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To: Resources and Infrastructure - Children, Families & Education Policy Overview Committee

Date: 24 November 2010

Subject: Primary Admissions

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This paper is in response to a question raised by the joint POSC meeting of the POSCs concerning the commissioning, demographics and funding of primary schools and their fitness for the future.

Introduction

1. (1) As set out in the summary above, this paper provides information in response to a question raised. Some of what was requested at the Joint POSC is outside of the remit and responsibility of this particular POSC, and we have asked the Learning POSC to address the elements for which they are responsible.

(2) The rest of this report picks up in the following sections the following issues:

- (a) Commissioning and demographics
- (b) Funding
- (c) Building condition

Commissioning and Demographics

2. (1) The overall provision of primary school places (and schools) is driven by actual pupil numbers and future projections based upon both new housing development and population growth (new births).

(2) Whilst at a County-wide level this is easier to calculate and manage, it becomes much more of a challenge at a locality level. The impact of the current economic situation has made the challenge even more difficult, with planned housing developments being deferred or cancelled e.g., the Eastern Quarry development. Improved transport e.g. High Speed Rail is also likely to impact upon the popularity of particular locations.

(3) The position of our primary estate in terms of places and roll numbers in the 2009/10 academic year was as follows:

	Numbers	%
Net Capacity	117,276	100.0
Pupil Roll	106,097	90.47
Surplus Places	11,179	9.53

(4) The forecast position over the next few years reduces the anticipated surplus as follows:

	%
2010/11	8.71
2011/12	7.26
2012/13	5.47
2013/14	3.71
2014/15	2.18

(5) The position is, however, somewhat different across the County, with district surpluses ranging from 5.89 to 14.46% in 2009/10 to - 4.83 to 9.17 in 2014/15. Within these figures will be variations within particular localities.

(6) The forecasting ahead of surpluses (and shortfalls) identifies the districts where we need to take action to secure additional pupil places, and it is our Area Education Officers who take this forward, in consultation with local schools and identify particular needs and how they can be addressed.

- (7) The options available to address local forecast shortfalls include the following:
- Provision of a new school
 - Expansion of an existing school(s) with or without additional classroom provision.
 - Redefining catchment areas.
 - Improvement of existing schools

Funding

3. (1) The Capital funding of new pupil places basically comes from:

- (i) developer contributions [Sc.106] - which is the assumed route for new primary schools arising from new housing development;
- (ii) government grant or supporting borrowing; or
- (iii) the County Council who meet its funding responsibilities from Capital Receipts or prudent borrowing.

(2) We await government announcements on the amount of Capital funding that will be available for new facilities over the next few years.

Building Condition

4. (1) Elsewhere on the agenda is a paper on school building maintenance.

Recommendations

Members are asked TO NOTE the information

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Background Documents:
None

Other Useful Information
None