and Walham

Accountable Executive Director: Ian Heggs, Tri-Borough Director of Schools Commissioning

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AUTHORISED BY: The Cabinet Members have signed this report.

DATE: 18th October 2013

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- 1.1. This report provides details of the consultation on the amalgamation of New King's Primary School with Sullivan Primary School, describes the necessary processes and seeks authority to proceed.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That, following full consideration of the consultation responses received, the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services and Cabinet Member for Education agree to proceed with the publication of statutory notices about the proposal, as set out in paragraph 4.1 below, and authorise the Director of Schools Commissioning and Director of Law to undertake the necessary procedures.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

3.1. The Council is obliged by law to follow a consultation process prescribed by statute for the amalgamation of schools.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1. In July 2013 the Cabinet Member for Education gave authorisation to begin a consultation exercise on a proposal to amalgamate New King’s Primary School and Sullivan Primary School, through the closure of Sullivan Primary School to form an enlarged New King’s Primary School on the New King’s site. A full consultation process then took place with all stakeholders including parents, governors, all staff at both schools, the local MP and ward members.

4.2. The first stage in the procedure was completed on 8 October when the period of consultation ended. The next step is to issue a statutory notice and a complete proposal.

5. ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

5.1 Primary pupil place planning

At New King’s and at Sullivan, first and second parental preferences have historically been low, and there continues to be spare capacity in both schools. The numbers in each year group in each school as of May 2013 and as set out in the consultation proposal are set out below:

| | PAN* | Reception | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
|------------|------|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| New King's | 30 | 20 | 28 | 22 | 25 | 20 | 29 | 25 |
| Sullivan | 45 | 36 | 44 | 38 | 39 | 39 | 27 | 30 |
| Capacity | 75 | -19 | -3 | -15 | -11 | -16 | -19 | -20 |

*PAN - Published Admission Number

Replacing Sullivan (45 places a year) and New King’s (30 places a year) with a single two-form entry school providing 60 places a year in total, would be in line with the Council’s Schools of Choice agenda, which aims to increase choice for

parents by providing more outstanding, high-achieving and oversubscribed schools, as well as rationalising provision where there are surplus places. It is noted that there is also capacity at Langford Primary in this part of the borough. However this school serves the need for primary places to the east of Wandsworth Bridge Road where there are no other primary schools. New King's and Sullivan are located nearby to each other and the table above shows that there is insufficient demand for two separate primary schools providing 75 places between them. Most pupils attending the schools live nearby to both schools and would easily be able to access the amalgamated school on the New King's site.

Since this data was published, further information has been collated from both schools and the updated information for each year group as of October 2013 is shown below:

| | PAN* | Reception | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
|------------|------|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| New King's | 30 | 23 | 21 | 27 | 24 | 25 | 22 | 30 |
| Sullivan | 45 | 45 | 39 | 42 | 36 | 40 | 39 | 31 |
| Capacity | 75 | -7 | -15 | -6 | -15 | -15 | -14 | -14 |

The updated information provided by the schools shows that there continues to be a significant number of spare places in almost every year group in both schools. Neither school has a waiting list for any of its classes. In its response to the consultation, Sullivan School has predicted that its school roll will increase in the future, but the school has not produced the evidence to support this prediction.

5.2 Supporting Capital investment in school buildings

Both schools require significant investment to maintain and improve the fabric of their buildings. The Council's capital allocation for schools is limited and taxpayers' money would be better spent on a single school building, rather than on two. Amalgamation would ensure that capital investment would be maximised by targeting this at the learning environment of the newly amalgamated school, ensuring local families have access to improved facilities.

Both schools are roughly the same size in terms of floorspace, but the traditional construction of New King's as a prized school building in an excellent location supports the view that a far longer lifespan would be achieved by such investment. The Council would contribute at least £2 million towards a full refurbishment of the New King's school buildings, including the Parayhouse Annex, to create a two-form entry school equipped with the latest teaching facilities.

The school buildings on the Sullivan site are of more modern construction and have significant maintenance requirements. At the request of Sullivan School, a further condition survey was carried out by EC Harris in September 2013. It has shown that the main requirements for maintenance and repair over a five-year period are as follows:

- roof replacement required within 1-2 years: £350k
- external school building masonry (external wall panels) to be replaced within 3-5 years: £380k
- window replacement within 3-5 years: £200k

The total cost of the maintenance works, including the major items listed above, is estimated at approximately £1.3m. These works would require significant investment in a building that is nearing the end of its useful life.

Sullivan School has commissioned its own survey by E.J. Hawkins, which also concludes that the windows and roofs require attention, but states that the wall panels are in good condition and that they do not require immediate attention. The school has also commissioned a survey by E.J. Hawkins, which sets out the estimated costs of converting the existing Sullivan building to a two-form entry school. However, this survey is based on the premise that the existing building should be retained and the Council is of the view that given the maintenance and repair costs set out above, it would not be a good use of resources to expand the current building. Alternatively, replacing the current building with a new two-form entry school would cost in the region of £6 million.

5.3 Further benefits

As part of its vision to become an outstanding and oversubscribed school, New King's School has recently approached the Council setting out its proposal to convert to academy status working with Thomas's London Day Schools, a local independent school trust with an excellent reputation. The Council fully supports this aim, but firstly wishes to rationalise provision where there is spare capacity and invest in the school building in order to provide state-of-the-art facilities for teaching and learning through a major refurbishment programme. If the proposal goes ahead following consultation, then the Council would support New King's with its academy conversion proposal working closely with Thomas's.

Since the consultation proposal was published, New King's and Thomas's have set out in more detail their plans for the new Parsons Green Academy on the New King's site. Changes would include a broadening of the curriculum, introducing a particular focus on science and music, with new specialist classrooms, including creative art rooms, recording studio, video editing suite and a junior science laboratory linked to an outdoor classroom and greenhouse. A richly resourced multi-sensory room will be one example of the facilities of a fully inclusive school catering for a range of special educational needs.

A lift will help make all rooms and resources accessible to pupils with a wide variety of needs.

Furthermore, there are clear economies of scale to be achieved if the proposal were to proceed. The savings made on running costs by moving from two schools to one would free up approximately £400k per annum, which could be reinvested in teaching and support staff, providing more learning resources and the opportunity for smaller class sizes.

Sullivan School has put forward an alternative proposal to convert to academy status and join the London Diocesan Board of Schools (LDBS) Academy Trust. The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services and the Director of Schools Commissioning met with the school and a representative from the LDBS Academy Trust to hear more about their proposal. As part of its plans, the school also raises the possibility of expanding to two forms of entry, but it is unclear from their proposal how the academy conversion in itself would enable the school to become more popular with parents than it is now.

This proposal would also release the Sullivan school site for other purposes. The Department for Education (DfE) has approved a proposal for a new Fulham Boys’ Free School, but so far has not been able to find a suitable site for them. A feasibility study may show that the present Sullivan School site is the right size and location for the new school. The school would meet the parental demand for boys’ Church of England education in this area of the borough, and is consistent with the delivery of the Council’s ‘Schools of Choice’ agenda. Parents of boys attending the amalgamated school would have a further local secondary school to choose from. If the Sullivan site were to be used as the permanent site for the Fulham Boys’ Free School from September 2016, then the DfE would seek to secure an interim site for the school, so that it could open as planned for September 2014. The DfE would fund the building of this new secondary school in Hammersmith and Fulham at a cost of approximately £13.5 million.

6. ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION

6.1 As at 10th October, the response to the consultation was:

1,367 Agree with the proposal

2,226 Disagree with the proposal

75 Don’t know

13 N/A (unticked)

6.2 The majority of **parents** responding directly to the consultation **agree** with the proposal. 1,107 parents agree and 1,036 disagree.

| | | New | | |
|--------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Disagree | Sullivan | Kings | Other | Total |
| Parents | 854 | 27 | 155 | 1036 |
| Staff/stakeholders | 123 | 5 | 116 | 244 |
| Pupils | 101 | | | 101 |
| Other | 615 | 13 | 217 | 845 |

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Total | 1693 | 45 | 488 | 2226 |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|------------|-------------|

| | Sullivan | New Kings | Other | Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Agree | | | | |
| Parents | 23 | 37 | 1047 | 1107 |
| Staff/stakeholders | 1 | 20 | 30 | 51 |
| Other | 2 | | 207 | 209 |
| Total | 26 | 57 | 1284 | 1367 |

6.2 The vast majority of responses, where a postcode was given, were from people living in the borough, or nearby. Only 127 responses were from postcodes from further afield. A large number of responses, 854, were received against the proposal from parents at Sullivan school, in excess of the numbers of parents with children attending the school and from others 'associated' with the school (615) who were neither parents or staff. 101 responses were received from pupils associated with Sullivan school. Large numbers of responses were completed by people who were not local parents or staff; 284 in favour of the proposal and 869 against. 244 staff, governors and other school stakeholders were against the proposal compared to 51 in favour.

It is worthy of note that there were 80 responses from one single "Three" mobile IP address, all anonymous and all definitely disagreeing with the proposal. It is possible that this resulted from large groups of people meeting together and submitting their responses, one after the other, on one mobile device, but the lack of identifying data makes this group of responses worth noting.

The largest response in favour of the proposal (1047) was from parents not associated with either school. The favourable responses are largely from those associating themselves with Fulham Boys' Free School. There is substantial support for a new CE secondary school for boys. Local residents who are not supporters of the free school, not defining themselves as parents of boys at local CE primaries keen to see a CE boys' secondary, are almost without exception against the loss of Sullivan Primary and concerned about the potential impact on the local area.

6.3 Sullivan representatives also delivered two petitions. One – 'Save our Sullivan' has 1,440 signatories. The phraseology used on the sheets is about the council proposing to close the school and asks: 'Please sign our petition to help save our school'. The cover states: 'We are presenting this as part of the consultation procedure'. Of these, 376 (26 %) of the postcodes supplied were a considerable distance outside the borough or supplied no address. 970 of the signatories live in the borough. The remainder, 103, live in areas just outside the borough.

- 6.4 The other is an online '38 degrees' petition, which asks signatories to 'please help stop the proposal to close Sullivan Primary School' and claims 2,168 signatures. Of these, 1,089 (50.2%) of the postcodes supplied were a considerable distance outside the borough. 686 were within the borough and 393 were postcodes in neighbouring areas.

Sullivan representatives also delivered 3 copies of their formal response, each with four appendices (condition surveys and cost estimates), plus two photo books.

The several letters, emails and submissions received have not been counted in the totals above.

- 5.3 Representations disagreeing with the proposal have been received from: PRARA, The Fulham Society, City Events Ltd. the Polo in the Park organisers, H&F Liberal Democrats, The Executive Board of the Fulham College Academy Trust and the NUT. Several different submissions came from Hurlingham and Chelsea including from Phil Cross as Head, plus another from the staff body, with 59 signatories 'formally objecting' to the proposal. The response from the governing body, of which Stephen Greenhalgh is Chair, expressed concern at the proposal to locate a new boys' secondary school so close to Hurlingham & Chelsea. Stephen Greenhalgh wrote, in a personal capacity, that he supports the principle of the amalgamation of New King's and Sullivan schools. Hurlingham District Residents Association expressed concerns about the impact on the local area and requested a survey.

Favourable submissions (agreeing with the proposal) have been received from: the Chair and Head of New King's and Greg Hands MP.

Analysis is provided in background paper 2 - Report on public consultation feedback.

7. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Subject to the Cabinet Member decision, were it to be agreed to proceed with the proposal, the following statutory steps in the process must be undertaken and these are shown below with target dates:
1. Publication of Proposal. Scheduled for 21st October 2013
 2. Representation. This is a minimum of 6 weeks and is scheduled to begin on 21st October 2013 and run to 29th November 2013.
 3. Decision. A report to Cabinet Member for a decision will be made in December 2013 unless the matter is referred to an adjudicator.
 4. Implementation. There is no prescribed timetable but the Council has scheduled completion of the necessary arrangements including new governance documents by 1st April 2014.
- 6.2 Publication of the Proposal includes a Statutory Notice and a Complete Proposal. The Statutory Notice must be published in a local newspaper, displayed at the

Schools and at other conspicuous local places. In the case of New King's and Sullivan Schools this will be at other local Schools and libraries and in surrounding streets. The Complete Proposal must be sent to the Department for Education.

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1. An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The relevant statutory steps are outlined elsewhere in this report.

10. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The costs of the consultation process can be contained within existing budgets.

**Ian Heggs
Tri-Borough Director of Schools Commissioning**

APPENDICES

B. Summary and analysis of consultation

C. Statutory Notice

Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Background papers used in the preparation of this report

[Note: Please list only those that are not already in the public domain, i.e. you do not need to include Government publications, previous public reports etc.]

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Other Implications

1. Business Plan – this proposal will be included in the School Organisation and Investment Strategy
2. Risk Management – risks will be identified in subsequent reports
3. Health and Wellbeing, including Health and Safety Implications - none
4. Crime and Disorder - none
5. Staffing - staffing issues will be addressed in a subsequent report
6. Human Rights - none
7. Impact on the Environment - none
8. Energy measure issues - none
9. Sustainability - none
10. Communications – a consultation strategy will be implemented as part of this scheme

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

| No. | Description of Background Papers | Name/Ext of holder of file/copy | Department/ Location |
|------------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Report on public consultation feedback | Terry Broady 020 8753 3731 | FCS |
| 2. | Public notice of statutory proposal | Alan Wharton 020 7641 2911 | CS-SchDiv: RBKC |