



### 3. Background

- 3.1 In real terms there has been an increase in the number of children being born in Solihull over the last four years. The rate of growth is variable, with numbers of children resident in the North rising at a faster rate, than in the South of the Borough. This increase in local cohorts is leading to a reduction in offers of places to children resident in other local authorities. The increased numbers of children in north Solihull primary schools will be manageable once the primary school building programme is completed.
- 3.2 The increasing numbers in the south of the borough is a more complex issue. Some localised areas are seeing steady growth in Solihull children, and in most areas places not required for Solihull children are being taken up by children from other local authorities. This has led to most schools being full in all infant classes. This is creating difficulties for new families moving into the Borough.
- 3.3 At secondary level, there is significant capacity beyond the number of places required for Solihull children. In the south of the borough, these places are taken up by children from other local authority areas. There is some surplus capacity in north secondary schools.
- 3.4 The tables at appendix 1 show a breakdown for schools in the north and south of the borough, by year group. The number of places taken up by Solihull children, other local authority children and spare places are also shown.
- 3.5 Appendix 2 shows more detailed analysis at planning area level. Within each area, all schools are identified along with the numbers on roll by year group at September 2013. The tables also analyse where children live in relation to which zone the schools are located in. Anticipated housing developments in the area are also identified.
- 3.6 Following detailed analysis of birth rate trends, proposed housing developments and parental preference trends, the number of places required in each planning area until 2024 has been calculated and then compared with the current availability of school places to identify likely shortfalls. Where new school places are already planned this is shown to give a resulting shortfall of places. The next stage will be to consider how these additional places can be created and in which specific schools.
- 3.7 The following new primary school places will be required by 2024 within each area:

Planning area	Primary places	Planned Places
North Solihull (North)	180	180
North Solihull (South)	165	165
Knowle Dorridge	0	0
Lyndon Elmdon	149	60
Monkspath	210	0
Rural East	0	0
Rural South	285	0
Solihull Central	210	0
Shirley East *	0	0
Shirley West	90	90
TOTAL	1289	495

\*Shirley East will be kept under review

- 3.8 The exact requirement for new places and the underlying cause of the growth varies

by area; as such, the way in which the need for additional school places will be met will vary. For example in some areas the additional numbers of Solihull children applying for reception places will mean fewer places can be offered to children from out of Solihull, so there will be no need to increase the overall number of places.

- 3.9 Where the increased need is as a consequence of a rising number of Solihull children, officers will need to work with local schools to identify where and how additional capacity can be added. Where there is a specific need to alter existing, remodel or provide new school premises, funding sources and feasibility proposals will be developed as part of the Solihull Schools Asset Management Plan for 2014/15 onwards.
- 3.10 With regard to secondary school places, there is presently an overcapacity in most areas. Much of this overcapacity is taken up by children living in other local authority areas. As primary numbers rise, the cohorts of Solihull children entering secondary schools will increase, and there will be a corresponding reduction in surplus places.
- 3.11 The additional need arising from secondary age children moving into new housing developments over the next five years can be largely met from existing capacity. The only area that will need additional capacity during that time will be Arden School. The school is planning to add an additional form of entry from 2015.
- 3.12 Longer term, there may be pressures on Tudor Grange Academy as a consequence of the developments in its catchment area. This should be kept under review.

#### **4. Evaluation of Alternative Option(s)**

- 4.1 Officers will work with Schools to consider how the need for additional school places can be met and set out options within a School Organisation Plan.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommending Preferred Option**

- 5.1 The underlying cause of the potential growth needs to be analysed and options for adding capacity assessed in consultation with schools and Academies. The options can then be costed and compared with the capital allocation to ensure affordability.

#### **6. Implications**

##### **6.1 Policy/Strategy Implications**

- 6.2 **Meeting the duty to involve:** Schools and academies will be involved in determining the most appropriate way to respond to the need for additional school places. In the event that any establishments need to be enlarged in the future, appropriate consultation will take place with parents and the wider community on any specific proposals.

- 6.3 **Financial Implications:** There will be capital financial implications of making changes to the infrastructure of schools to enable capacity to increase. The DfE has allocated capital of £10.8M to the Local Authority for the period 2015 to 2017 to enable additional school places to be secured.

- 6.4 As part of the future reporting arrangements envisaged around the response to this report the Solihull Schools Asset Management Plan for 2014/15 onwards, due to be reported to the Cabinet Member Meeting in April, will begin to address the allocation of capital to support meeting this demand, specifically, as part of the Children Services Capital Programme for 2014/15.

- 6.5 Revenue costs of rising pupil rolls are funded through increases in Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), from an annual October census, whilst the local funding

formula allocates additional resources to individual schools through the per pupil element of funding. There is scope within the local formula to forward fund planned increases in places so that the staff and resources are available for when the new classes start.

- 6.6 **Legal implications:** The local authority has a legal duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet the needs of Solihull children.
- 6.7 **Risk Implications:** The key risk is that the additional school places can not be provided in time to meet the growth in demand from Solihull children. This will be properly assessed as part of the proposals for adding school places.
- 6.8 **Statutory Equality Duty:** None as a consequence of this report.
- 6.9 **Carbon Management/Environmental:** The distances children travel will be considered in determining the location of additional school places. As far as possible school places should be within walking distance of where children live.
- 6.10 **Partner Organisations:** None as a consequence of this report.
- 6.11 **Safeguarding/Corporate Parenting Implications:** None as a consequence of this report.
- 6.12 **Customer Impact:** There will be considerable impact on children and their families. This will be carefully considered in determining where school places should be added.
- 6.13 **Other implications:** None as a consequence of this report.

## 7. List of Appendices Referred to

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Analysis of School Rolls for North and South Solihull
- 7.2 Appendix 2: Demography by planning area

## 8. Background Papers Used to Compile this Report

- 8.1 None

## 9. List of Other Relevant Documents

- 9.1 None