

## Notes of Public Consultation Meeting

### Primary School Expansion 2011 – Public Consultation Meeting Burlington Infant and Nursery School

Monday 26 March 2010, 19:00 – 21.00

#### Officers Present:

**Tina Herring** - Head of Learning & School Effectiveness

**Rosemary Hafeez**

**Katharine Thorn** - Information Officer, Learning and Children's Services

**Mary Cowell** - Head Teacher, Burlington Infant and Nursery School

**Chair of Governors** for both Burlington Infant School and Burlington Junior School were also at the meeting.

There were 18 people present at the meeting.

#### Presentation

Tina Herring welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a presentation on expansion of Primary Schools 2011. The presentation outlined our statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient school places for all children who need one and Kingston's proposal to meet this demand through school expansion in the Maldens and Coombe area. The presentation is attached as Annex A.

#### Comments and Questions

The table below outlines the main comments made and questions asked together with the response given by officers.

Comment/Question	Response
<p><b>Question around the land considered when looking at building a school in Maldens and Coombe.</b></p> <p>Was the old B&amp;Q site considered as a possible site? It was available before the first bulge class was built.</p> <p>Would it have been feasible to have had the Infants opposite Burlington (old B&amp;Q site) and the Juniors on the Infant/Junior site?</p>	<p>TH was not able to specify whether the particular site in question (old B&amp;Q site) was considered. Land was looked at in detail. We employed an independent land agent and only 1 useful site was found and this is in Surbiton (the Surbiton Hospital site). Therefore we are pursuing a proposal for school expansion in Maldens and Coombe rather than the building of a new school.</p> <p>TH also referred to a school in North London which was a popular school, similar to Burlington, and it did not want to have a new school opposite reducing their intake of pupils. They took their case to expand to 4 FE to the School Adjudicator and the School Adjudicator ruled in favour of expansion rather than a new school. All of these issues need to be considered when looking at sites.</p> <p>MC also felt that as a school that they would not have liked to have moved across the road.</p> <p>Also we have to be cautious about considering land very close to the boundary between Kingston and other neighbouring local authorities, as it is our responsibility to provide places for all children living in Kingston and it is this need that we are seeking to meet.</p>

<p>Does that mean that building a school in Maldens and Coombe is definitely not going to happen now?</p> <p>Parent living in Grove area has 2 faith schools close by with their own admissions criteria and too low down on waiting list for Burlington as nearest Community School.</p>	<p>We have looked everywhere and there is not the land available to build a new school in Maldens and Coombe.</p> <p>TH reiterated that there are spaces at Corpus Christi and that the school takes a large number (approx 50%) of children from non-faith backgrounds. Also in the last 2 years of bulge classes the distance between the schools and pupils attending the school went much further out.</p> <p>We have inherited different schools across the borough and the location of nearest community school varies from area to area. We now have to maintain this balance of provision.</p>
<p>Query on the physical capacity of the school – the school doesn't want to lose the land it currently has.</p> <p>Also if the results of the consultation indicate that parents/residents do not want the school to expand what will happen?</p> <p>When will access, road capacity etc be looked at?</p>	<p>Burlington is a very popular school and has the physical capacity to expand. Although this is the Local Authorities consultation, we would not expand without the full support of the governing bodies. No school will be forced to expand if they didn't want to. What we do know at Burlington is that there is real demand for places. The bulge classes have been full and we have a waiting list. The Governing body have supported this proposal to be put forward for consultation. Also last summer's consultation indicated that people would want expansion here.</p> <p>We will not go ahead if people are not happy. However we would not have put forward this option without support. Proposals have risk factors, the highest risk factors have not been chosen. We have got surplus in Maldens and Coombe so we may have enough places, but would need to ask for a temporary classroom whilst we look at other options. There is not a 'plan B', as there are not many options, other temporary measures would have to be put into place, which is not ideal but would be necessary in the short term. We are confident we can come to a good solution for creating school places through our experience in working with schools, parents and local residents.</p> <p>Access, road capacity etc will be considered at the planning stage. This will be part of a separate consultation.</p>
<p>One parent was concerned for a friend who had not received a place at Corpus Christi and had very few other options (Christ Church and Burlington both being full).</p>	<p>TH had checked with the School Admissions team on the day of the meeting and can state that there are spaces available at Corpus Christi. TH encouraged the parent to contact the School Admissions team. KT gave parent her contact details if parent wanted help following this up.</p>
<p>Query on forecasting – how has this been improved?</p>	<p>TH – 2 years ago our projections were wrong, along with most of London and other areas across England. Before this our figure had been accurate for 10 years and we were not prepared</p>

	<p>for the huge increase in demand for places. The projections are now much stronger and much tighter to birth rate data. Last year we were only 10 pupils out in our projections and this year we are currently 10 pupils under are projection, but there is still time for this to change, especially as take up and parental choice has a huge impact.</p>
<p>At the moment we can see that there is a need for expansion but what happened when it get to 2013/14 is this process going to start again?</p>	<p>A key aspect of the expansion programme is the Primary Capital Programme (PCP) funding for ensuring that schools are fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. If we expand and then the numbers do not continue we would have space that school's would relish and if it rises we do have capacity that has been built into our plans for expansion (i.e. surplus places).</p>
<p>Query around building permissions – why is there not a stronger relationship between housing and education in terms of not allowing new housing developments in areas where there is not capacity for school places.</p>	<p>There is a Government requirement to build more housing, which has to be built into our estimates. Therefore there are real pressures from these two areas (housing and school places) and we agree this needs to be joined up as much as possible. The Planning Committee is a separate body with clear statutory guidance is adheres to. We can inform our places planning with information and data on housing about what buildings have been given permission, but we cannot stop building taking places – this committee has to work independently. However the key is that we have a much stronger relationship with planning and that conversations are happening between planning (housing) and school places planning.</p> <p>We have also learnt lessons in terms of previous assumptions about the size of a property and the number of children that are likely to live there, e.g. children living in one bedroom flats.</p>
<p>One parent was concerned with the reference to parental 'preference' when it is often necessity. The parent cannot work and get their child to any other school (other than Burlington – through a relative at the school).</p>	<p>TH knows that this is a common problem, but it is not something that the admissions process can take into account, particularly because it is such a common issue amongst parents.</p>
<p>Question around how children attending the school will be affected by the building work.</p>	<p>TH explained that there was not a work plan yet but that building work will happen as pragmatically as possible, using the modular buildings which are already on site to minimise the impact on children. However it has to be acknowledged that there will be an impact on children, but as much as possible we will make this a positive learning experience. TH used the example of St Mary's Primary which has had huge building works, doubling in size, but it has made it a really positive learning experience with look and see holes, a media team etc. The noisiest building work will happen at a time convenient for schools, often in school holidays.</p> <p>Mary Cowell – from working with the planning</p>

	<p>teams for the expansion it seems likely that the building for both schools will happen at the same time. However the impact can be minimised with the 2 schools working together. Mary has seen lots of building work happen whilst she has been at the school, largely because it is a 100 year old building, so they are used to building work and feels that things have really improved in terms of the relationship between planners, builders and schools at lessening the impact on children.</p>
<p>In 2011 if we are not full to capacity is mixed year classes a possibility?</p>	<p>This is unlikely given the demand for places at Burlington. There is no guarantee but it is unlikely at this school. Mary also felt that this would not be an issue at Burlington.</p>
<p>Will classes increase more than 30 per class?</p>	<p>There are no plans to increase class size above 30. That has been the solution in other local authorities, but not a solution we have adopted in our school expansion proposals.</p>
<p>One local resident asked why consultation documents had not been sent to local residents? Are Kingston not obligated to keep local residents, as well as parents, informed of their proposals?</p> <p>Also concern was raised about people commenting on schools they are not familiar with.</p> <p>Concern re: not getting local paper delivered to their flats so missing the consultation being advertised.</p>	<p>The consultation has been advertised in local papers, on the Royal Borough of Kingston Website, in Libraries as well as children's centres, schools and early years providers. This is a consultation on the principle of expansion and therefore not distributed door to door.</p> <p>One resident was concerned that there were no consultation forms in their local library, but another resident had picked one up at New Malden Library on the day of the meeting. KT has sent additional consultation documents to New Malden and Old Malden library in case these libraries need additional documents.</p> <p>We are aware that people could tactical respond to the consultation. However we cannot stop people doing this, people are free to respond as they wish. We will acknowledge in our reporting if we think this has happened.</p> <p>Noted that local papers are not delivered in some areas. This is particularly important for consultations at the planning stage, when local residents will be sent documents.</p>

Tina Herring, Head of Learning & School Effectiveness, thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged parents to complete the expansion consultation.