

Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services to the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 22nd September 2021

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Subject:

School Organisation - including;

- School Expansion Programme
- Education Capital Funding
- Academy Conversions

Summary statement:

This report updates the committee on a number of key areas related to School Organisation in the Bradford District.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

This report updates the committee on a number of key areas related to School Organisation across the Bradford District.

2. BACKGROUND

The population growth in Bradford over the last decade increased pressure on primary school places, resulting in a large-scale expansion programme to meet the growth in demand. When current projects are completed, the built capacity for 9,300 additional primary school places will have been added across the District since 2010.

Increased pupil numbers at secondary level increased the pressure on secondary schools as higher numbers of pupils move through the system. When current projects are completed, 7,235 additional secondary school places will have been added across the District since 2011. These have been delivered as the opening of Free Schools' increases in published admission numbers (PAN); school expansions being carried out; and existing spaces being reconfigured as a result of sixth forms provisions closing. However, due to organisational changes some academies have decided to make PAN reductions which over time will result in a total reduction of 450 secondary school places.

The monthly data received from the Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust shows that the numbers of younger children living in the Bradford District is reducing. These reductions in the numbers of younger children are District wide and as such will have an effect on schools across the District. In some areas, schools have already experienced significant reductions in pupil numbers and have begun to make organisational changes and/or PAN reductions. PAN reductions which over time will result in a total reduction of 1910 primary school places have been agreed by the relevant decision makers (Council's Executive Committee, Academy Trusts, RSC) since 2019.

This reduction in numbers of younger children is not unique to the Bradford District. Local Authorities across the Yorkshire and Humber region, and nationally, are experiencing these changes. Data published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in July 2020 showed that the number of live births in England and Wales in 2019 were the lowest level recorded for the fourth consecutive year and were the fewest since 2004. ONS has not yet released the final annual birth statistics for 2020, but the provisional data release indicates that there were fewer births in 2020 than 2019.

The Council is also undertaking a programme of School Academy conversions in line with the requirements of the Academies Act 2010. To date, the Council has converted 114 schools to academy status. In addition, there are currently 10 Free Schools operating within the Bradford District, including the two new secondary Free Schools which opened in September 2019; Bronte Girls' Academy and Eden Boys Leadership Academy.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Mainstream provision:

Bradford Metropolitan District Council (the Local Authority) has a statutory duty under The Education Act 1996 Section 14(1) to ensure a sufficient number of school places for all children and young people who are resident within Bradford.

It is a requirement of the DfE that each Local Authority produces forecasts for primary and secondary schools.

The District is divided into planning areas:

- Primary places are planned in 26 areas
- Secondary places are planned in 8 areas.

Reception forecasts are based on calculations made between the health data and the numbers on roll recorded by schools in the statutory census returns.

Allocation trends are calculated and applied to the number of younger children in each area to predict the number of school places required in each of the next five years.

Forecasts for year 7 pupils are based on the allocation trends from each primary school, and the calculated percentage is applied to the number of pupils in each year group at each primary school to predict the number of school places required in each of the next seven years.

For all other year groups, a 'retention rate' using weightings over the previous three years is used to calculate the percentage in-year changes. This is applied to each actual cohort using census data for each school. Additional pupils who may come to live in approved housing developments are also included on individual school forecasts, although this can be risky as development timescales are often unknown.

Forecast information is used to inform decisions about the need for changes to the provision available; this includes responding to applications to the DfE for Free Schools, increasing or decreasing the number of places, changing the age range of schools and the possibility of introducing specialist provision in a mainstream school.

Specialist Provision for Children and Young People with SEND:

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to keep under review the specialist provision it makes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Whilst also ensuring there are sufficient specialist places available to meet the needs of the growing SEND population.

Bradford has experienced a significant increase in demand for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision in the last 10 years. It is projected that the demand for SEND provision in Bradford will continue to grow and it has been identified that additional specialist places across all sectors in the Bradford District will be required.

For the purposes of SEND sufficiency, we plan provision by Constituencies.

- Bradford South
- Bradford West
- Bradford East
- Keighley
- Shipley

Forecasting for SEND provision is based on analysing trends in Health data, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the SEN2 published data for children with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and allocation of place information.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

School Expansions

There are currently no new individual expansion projects that are over the value of £2million to report on.

The following school expansion projects are currently ongoing. The status of these schemes were reported to this Committee in August 2020.

Table 1: School Expansion over £2million

School	Stage	Current Status	Description	School Capacity Before Expansion	Places Created
Ilkley All Saints Primary	Stage 1 of 1	In Construction	Expansion	315	105
Silsden Primary School	Stage 1 of 1	In Construction	Expansion – new enlarged school building for Silsden Primary School – currently operating on a split site	568	60

School Condition Allocations

Since 2008, the School Condition Allocation (SCA) which is allocated to the Council on an annual basis for major repairs has been as follows:

Table 2: School Condition Allocation

Year	DfE SCA Allocation	Annual % Change
2008-09	£5,392,740	
2009-10	£5,818,955	7.9%
2010-11	£5,818,955	0.0%
2011-12	£7,884,044	35.5%
2012-13	£6,351,482	-19.4%
2013-14	£6,137,430	-3.4%
2014-15	£5,614,808	-8.5%
2015-16	£5,877,114	4.7%
2016-17	£5,856,472	-0.04%
2017-18	£3,718,970	-36%

2018-19	£3,428,127	-7.82%
2019-20	£3,004,603	-12.35%
2020-21	£2,804,799	-6.6%
2021-22	£3,264,643	16.34%
Total		

In August 2020 the Government announced additional SCA for 2020-21 of which Bradford received £1,302,601.

The Council's Building & Technical Services Team undertake projects such as window replacements, new boilers, roof renewals, electrical and structural works with the SCA.

School Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)

In addition to the SCA, Schools also receive a Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) allocation. This money is passed directly to schools.

Table 3: Annual School Devolved Formula Grant

Year	School DFC Allocation	Annual % Change
2008-09	£8,282,303	
2009-10	£8,116,273	-2.0%
2010-11	£7,531,530	-7.2%
2011-12	£1,567,639	-79.2%
2012-13	£1,488,626	-5.0%
2013-14	£1,453,034	-2.4%
2014-15	£1,317,713	-9.3%
2015-16	£1,310,363	-0.6%
2016-17	£1,315,559	0.4%
2017-18	£914,000	-31%
2018-19	£867,542	-5.08%
2019-20	£744,382	-14.2%
2020-21	£684,546	-8.0%
2021-22	£655,187	-4.3%

One-Off Additional School Capital Funding

In the 2018 Budget, the Government announced an extra £400 million of additional capital funding for schools in England for 2018-19.

Bradford received £1,494,260 on the 7th February 2019 which was passed onto schools directly by the DfE. A separate allocation was made to VA schools.

The DfE released further information on the School Rebuilding Programme in July 2021. They are consulting on the approach to prioritising schools for the future places in the programme. The consultation closes on 8th October 2021 and a full response from Bradford Local Authority will be submitted.

Basic Need Funding Allocation

Basic Need monies are allocated by the Department for Education based on the annual SCAP (DfE School Capacity Survey) return, which the Council completes each year. Funding is allocated 2 years in advance and fluctuates based on the demand for numbers and previous allocations made, in relation to that demand.

The figure of £23m in 2018/19 was allocated mainly to deal with the secondary expansion pressures.

Table 4: Basic Need Funding

Year	Basic Need Allocation	Annual % Change
2010-11	£11,009,000	
2011-12	£17,729,194	61.0%
2012-13	£19,611,561	10.6%
2013-14	£7,644,753	-61.0%
2014-15	£7,644,753	0.0%
2015-16	£9,223,125	20.6%
2016-17	£9,684,281	5.0%
2017-18	£727,005	-92.5%
2018-19	£23,839,673	3,179%
2019-20	£1,117,248	-95.3%
2020-21	£0	100%
2021-22	£2,857,066	100%
2022-23	£318,214	-88.86%

In 2017 £4million of the Basic Need grant was allocated to the SEND Development programme, to ensure the Council could meet its statutory duties in relation to SEND sufficiency. Since then a further £2.5million has been allocated and further discussions are on-going regarding the need for further allocations. Without these funds, we will be unable to carry out the required capital works to meet the growing demand for additional specialist places across the District.

In addition, please note - Bradford received a one off lump sum of £2,144,169 additional High Needs Capital Funding for 2021-22. This was awarded in March 2021.

A three-year Special Provision Grant of £1,120,110 covering a three-year period from 2018/19 was also awarded, which combined with the Basic Needs monies enabled the development of in excess of an additional 500 specialist places.

School Academy Conversions

Since the last report in August 2020, the below schools have converted to academy school status:

School	Conversion date	Academy Trust
Lister Primary School	1 st September 2020	Carlton Academy Trust
Our Lady & St Brendan's Catholic Primary School	1 st November 2020	Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Bradford)	1 st November 2020	Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust
St William's Catholic Primary School	1 st November 2020	Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust
Grove House Primary School	1 st November 2020	Pennine Academies Yorkshire
Marshfield Primary School	1 st December 2020	Carlton Academy Trust
Thorpe Primary School	1 st December 2020	Carlton Academy Trust
Cottingley Village Primary	1 st February 2021	Exceed Academies Trust
St Columba's Catholic Primary School	1 st March 2021	Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust
St Clare's Catholic Primary School	1 st September 2021	Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust

Please note - The School Condition Allocations that the Council receives (detailed in Table 2), reduces each year to reflect the number of schools which have converted to academy status. Building condition for Academies is funded directly by the Department for Education.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The Council requires the SCA to fund major school repairs required in Local Authority maintained schools.

Lack of Capital funding, increases the risks to SEND place development; which could lead to more children being placed out of authority in costly placements and away from their families and local communities.

The Construction Market is currently experiencing unprecedented price increases as a result of labour and material shortages due to the effects of the pandemic. Therefore, higher contingencies may be needed on projects to cover increasing costs. However, we will work closely with the Council's procurement team and Client Services Team to ensure that procurement is being undertaken in the most cost effective way in relation to the current market conditions being experienced.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The Local Authority must not discriminate directly or indirectly against any group or individual. The schools and any proposed new provision will continue to cater for the needs of all children and serve its community. As part of the proposed SEND expansion programme, an Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

All school improvement projects and school expansion schemes are carried out to current building standards. Energy efficient boilers, LED lighting and high levels of insulation are used wherever possible. Any new developments or changes to school buildings will be undertaken in a sustainable way which minimises the future impact of the Local Authority's carbon footprint.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

If children are able to attend their local provision wherever possible, this could lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The Human Rights Act incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights which provides that no person shall be denied the right to education.

7.6 TRADE UNION

None

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Section 3 shows the list of school expansions which are being undertaken and planned in different wards across the District.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Ward Councillors will be consulted on any proposed changes to Schools/Specialist Provision in their wards.

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

There are no direct impacts on corporate parenting. However, increases in Specialist Provision across the District will provide a wider choice within local communities, reducing

the need for out of District placements.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

None

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

None

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee notes the report.

11. APPENDICES

None

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th April 2019.

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20th August 2020.