



## CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 August 2012 (Special)

**Subject Heading:**

Commissioning School Places Strategy  
2012/13 – 2016/17

**CMT Lead:**

Sue Butterworth  
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**Policy context:**

The Strategy has implications for all wards in the borough.

In accordance with Paragraph 17 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Rules, a requisition signed by two Members representing more than one Group (Councillors Keith Darvill and Gillian Ford) has called in the decision of the Cabinet Member dated 11 July 2012. The text of the requisition appears at the end of this report:

### **CABINET DECISION**

At its meeting on 11 July 2012 Cabinet considered the Commissioning of School Places Strategy 2012/13 – 2016/17 and made the following decisions:

1. To approve the draft Commissioning School Places Strategy 2012/13-2016/17 (CSPS)
2. To approve the circulation of the draft CSPS for consultation to all stake holders in school place planning
3. To delegate the determination of the final CSPS, to the Cabinet Member for Children Service's and the Group Director for Children's Services.
4. To note that a further report will be going to Cabinet in September 2012, which will set out the details of each expansion scheme, the consultation process and indicative costs and funding for each scheme

**Reasons for decisions:**

This decision is necessary to progress the strategy for ensuring there are sufficient school places in Havering to meet the rising pupil population.

**Other options considered and rejected:**

It was considered that the Council could proceed with the expansion programme without an agreed CSPS in place. However as the Council is in the leadership role

for this major and long term expansion programme it should be consulting with stake holders on its proposed strategy for meeting the challenge of the rising school population and in so doing reduce the risk of these plans being unsuccessful.

### **REASONS FOR REQUISITION**

1. To examine the availability of spare accommodation which will meet some of the increased demand (see para 2.4. of the Report to Cabinet)
2. To examine the implications of the proposed strategy for home to school travel particularly relating to primary schools.
3. To consider the financial difficulties that schools will face as a consequence of the increase in pupil numbers in the current funding arrangements.
4. Page 58, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph down it quotes 2006/07 as the beginning of the birth rate rise however in the second paragraph from the bottom it suggests 2007/08 as the beginning of the increase. Could you please confirm the correct year.
5. Page 61, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph down, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence needs re wording as it currently doesn't make sense.
6. Page 64, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph from the bottom refers to the Technical feasibility work on secondary schools is this all schools including academies or just community schools?
7. In fairly recent times we have experienced school closures and amalgamations; under the premise primary numbers were falling. How have you mitigated the risk against unnecessary growth or insufficient growth?
8. Admissions are currently overseen by the authority in partnership with schools; however Academies and Free schools will determine their own admission numbers. What measures are being put in place to alleviate the pressures this would bring to community schools budgets and the availability of pupil places?
9. Have any sites been considered for the development of Academies or Free schools and how many expressions of interest have been shown to date?
10. Thurrock now has Primary Academies. How many Primary schools have shown an interest in becoming Academies in Havering?
11. The debate around Free schools is increasing intensity. Could the Cabinet Member confirm if representation has been made to the DFE concerning the free for all that will develop when Academies and Free Schools determine admission numbers, the lack of cohesion academies and Free Schools bring to borough standards of education and if representation has been made to Ministers over the pressures the new housing policy is having on school admission numbers?
12. Any growth or shrinkage of schools becomes a hot potato for parents and residents. Would the Cabinet member agree to the Children Overview & Scrutiny supporting this process before decisions are taken and could we have a reassurance that the relevant ward Councillors are briefed on any proposals in their area.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Committee considers the requisition of the decision of Cabinet and determine whether to uphold it.**