

**PROPOSED EXTENSION OF AGE RANGE AND EXPANSION TO DITTON LODGE
FIRST SCHOOL, NEWMARKET**

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **7 July 2009**

From: **Service Director, Strategy and Commissioning
Children and Young People's Services (CYPS)**

Electoral division(s): **Wooditton**

Forward Plan ref: **2009/030** *Key Decision:* **Yes**

Purpose: **To:**

i) Advise Cabinet of the review of educational provision undertaken by Suffolk County Council and the impact of this on educational provision in Cambridgeshire; and

ii) Seek Cabinet's approval to extend the age range for Ditton Lodge First School from 4 – 9 years to an all through 4 –11 years Primary School, and to increase the size of the school to 210 places with effect from September 2011.

Recommendation: **Members are asked to:**

i) Note the outcome of the Suffolk review and comment on the impact on educational provision in Cambridgeshire; and

ii) Give their support to the publication of a statutory notice to extend the age range for Ditton Lodge First School from 4 – 9 years to an all through 4 –11 years Primary School, and to increase the size of the school to 210 places with effect from September 2011.

<i>Officer Contact:</i>		<i>Member contact</i>	
Name:	Hazel Belchamber	Name:	David Harty
Post:	Head of Infrastructure	Portfolio:	Learning
Email:	Hazel.belchamber@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	David.harty@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 699775	Tel:	01223 699173

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Educational provision for children living in the area of Newmarket which falls within Cambridgeshire's administrative boundary is currently provided at schools in both Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Children of Reception age and up to Year 4 (aged 4 to 9) attend Ditton Lodge First School, maintained by Cambridgeshire Local Authority (LA), and then transfer to schools maintained by Suffolk County Council for the rest of their education. St Felix Middle School caters for children from Year 5 to Year 8 (aged 9 to 13), whilst Newmarket College (Upper School) caters for children from Year 9 onwards (aged 13 to 19.) A map is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 In 2006 Suffolk commenced a review of the structure of their schooling system and have now completed an extensive consultation on their proposals to move from a three-tier system (first, middle and upper schools) to a two-tier system (primary and secondary). Suffolk's review is being conducted in three phases with a review of provision in Newmarket being part of Phase 2.
- 1.3 On 5 February 2009 Suffolk County Council's Cabinet approved the proposal to move to the primary and secondary school arrangement.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The Suffolk proposal is for all pupils who have started Year 3 and Year 4 at Ditton Lodge First School in September 2008 to transfer to Middle School at the end of their Year 4 in 2009 and 2010. All Middle Schools in the Newmarket area would then cease admitting pupils. In September 2011 Year 5 pupils would remain in primary education, transferring to secondary school at Newmarket College for Year 7 in September 2013.
- 2.2 As part of the consultation process Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Education local authorities arranged a joint meeting at Ditton Lodge First School on Thursday 13 November 2008, providing opportunities for staff, governors, parents and other members of the public to hear about the proposed changes and to make their views known.
- 2.3 The Head teacher and the Governing Body of Ditton Lodge First School support the proposal to extend the school's age range from 4 – 9 years to an all through 4 –11 years Primary School, and to increase the size of the school to 210 places with effect from September 2011.

3.0 PUPIL FORECASTS

- 3.1 Latest forecasts for Ditton Lodge First School indicate that the school will remain at full capacity for the foreseeable future. While the catchment area for the school is within the County boundary, parental preference for the school from Suffolk residents means that the school includes a large proportion of Suffolk children. Some Cambridgeshire residents in the catchment area of the school also opt to educate their children at other schools.

The chart below indicates the latest projections and assumes that the extension of the age range is implemented. As indicated, the expectation is that the school would be operating

at its proposed new capacity of 210 places by 2013/14.

Projected Numbers for Ditton Lodge First School

JANUARY	Child Health Register		Reception		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	Total	Pupil Admission	Number							
2007/08	28	30	30	29	31	23		143	30	
2008/09	20	29	29	29	28	29		144	30	
2009/10	23	30	29	29	29	28		145	30	
2010/11	19	30	30	29	29	29		147	30	
2011/12	24	30	30	30	29	29	30	178	30	
2012/13	13	30	30	30	30	29	30	30	209	30
2013/14		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210	30

- 3.2 There are limited options for the primary aged children living in the area served by Ditton Lodge First School to attend other primary schools in Cambridgeshire, because of the travel distances and transport costs involved. The number of children living in the catchment area is listed in the table above in the Child Health Register column.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resources and Performance

- 4.1.1 Careful consideration needs to be given to the timeline for this proposal, in order to achieve the best educational outcomes for the children involved during the transition period. Suffolk plans involve Year 5 children remaining at Ditton Lodge in September 2011, and the reduction of the number of children in the Middle Schools before the first Year 7 intake to Newmarket College in September 2013.
- 4.1.2 Outline plans for the proposed expansion of the school have been shared with the school's head teacher and the governing body. A Milestone 2 report (feasibility study) has been completed and this indicates that the site is large enough to enable the expansion to a 210 place primary school. The indicative cost of the proposal has been estimated at £3 million, which includes permanent accommodation for the pre-school which is currently housed in an ageing mobile on the school site. The next phase of the scheme is the detailed design stage, which will involve further planning work with the school governing body.
- 4.1.3 The scheme has already been identified as a priority in Cambridgeshire's Primary Capital Strategy and is currently in the Capital Programme for 2010/2011.
- 4.1.4 The issue of secondary provision has also been raised. A frequently expressed preference from some Ditton Lodge parents is to send their children to a Cambridgeshire secondary school, such as Bottisham or Soham Village Colleges, and not to Newmarket College. However the cost of transporting all secondary age children who live in the Ditton Lodge catchment area to a Cambridgeshire secondary school has been calculated to be in excess of £85,500 per annum. Children in the Ditton Lodge catchment area do live within walking distance of Newmarket College.

4.2 Statutory Requirements and Partnership Working

- 4.2.1 The Local Authority (LA) can publish expansion proposals for any category of maintained

school within Cambridgeshire. This proposal has emerged from partnership working with Suffolk County Council.

4.2.2 The resulting statutory notice was published on 14 May 2009, and also posted at the main entrance to the school in order to ensure that all those substantially affected have the opportunity to comment. In addition, the notice has been published on the County Council's website and sent to all statutory consultees. The published notice is attached as Appendix 2. There then follows a statutory period during which representations (e.g. objections or comments) can be made. These must be sent to the LA. The period for comments and objections is 6 weeks for an extension of the age range at a school. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposals and to ensure that the Decision Maker, who in this case will be Cabinet, taken them into account.

4.2.3 The statutory notice expired on Thursday 25 June 2009 and there were no written or verbal representations during this period.

4.3 Climate Change

4.3.1 Members are advised of the following climate change implications, relating to both climate change mitigation and adaptation, arising from the report.

a) Prevention of the need for additional children having to travel into Newmarket to complete their primary education.

b) Provision of purpose-built high quality post-16 facilities, which meet the Council's standards in terms of energy and water efficiency.

All building works have to achieve the Establishment's Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) very good standard as a minimum. Further work will be undertaken to assess the scope for going beyond the BREEAM very good standard, with a specific aim of reducing the carbon impact of the school accommodation.

4.4 Access and Inclusion

4.4.1 A duty of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 is that LAs should take account of the needs of all communities when planning educational provision and that the LA should seek actively to increase diversity of provision.

4.5 Engagement and Consultation

4.5.1 A period of consultation regarding the provision of education by Suffolk County Council in the Newmarket area commenced on Monday 22nd September 2008 and concluded on 15 December 2008. The Suffolk proposals require the closure of their Middle Schools, for children aged 9 to 13, and a move to the primary and secondary school arrangement found in the majority of local authorities.

4.5.2 The consultation meeting on Thursday 13 November 2008 was well attended, with 15 staff and governors present and 31 members of the public. The main concerns and issues raised at the meeting were:

- (i) Concerns about timing and funding of building works
- (ii) Whether the school could feed into Cambridgeshire for secondary provision
- (iii) Maintaining standards during the transition period

These concerns were addressed at the meeting by officers of the County Council. Items (i) and (ii) are addressed below. Item (iii) was addressed by the Head teacher who was positive about managing the change with a minimal impact on children. The Head teacher and the Governing Body support the proposed change.

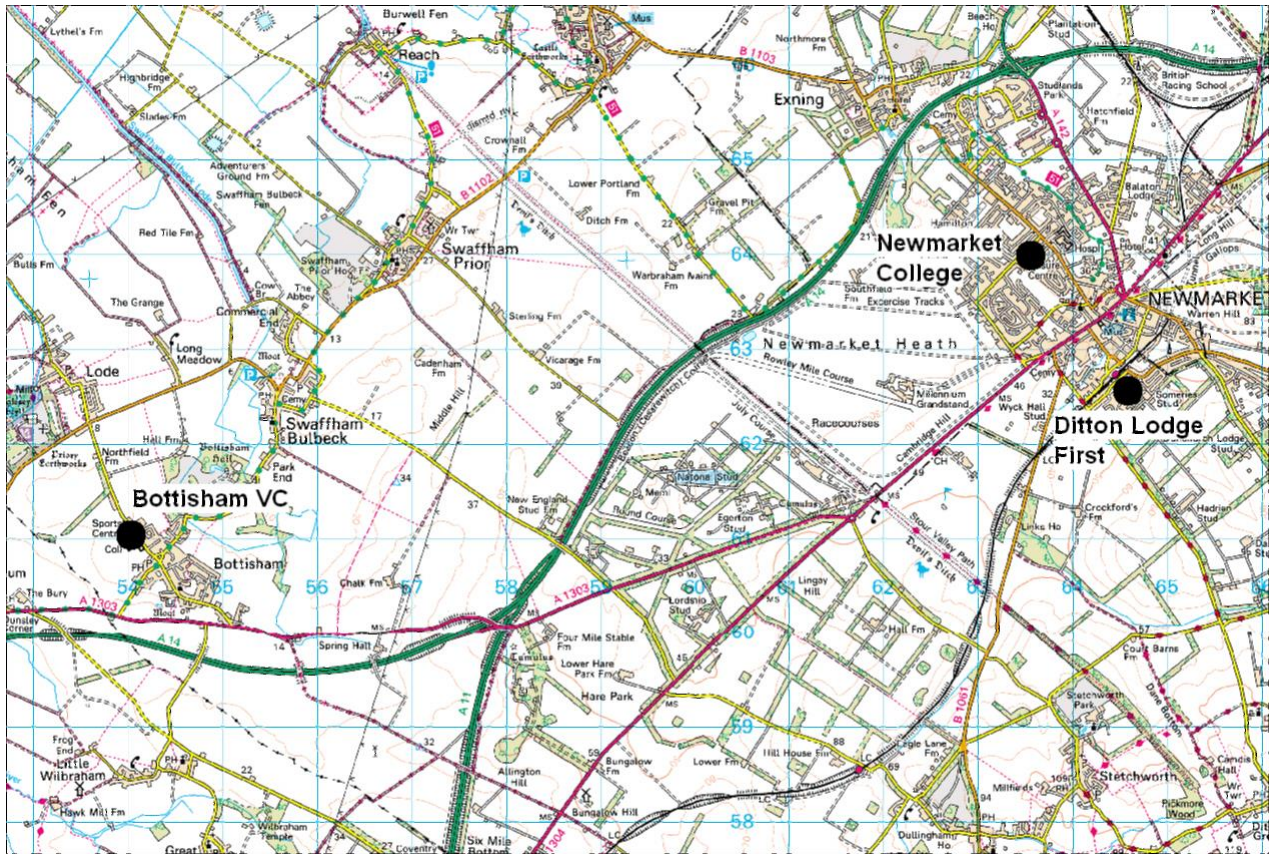
There were also 14 written responses sent to Suffolk LA, with 10 people in favour of the expansion. 63% of those who responded felt that they had been given enough time to consider the proposal and 76% felt that they had been given sufficient information regarding the phased expansion.

4.5.3 The secondary issue has been discussed with the relevant head teachers.

4.5.4 All the statutory requirements to consult in relation to this proposal have been complied with by the LA.

Source Documents	Location
Suffolk Consultation document Prescribed Alteration document	School Organisation & Planning Cambridgeshire County Council Box CC1206 , Castle Court, Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP

Appendix 1



Map to show the location of Ditton Lodge First School, Newmarket

Extension of the Age Range and Expansion to Ditton Lodge First School, Newmarket

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Cambridgeshire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Ditton Lodge First School, St John's Avenue, Crockfords Park, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 8BL, which is a community school in Cambridgeshire from 01 September 2011.

The proposal is to expand Ditton Lodge First School, from 150 to 210 places, and to extend the age range, from 4 to 9 years to 4 to 11 years, to become an all-through primary school.

Planned building work would begin in January 2010 and be completed in 2010/2011. The phased implementation of the extension of the age range would start in September 2011 when the rising 10 year olds (up to 30 Year 5 pupils) would remain at Ditton Lodge making a capacity of 180. In September 2012 the rising 11 year olds (up to 30 Year 6 pupils) would remain at the school and the total roll at Ditton Lodge would rise to 210.

The current capacity of the school is 150 with the current number of pupils registered at the school in January 2009 being 144. The proposed new capacity of the school would be 210. The current admission number for the school is 30 and the proposed admission number will be 30.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from the county website at: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/> or from David Clark, see contact details below.

The period for comments and objections for expanding the school is 4 weeks from the date of publication of this proposal. The period for comments and objections for a change of age range to the school is 6 weeks from the date of publication of this proposal.

Any person wishing to object or make comments on the proposals should do so by sending them to:

David Clark, Cambridgeshire County Council, Box CC1206, Castle Court, Castle Hill,
Cambridge, CB3 0AP.

Telephone: 01223 699782

Email: david.clark@cambridgeshire.gov.uk .

Signed: Gordon Jeyes

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