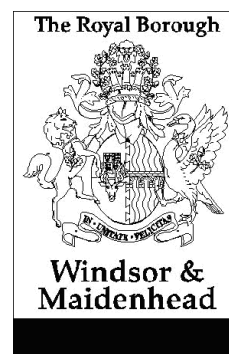


Report for: ACTION
Item Number: 6i



Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO – Part I
Title	Wraysbury Primary School Petition to Council - Response
Responsible Officer(s)	David Scott, Head of Education Strategy & Commissioning.
Contact officer, job title and phone number	Ann Pfeiffer, Senior Leader, Sufficiency & Access, 01628 796364
Member reporting	Cllr Phillip Bicknell, Lead Member for Children's Services
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	30 October 2014
Implementation Date if Not Called In	None
Affected Wards	Horton and Wraysbury
Keywords/Index	<i>Wraysbury; community; flood; school; capital; petition</i>

Report Summary

1. This report responds to a public petition submitted to the Council in July 2014.
2. The petition requests the Council provide £330k capital funding for an extension at Wraysbury Primary School. The extension would act as a community hub during emergency situations and a staff room during normal circumstances.
3. The petition has received 72 signatures, mainly from residents living in the Wraysbury locality.
4. It is recommended the Council notes the aspirations of the local community proposed by the petition, accepts there is an alternative community venue locally, encourages the school and local community to continue to raise funds towards a school expansion, but concludes there is insufficient Basic Needs Grant funding to support this request. This is because pressures on the Children's Services capital programme are great and the proposed extension is not considered high priority at this time.

If recommendations are adopted, how will residents benefit?	
Benefits to residents and reasons why they will benefit	Dates by which residents can expect to notice a difference
1. Wraysbury Primary School will continue to operate as normal apart from times when staff and pupils cannot actually get to school.	N/A
2. Pupils will be safeguarded by not having high numbers of adults on site.	
3. Children's Services capital will be used for high priority works to meet school place provision or maintenance of buildings.	

1. Details of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION that Cabinet:

- i. **recognises the petitioners aspiration to expand Wraysbury School as a possible central community hub for managing local responses to emergencies in Wraysbury village.**
- ii. **accepts that there is an alternative community facility which may operate as a community hub, and it encourages the school and local community to continue to fund raise towards achieving their aim to expand the school facilities.**
- iii. **agrees that there is insufficient Basic Needs Capital grant funding to support the general expansion of the non-school place expansion as requested by this petition.**

2. Reason for Recommendation(s) and Options Considered

- 2.1 During the floods of early 2014, Wraysbury Primary School was used as a base for both the emergency services and the efficient band of community volunteers. The playground was used to park fire engines, police and army vehicles, one classroom became the 'Bronze Room' as part of the formal emergency operation, the main school office was taken over by the local volunteers for fielding phone calls from residents, and the hall was used for storing emergency bedding etc. and for providing hot drinks and food to the workers and the community. Also the school was a distribution point for sand bags for the village.
- 2.2 In addition the local Baptist church opened up as a hub for the local community to visit for food, drink, support and information. Some of the large Community up-date meetings were held here, as well as the final stages of the operation after the school was handed back.
- 2.3 The school was closed during this period, for 3 reasons A) whilst the school itself did not flood, access through the village was extremely difficult for much of the time. Staff and pupils were finding it impossible to get to school on time, if at all. B) the emergency operation took over a large part of the school buildings and playground C) fortunately one of the weeks was half term anyway.

- 2.4 A petition was presented to Full Council by Councillor Rayner on 22 July 2014. The wording of the petition was:

'we the undersigned request the Council fund the extension to the school adult facilities in the region of £330,000 in order that, should a Community Hub be needed in an emergency situation such as a flood again, then the school would not have to be closed to children and can continue to function, sharing the facilities as appropriate.'

- 2.5 The petition claims that if an extension were to be built the school would not need to close if such an operation were to be needed again. Officers are not convinced that this is correct. Yes, the proposed upstairs staffroom could be used for either / possibly both the Bronze Room function and the volunteer phone centre, but the vehicle parking, food / drink / bedding service, and general high numbers of people moving around the site, would not be tenable with the school remaining functional. Safeguarding issues would be extremely difficult to manage, including the physical safety of pupils in such a busy and open-door environment as needs to be the case for emergency situations.
- 2.6 It is unknown how long any future emergency operation would last - if the period does not include a school holiday period, disruption would be greater than this time was. Officers feel that if the school is to be used as the emergency centre, it would still need to be closed. For some of the time this may need to be the case anyway due to insufficient staffing levels.
- 2.7 The school staffroom area is however rather small and crowded, so an extension would have the benefit of helping this situation. The school have started to fund raise towards achieving a larger staffroom, but is unlikely to attract Children Services capital funding for some years to come, as the priorities are currently for funding extra pupil spaces, and for maintaining the fabric of the school buildings.

Option	Comments
1. To reject the motion proposed by the petition	Recommended
2. To find alternative locations in the village to create a community hub.	For example the Baptist church, along with other village facilities
3. To use the school as before.	School would need to be closed.

3. Key Implications

Defined Outcomes	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date they should be delivered by
Capital expenditure is confirmed by Cabinet	N/A	£0	N/A	N/A	1 November 2014

4. Financial Details

4.1 Financial impact on the budget (mandatory)

Capital. When the school first had a possible staffroom extension scheme drawn up sometime in 2013, the estimated cost of the extension was considered to be in the region of £330,000. The school will be able to contribute something towards the cost, but as construction costs are rising now, it is likely that this estimate will increase, especially if the scheme needs to be amended slightly to cater for use as a community hub at times.

The priority for DfE capital grant allocated to RBWM Children Services is for projects which increase the number of pupil places in the Borough, and which maintain the fabric of the school buildings. The community hub proposal is consistent with neither of these priorities.

If this recommendation is adopted there would be no financial impact for the borough.

Revenue

N/A as any running costs would be subsumed by the school revenue budget.

5. Legal Implications

None if the recommendation is adopted.

6. Value For Money

6.1 School capital grant will be used for higher priority works.

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

N/A

8. Risk Management

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
That any future emergency will not have a base from which to operate.	Medium	Find alternative locations for the base or close the school.	Low

9. Links to Strategic Objectives

Residents First

- Support Children and Young People
- Improve the Environment, Economy and Transport

10. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

N/A

11. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

None

12. Property and Assets

None

13. Any other implications:

N/A

14. Consultation

The head teacher has been consulted and feels that if this extension were to take place, the school could accommodate the emergency hub without closing the school.

15. Timetable for Implementation

N/A

16. Appendices

None

17. Background Information

The petition submitted to the Council on 22 July 2014.

18. Consultation.

Name of consultee	Post held and Department	Date sent	Date received	See comments in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Burbage	Leader of the Council	02/10/14	6.10.14	
Cllr Bicknell	Lead Member for Children's Services	25/09/14	25/09/14 14/10/14	
Alison Alexander	Director of Children's Services	26/09/14	02/10/14	
Maria Lucas	Head of Legal Services	26/09/14	16/10/14	
Edmund Bradley	Finance partner	26/09/14	29/09/14	
Andrew Brooker	Head of Finance	26/09/14		
Simon Hurrell	Head of Service	26/09/14		

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
<i>Non-key</i>	No

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Full name of report author	Job title	Full contact no:
Ann Pfeiffer	Sufficiency and Access Service Leader – Children’s Services	01628 796364