

If Key Decision: Decision Ref. No.

B088/24

If not a Key Decision write n/a above

OFFICER DECISION RECORD ⁱ

Officer Key Decisions are subject to the Council's Call-In Procedure (Annex 9 of the Council's Constitution <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/who-we-are-and-what-we-do.aspx>)

Type of Decision: Executive

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Member: Caroline Clapper

Portfolio: Education, Libraries & Lifelong Learning

Officer Contact: Kate Leahy, Head of School Planning
Tel: 01992 555864

Subject: Whether or not to initiate public consultation on the proposal to enlarge Amwell View School, Stanstead Abbots, through the opening of a new satellite provision in Buntingford, from January 2028.

1. Decision

Whether or not to initiate public consultation on the proposal to enlarge Amwell View School ("The School") by 100 places through the opening of a new satellite provision in Buntingford, from January 2028

The School is a community special school for children aged 2-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD).

2. Reasons for the decision

In December 2020, the Cabinet of Hertfordshire County Council ("the county council") approved the Special School Place Planning Strategy 2020-2023, which sets out that demand for special school places has grown sharply in recent years and is forecast to continue to grow at a rate that will exceed the current supply of places. As the majority of

Hertfordshire's special schools are now at capacity, the strategy sets out longer-term priorities which will deliver the additional school places required. However, in the short term, it identifies that additional capacity will be needed to meet the immediate demand for special school places.

Currently there are 153 children in Hertfordshire awaiting an SLD school place, 16 of whom have been waiting over three terms. The county council's Ofsted Action Plan sets out that the county council should have no pupils waiting over three terms by January 2025.

The Integrated Plan 2024/25 to 2027/28 included £40.5m to support SEND capital investment, including £25.5m against a specific priority; to deliver 100 new SLD places to the east of the county. There is a current gap in provision and this location will not only ease pressure to the east of the county, but also in Stevenage and North Herts.

Feasibility on a scheme to deliver these places on an HCC owned site in Buntingford is now sufficiently progressed to move to public consultation. It is proposed that the new places will be delivered through an expansion of Amwell View, an outstanding SLD school in Stanstead Abbots, by 100 places utilising the site in Buntingford. This will require a full statutory process.

3. Alternative options considered and rejected

None

4. Consultation *(see Summary of Requirements below)*

Was any Councillor consulted? Yes

If yes:

(a) Comments of Executive Member

The Executive Member has no comments other than to concur with the Executive Director's intention to agree the proposal.

(b) Comments of other consultees

None

5. Any conflict of interest declared by a councillor who has been consulted in relation to the decision

None

6. Following consultation with the Executive Member, I am proceeding with the proposed decision.

Signed: Jo Fisher

Title: Executive Director of Children's Services

Date: 30/08/2024

Copies of record to:

- All consultees
 - Electronic copy (if required to be made available for public inspection) to Democratic Services Manager - Room 213 County Hall.
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