

**PROPOSED NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL AT HAMPTON GARDENS,
PETERBOROUGH**

To: Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Date: 29 July 2014

From: Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults

Electoral division(s): Norman Cross, Sawtry & Ellington

Forward Plan ref: 2014/024 **Key decision:** Yes

Purpose: To advise the Committee of the pressure upon secondary school places in Peterborough and the implications this has for securing future school places for Cambridgeshire pupils living in Farcet and Yaxley whose catchment school is Stanground, Peterborough.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to approve the proposal to commission secondary school places for children from Farcet and Yaxley at the proposed new secondary school at Hampton Gardens, Peterborough and making the school the catchment school for children from these communities.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 When Peterborough City Council (PCC) became a separate unitary authority in 1997, it was agreed to continue the arrangements for pupils resident in the Yaxley, Farcet and Elton areas of Cambridgeshire to be part of the catchment areas of secondary schools in Peterborough. Under this arrangement, the villages of Yaxley and Farcet are part of the catchment area for Stanground Academy, whilst Elton is part of the Nene Park Academy catchment. Pupils living in Yaxley and Farcet are entitled to free transport to Stanground on road safety grounds; this distance is under the 3 mile statutory walking distance.
- 1.2 There is a long established trend of parental preference applications, from Yaxley and, to a lesser degree Farcet, for places at Sawtry Community College (CC) Academy from Yaxley. Around 55 children each year are successful in obtaining places at the school. This equates to around 25% of Sawtry's total roll.
- 1.3 Like Cambridgeshire, Peterborough has in recent years experienced an increase in primary aged pupils. As these larger cohorts move through they will begin to increase demand for secondary places from the middle of this decade. In particular, there are demographic pressures upon Fletton and Woodston, which are the areas of Peterborough closest to Stanground Academy. Consequently, the Council has concerns that Cambridgeshire parents may find themselves unable to secure places at Stanground Academy in future.
- 1.4 A planning application has been submitted for a major housing development at Great Haddon to be built in several phases over an extended period of time, likely to be 10-15 years. Within the masterplan, PCC has secured sites for three primary schools and a new secondary school. The Great Haddon school would be the closest secondary school for children living in Yaxley, but as it is to be built solely to serve the Great Haddon development, it is unlikely that it would have any capacity to accommodate children from Yaxley/Farcet.
- 1.5 Hampton College, which was opened by PCC in September 2005, will shortly be too small to meet the growing primary population of Hampton Hargate and Hampton Vale. In addition, there is currently no designated secondary school for the two primary schools planned for Hampton Gardens. In response, PCC has identified the need to create additional secondary capacity at Hampton Gardens by opening a new 1200 place (8 form entry (FE))¹ plus a 300 place sixth form in September 2017 (see map attached as Appendix 1).
- 1.6 Under this proposal the Council would commission secondary places at Hampton Gardens for children living in Farcet and Yaxley and would secure these as part of a legal agreement with PCC.

¹ A form of entry is the number of class groups in the first year of entry, and assumes 30 in each class. This multiplied by the number of years (5 years in a secondary school) gives the total pupil numbers in the school e.g. 8 x 30 x 5 = 1200

2. MAIN ISSUES

Pupil places

2.1 The Council's Research and Performance Team have undertaken a thorough analysis of the local demography, catchment forecasts and option patterns and advise that it would be reasonable to plan on the basis that Farcet and Yaxley children would require between 4 and 5 FE (120 – 150 Year 7 places) if their catchment secondary school were to become Hampton Gardens.

2.1.2 The pattern of sixth form provision in PCC is similar to that in north Cambridgeshire (Huntingdonshire). All Peterborough secondary schools have a sixth form and, generally, Year 11 students remain at their secondary school at post-16 stage because Peterborough does not have any sixth form colleges or a Further Education (FE) college that offers 'A' levels.

2.1.3 Cambridgeshire pupils from Farcet in particular, and to a lesser degree Yaxley, would live further from the proposed new school than their PCC peers. Therefore, it would be essential to ensure, when developing the admissions criteria for the new school, that Cambridgeshire pupils were not disadvantaged. To address this, the approach Council officers would propose is that of a defined catchment with named partner primary schools both of which should give children living in that area a higher priority of admission than those with a sibling connection. Securing school places for Cambridgeshire pupils is of paramount importance and would be reflected as such in legal agreements drawn up with PCC in order to safeguard the Council's investment.

2.2 Potential impact upon Sawtry Community College (CC)

2.2.1 The Published Admission Number (PAN) for Sawtry CC is 230 (or 7.6 FE) and the school has the capacity to accommodate 1150 pupils plus sixth form.

2.2.2 Sawtry CC has a falling roll. The demography within its catchment area is that of an ageing population. In addition, there is no planned housing development of any significant size in the school's catchment area. Until September 2012 it had been operating on 8FE across all year groups, dropping to 7FE in its Year 7 intake in September 2013. In September 2014 it will take 6FE into Year 7, a reflection of the falling demography within its catchment area. Over recent years, the numbers in the sixth form have been around 200, made up almost exclusively of students who entered the school at secondary stage and have remained at the school post-16.

2.2.3 Demographic forecasts indicate that even if, in the future, Sawtry CC Academy were to attract no children from Yaxley/Farcet, it would still be a viable size at 5FE. If it were also to lose children from Alconbury and Alconbury Weston to the secondary school at the proposed development at Alconbury Weald, it would potentially reduce in size to 4FE which is the same size as the smallest secondary school in Cambridgeshire. Sawtry CC is concerned that a reduction in secondary pupil numbers will jeopardise the future viability of its sixth form.

- 2.2.4 The chart below shows that Sawtry CC would not be large enough to accommodate both its secondary catchment population and the children from Farcet and Yaxley whose catchment is currently Stanground Academy in Peterborough.

Academic year	Total 11-15 yr olds in catchment		Total 11-15 yr olds combined catchment	Capacity of Sawtry CC	Deficit
	Sawtry	Yaxley/Farcet			
2017/18	689	744	1433	1150	283
2018/19	675	767	1442	1150	292
2019/20	680	761	1441	1150	291
2020/21	656	779	1435	1150	285
2021/22	648	800	1448	1150	298
2022/23	650	805	1455	1150	305

- 2.2.6 Even if Sawtry CC were large enough to combine the above two secondary pupil populations, its current OfSTED status (Special Measures) means that it would not be allowed to expand.

3 Selection of school sponsor

- 3.1 The proposed new school would open as an Academy or Free School under the requirements of the 2011 Education Act. PCC has successfully commissioned a number of Free Schools recently and its preference is for the new school to also open as a Free School in the expectation that the Department for Education (DfE) would make capital funding available for this, and would provide additional revenue support.

- 3.1.1 The Department for Education (DfE) sets the timetable for Free School applications. The last rounds were in January 2014 (Wave 6) and May 2014 (Wave 7). The outcomes of the January 2014 applications have not yet been announced. The next round has been published as 'autumn/October 2014' (Wave 8) but no specific date has been released yet for the application deadline. No further rounds have been announced beyond Wave 8 and, although this has not been confirmed either way, because of the impending elections in May 2015 it is highly possible that the October 2014 round will be the final round before the General Election.

- 3.1.2 The timetable to secure a school sponsor in time for that sponsor to submit a Free School application for the October 2014 round is tight.

- Deadline for education providers to submit their proposals – 25 July 2014
- Joint PCC/CCC selection panel – 5 September 2014

If the Committee confirms its agreement to CCC commissioning places at the proposed new secondary school, the selection panel would comprise both Members and Officers from PCC and CCC.

3 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

Providing access to local and high quality mainstream education will enhance the skills of the local workforce. The school would also provide local employment.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

If pupils have access to local schools and associated services, they are more likely to attend them by either cycling or walking rather than by bus or car. It is likely to be easier for them to access out-of-school activities such as sport and homework clubs and to develop friendship groups within their own community. This will contribute to the development of both healthier and more independent lifestyles.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

4.1.1 The cost of the project would be shared 50:50 between the two councils (reflecting the proportion of school places which will be required for Cambridgeshire pupils). PCC has received £2m in S106 funding from the developer of Hampton Gardens. This project currently features in the 2017/18 year of the Children, Families and Adults (CFA) 5-year Capital Programme with an attached figure of £20m. However, this was an initial, indicative figure based on the costs of delivering a 750 place (5FE) secondary school in Cambourne (which included land acquisition and highway improvement works).

4.1.2 PCC recently commissioned a feasibility study on the proposed school site which confirmed that the key risks associated with the proposed scheme are predominantly as a result of the ground conditions:

- Site of a former brick works and the ground is made up of pulverised fuel ash which will need to be removed to a depth of between 13 and 19 metres
- No local draining connections
- Limited site access

4.1.3 These conditions create abnormal costs, around £3m - £4m in excess of those which would normally be associated with delivering an 8FE secondary school with sixth form. Consequently, the potential costs of establishing the school could be £27m. However, this figure could be reduced significantly if the option of opening the school as a Free School were to attract capital funding based on PCC's experience of opening the City of Peterborough Academy as a Free School in September 2012 when they secured £7m from the DfE towards the capital costs.

4.1.4 The Council's aim is, wherever possible, for children to attend schools that are local to where they live and to which they can walk and cycle. It currently spends £130,000 per annum on home/school transport for pupils living in

Farcet and Yaxley attending Stanground Academy. This proposal would represent a revenue saving on transport costs as an essential requirement of the project.

4.2 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

- 4.2.1 There are specific statutory requirements to be followed in seeking to secure a sponsor for the new secondary school under the provisions of the Education Act 2011. Whilst PCC would lead the process for the establishment of a new secondary school within their own Authority, County Council Members and Officers would be full participants in the process.
- 4.2.2 This joint proposal would be a first for both Councils. For the County Council there are a number of risks associated with contributing funding to a capital project based in another Council's area. Officers have engaged with their Legal Services colleagues to identify the risks and how they could be mitigated to protect the County Council's interests and the interests of families living in Yaxley and Farcet. These include:
- An indemnity to reflect the fact that the building contract would be between PCC and the contractors not the County Council
 - A funding agreement
 - County Council representation on the project board
 - Protection of school places for Cambridgeshire students for whom the secondary at Hampton Gardens would be their designated catchment, and associated admissions criteria.
- 4.2.3 It has emerged from very recent discussions with PCC that they are seeking to reduce their contribution by a figure, as yet unascertained, in relation to the value of the land. They have indicated at this early stage that they may seek further financial input from CCC as a result. We can presently see no rationale for this and have made it clear that this would not be acceptable. It is long established practice, endorsed by Cabinet on 28 January 2014, that CCC secures sites in housing developments at nil cost and we would expect to apply this approach in this case.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 4.3.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are able to attend their local mainstream school where possible, with only those children with the most complex and challenging needs requiring places at specialist provision. This would be part of our requirements.
- 4.3.2 The accommodation provided for delivery of secondary education would fully comply with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty and current Council standards.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation

- 4.4.1 To date consultation has taken the form of a briefing for the Children and Young People's (CYP) Spokes and a briefing meeting held jointly for local Members and Spokes with their PCC counterparts on 6 May 2014 to outline

the feasibility work undertaken, options for finding an educational sponsor and an indicative procurement and building programme if the school were to open in September 2017. One of the two local Members was able to attend the briefing and responded very positively by expressing the view that the proposal would offer a more local, easily accessible secondary school for the local north Cambridgeshire communities of Yaxley and Farcet.

- 4.4.2 A similar briefing for Huntingdonshire and Peterborough headteachers took place on 3 June 2014.
- 4.4.3 In addition the lead education officer for school place planning in the Huntingdonshire area has met on several occasions with the deputy headteacher at Sawtry CC Academy and the local Member in response to concerns expressed by them about the impact of a new school at Hampton Gardens could have on its ability to continue to attract parental preference applications from Yaxley and Farcet and the impact on overall reduction in secondary pupils would have on maintaining viable sixth form provision at the school.
- 4.4.4 A consultation event will take place in Yaxley on 16 July 2014 to give the local communities, whose families would be directly affected if a new secondary school at Hampton Gardens were to become their catchment school rather than Stanground Academy, the opportunity to express their views on the proposal. A briefing paper has been published on the Council's website.

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

As outlined in section 4.4 above the local Members and CYP Spokespersons have been fully briefed at the formative stages of this proposal.

4.6 Public Health

- 4.6.1 The school will be accessible to pupils as either pedestrians or cyclists.

Source Documents	Location
Analysis of Yaxley and Farcet Data by Research and Performance Team, September 2013	Castle Court B202
Site feasibility report prepared by Rider Levett Bucknall	Castle Court B202