

SCRUTINY PANEL

25 February 2016

PROVISION OF SCHOOL PLACES

Report of the Director for People

Strategic Aim:	Creating a brighter future for all		
Exempt Information	No		
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Lifelong Learning		
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REPORT TO SCRUTINY ON PUPIL PLACES v2 100216

Version control: v2 100216. Based upon: *Report on Pupil Places v1E 100216.*

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Panel approve the recommendations to:

- a. continue to monitor demand for places in Uppingham;
- b. review the situation using the annual SCAP (school capacity survey) process in July. This will include a further analysis of pupil yield from new housing.
- c. report to Cabinet / Scrutiny on findings in October 2016.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report was requested by the Scrutiny Committee as an update to the report presented to Cabinet 17 March 2015 (68/2015) and the supplementary report to Cabinet 21 April 2015 (81/2015). It provides further background information on the current position regarding pupil place planning in Rutland. It includes information on the key factors influencing demand for pupil places and the projections of future demand.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 The purpose and impact of the March 2015 report.

- 2.1.1 The purpose of the March 2015 report (68/2015) to Cabinet was to provide:

- background information on the context and current position regarding Pupil Place Planning;
- information on the key factors influencing demand for pupil places;
- projections of future demand;
- a strategy to match demand for places;
- a process for consultation on opening a new 210 place primary school in Oakham;
- funding arrangements (“Basic Needs Fund”) for expanding school place provision in Oakham and Uppingham.

2.1.2 The March 2015 report was approved and the recommendations were implemented.

2.2 The key points of the March 2015 report;

2.2.1 The Pupil Place Plan (Appendix 1 of the March 2015 report) provided information under the headings below.

- Trends in Rutland.
- School Places in September 2014.
- Changes in Pupil Numbers.
- How school places are planned.¹
- Providing School Places for Different Areas of Rutland.
- Demand for School Places in Urban Areas.
- Future School Places.
- Admissions Arrangements.
- Next Steps.

2.2.2 As pupil numbers vary, the Council is required to tailor the number of school places to match. It is a matter of judgement what level of surplus is required to allow for future growth (or reduction) in pupil numbers. The Audit Commission does not stipulate a single level of surplus places that would be appropriate, but has stated that 10% surplus capacity is generally agreed as the level that provides a prudent strategic use of resources and supports the process of providing an opportunity for parents to express a preference (*Audit Commission School Places Tool*, 2010).

¹ See this section in Appendix 1 of the March 2015 report for method of calculating pupil numbers and level of demand.

- 2.2.3 The task of managing the supply of places is exacerbated by the variation in pupil numbers both in year and between years. In addition, Rutland faces the specific challenge of MOD movements. Schools can face quite large variations in their pupil numbers as MOD personnel move into and away from the military bases in Rutland or go on tour.
- 2.2.4 In analysing the provision in 2014-15, the Report concluded that more school places were needed in Rutland for 2015/16, but that the pattern of demand was not simple. Due to a range of factors, not just housing developments, the Oakham area would require additional places at both primary and secondary level. A similar requirement was identified in the Uppingham area.
- 2.2.5 In contrast, some parts of Rutland were shown to have surplus school places; these were mainly in the east of Rutland in the Great Casterton area.

2.3 The proposal contained within the March 2015 report

- 2.3.1 Recognising the need to increase school places, Appendix 1 of the Report, - headed *Pupil Place Plan 2015-2020* - contained four proposals. These are copied below.

68/2015 March 2015 Report: Proposal

- a. *“To build a new 210 places primary school in the Oakham area to address the projected demand largely arising from the pupil yield from major housing developments in Oakham.*
- b. *To open this school in the 2017/18 school year and to undertake a graduated admission process commencing with 30 reception age children, 15 Year 1 and 15 Year 2 children.*
- c. *To immediately install classrooms in 2 primary schools in the Oakham area to provide 60 primary places for the period 2015-2016.*
- d. *To install classrooms in one or two primary school in Uppingham in 2015 to provide up to 60 primary places for the period 2015-2020.”*

2.4 The recommendations to Cabinet regarding the March 2015 report

- 2.4.1 The recommendations of the March 2015 Report included the proposal described above and actions needed to realise the proposal. The recommendations were approved² and implemented directly.

68/2015 March 2015 Report: Recommendations to Cabinet

1. *That Cabinet authorise the release of Basic Need funding as detailed in financial section 11 of the report.*
2. *That Cabinet agree the strategy for “Providing School Places for Local Children 2015-2020” and the proposal contained within it.*
3. *That Cabinet approve the consultation process for provision of a new primary school in Oakham as outlined at Appendix 4.*

² See *Record of Decisions* Cabinet 17 March 2015.

2.4.2 At this stage, there is no reason to change or add to the recommendations of the March 2015 report.

2.5 An update on action taken in the light of the report.

We provide below an update on each of the four elements of the proposal.

2.5.1 *“To build a new 210 places primary school in the Oakham area to address the projected demand largely arising from the pupil yield from major housing developments in Oakham.”*

UPDATE: consultation has taken place and expressions of interest were invited to create a new free school. At the point of writing, one organisation has expressed interest in creating a “free school”, being Catmose Academy Trust. Detailed proposals are expected from the Trust in early 2016. The timetable currently is on target for completion as planned.

2.5.2 *“To open this school in the 2017/18 school year and to undertake a graduated admission process commencing with 30 reception age children, 15 Year 1 and 15 Year 2 children.”*

UPDATE: no changes are expected to this proposal. However, this being a free school, the intended owner has authority to establish their own admission arrangements (unless the Government imposes specific conditions).

2.5.3 *“To install classrooms in 2 primary schools immediately in the Oakham area to provide 60 primary places for the period 2015-2016.”*

UPDATE: this work is complete. Two additional classrooms have been created in Brooke Hill Academy. A further classroom is currently under construction in English Martyrs Primary School, providing an additional 22 places. This work should be completed by late spring 2016.

2.5.4 *“To install classrooms in one or two primary schools in Uppingham in 2015 to provide up to 60 primary places for the period 2015-2020.”*

UPDATE: this proposal was based upon predicted increases in pupil numbers at primary level in Uppingham. However, this increase has not been realised. It is believed that this was caused by the change in the admissions policy of Uppingham Community College.³

³ UCC changed its admissions policy for 2015. The new policy no longer gave priority to children from the two Uppingham primary schools in applying for the secondary school. We may infer that parents no longer felt the need to send their children to an Uppingham primary school in order to get a secondary place at UCC.

Consequently, the need for further primary places reduced. The additional classroom was not, therefore, installed. This situation is being monitored; the proposal will be reinstated if numbers rise substantially again.

At time of writing (21/1/2016), the demand from Rutland residents is:

2016	PAN ⁴	1 st choice	2 nd choice
Leighfield	30	18	10
Uppingham CoE	30	17	8

We have yet to receive the number of requests from out-of-county residents. Last year's out-of-county demand levels were:

2015	Out-of-County
Leighfield	1
Uppingham CoE	1

2.6 Any issues that remain to be addressed

All issues raised in the March 2015 report have been addressed. There are no outstanding issues, except in relation to the level of demand for extra places in the Uppingham area.

2.7 Any changes to the analysis and key points; any additions

2.7.1 Key points relate to: secondary school pupil places; post 16 places. These are addressed in the following paragraphs.

2.8 Secondary school pupil places – current position

2.8.1 Whilst the matter of secondary school places was addressed in the March 2015 report, no recommendations were drawn up. Similarly, the proposal contained in the appendix to the Report (Pupil Place Plan 2015-2020) made no recommendations for change to secondary provision.

2.8.2 The pattern of school place provision in the secondary schools currently remains complex.

- **Casterton College Rutland** (academy); there is considerable spare capacity: 183 places = 20% (Y7-11 only). Almost 40% of its current pupils reside outside Rutland.⁵
- **Catmose College** (academy); there is almost no spare capacity, despite the increase in capacity figure over two years (see 4b below)⁶. Almost all its pupils are resident in Rutland.

⁴ Pupil Admission Number.

⁵ When Rutland Community College is included, this amounts to 30.5% spare capacity = 406 spare places out of 1329.

⁶ Catmose Academy raised the number of pupils admitted in Y7 from 180 to 210. This change applied to the 2015 and 2016 cohorts only; there is no longer term commitment.

- **Uppingham Community College** (academy); there is no spare capacity. As with Casterton, almost 40% of its pupils reside outside Rutland.

2.8.3 The SCAP⁷ analysis conducted by the Council Data Unit in June 2015 took full account of trends in pupil numbers and the impact of new housing, etc. Using those calculations, the following forecasts were made:

- Catmose would have no spare capacity by 2018/19 with a shortfall of 18 places. This would rise to a shortfall of 59 pupils in 2019/20;
- Uppingham would have no spare capacity by 2017/18 with a shortfall of 37 places. The shortfall would grow to 64 by 2019/20;
- Casterton's spare places would reduce from 166 to 111 by 2019/20.

2.8.4 Rutland predicted totals (secondary) 2019/20:

	2018/19		2019/20	
	Shortfall places	Excess places	Shortfall places	Excess places
Catmose	18		59	
Uppingham	63		64	
Casterton	0	126 ⁸	0	111
Rutland totals		45	12	

2.8.5 Using these forecasts, there would be sufficient capacity at secondary level for all Rutland pupils if pupils travelled to Casterton College Rutland. The forecasts to 2019/20 indicate that there would continue to be enough pupil places in Rutland every year leading to 2019/20. (This would be based on the assumption that Catmose continued to increase its PAN from 180 to 210 for each year to Y11 – as described in footnote 6, above).

2.8.6 However, travelling to Casterton may not be an acceptable option as parents and pupils are entitled to express a preference for their school. In addition, the Council would incur substantial costs to transport children to Casterton College Rutland.⁹

2.9 An update on secondary school places

2.9.1 As indicated above, Catmose Academy has raised the number of pupils that may be admitted in Y7 from 180 to 210 for two years running. However, the Academy stated in January 2016 that it is, nonetheless, maintaining its PAN at 180. The decision to increase the PAN again in future years may relate to the possible move

⁷ SCAP; *School Capacity Report*. Central government requires local authorities to provide information yearly on pupil place capacity. The analysis is conducted by LAs each summer and is reported to Government in late June.

⁸ This figure does not include the post 16 numbers which will arise if the students at Rutland County College move to Casterton.

⁹ By 2019/20 a shortfall of 50 places will be seen in secondary provision in the Oakham area (209 if Catmose does not continue to increase the PAN each year).

of the Children's Centre to an alternative site as this will release space at the College.

2.9.2 Casterton College Rutland is planning to move its post 16 students (currently no. 206) to the Casterton site from the Barleythorpe campus for September 2017. It is likely that some of these would remain in Oakham and join Harington College, but we cannot predict numbers. (If all were to transfer to Casterton in 2017 the Academy, with a capacity of only 900, would immediately be short of 23 places – but this is the worst scenario. The new 2015 cohort dropped to a total of 83 pupils; if this pattern continued, the total number of post 16 students in both Y12 & Y13 would reduce to circa 170. At this number, the Casterton site could house the students but would not have appropriate rooms.)

2.9.3 The Academy has plans to seek funding for further building to allow for this migration of students. Furthermore, it is foreseeable that the Academy would draw an increase in pupils from Y7 upwards once post 16 education is on the same site.

2.9.4 However, it should be noted that none of the changes outlined in the preceding three paragraphs is certain at present. Further uncertainties include:

- the numbers of pupils who may come from the extensive home building development in the Stamford area;
- the impact on pupil numbers in Casterton of the improvement in the standards and reputation of secondary schools in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire;
- the impact of Harington College on pupil applications to Uppingham and Catmose.

2.9.5 It is clear that the large number of possible changes relating to secondary provision remain uncertain at point of writing. It may, therefore, be wise to delay any decisions regarding possible investment in further secondary provision until the pattern becomes clearer. A thorough review of school capacity and places is undertaken each year in May and June for reporting to central government. It is expected that this review will identify any further patterns from which recommendations may emerge.

2.9.6 Given the assumptions and method of the 58/2015 paper and strategy, there are no proposed changes other than monitoring the demand in Uppingham area.

2.10 Post 16 provision

2.10.1 There is no lack of pupil places post 16. However, current provision within Rutland is suitable mainly for more academic pupils. Pupils seeking vocational and less academic post 16 options currently travel to providers in neighbouring counties.

2.10.2 The array of possible changes affecting post 16 are significant enough to warrant a separate paper on this aspect. This paper is expected to coincide with the substantial review undertaken in June/July for the SCAP report (c.f. 2.8.3 above).

2.11 Recommendations

- a. Continue to monitor demand for places in Uppingham.
- b. Review the situation using the annual SCAP (school capacity survey) process in July. This will include a further analysis of pupil yield from new housing.
- c. Report to Cabinet / Scrutiny on findings in October 2016.

3 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 There is no cause to change the overall strategy as approved in the Report 68/2015. No significant change is predicted in the level of demand and supply of pupil places.
- 3.2 The recommendations under 2.8 above will ensure that pupil place demand and supply are monitored in line with the significant research and evaluation work that takes place for the SCAP yearly return.

4 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 4.1 Report to Cabinet 17 March 2015 (68/2015).
- 4.2 Report to Cabinet 21 April 2015 (81/2015).

5 APPENDICES

- 5.1 No appendices

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request –
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