

Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

1 November 2017

Report title	School Place Planning	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Darke, Cabinet Member for Education	
Corporate Plan outcome	People and communities achieve their full potential	
Wards affected	(All Wards);	
Accountable Director	Meredith Teasdale, Director of Education	
Originating service	School Planning and Resources	
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Report to be/has been considered by	Education Leadership Team	16 October 2017
	Strategic Executive Board	17 October 2017

Recommendations for action:

The Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider and comment on the following:

1. The current levels of surplus in the Primary and Secondary school estates.
2. The 2017 Pupil Projections.
3. The status of the Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020.
4. The status of the Secondary School Expansion Programme 2017-2019.
5. The planned priorities to address future demographic needs.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update to Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel regarding school place planning activities in Wolverhampton. The report highlights current pressures on school places, outlines the anticipated future needs of communities, and details the status of proposed expansion programmes.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Local Authorities have a duty to ensure sufficiency of school places.
- 2.2 Levels of demand for educational provision in Wolverhampton have increased significantly in recent years. This uplift has principally been driven by a 24% increase in births to Wolverhampton residents between 2002 (2,807) and 2014 (3,481) (ONS Vital Statistics).
- 2.3 In order to ensure the ongoing sufficiency of provision the Local Authority has invested heavily in expanding the primary school estate and has successfully introduced more than 2,150 additional primary school places since September 2012.
- 2.4 Cabinet approved the Primary School Organisation Strategy 2016-2018 and the Secondary Sufficiency Strategy 2016-2018 on 20 July 2016. The policies outline strategic policy with regard to school organisation and provide frameworks to guide the future development of school provision in the City.
- 2.5 The Council effectively discharges its sufficiency duty within the fragmented education system; however, it must be recognised that the Council is not in full control of all the factors relating to the effective and timely supply of school places.

3.0 Current Position

Primary Provision:

- 3.1 The Primary School Organisation Strategy 2016-2018 recommends that a minimum level of surplus within each year group of five percent (against admission number) is available at a citywide level.

A level of surplus is essential in order to provide for parental choice, to allow for fluctuations in demand and to offer flexibility to cater for mid-year entrants. Too few surplus places can result in reduced parental choice, increased travel times, and increased class sizes. However, too great a number of surplus places can lead to the inefficient use of resources.

- 3.2 As illustrated in Figure 1, levels of surplus across the city are constrained. Despite significant recent investment in the uplift of capacity, in September 2017 six of the seven primary cohorts had less than five percent surplus available.

3.3 Figure 1: Levels of Surplus by Year Group (25 September 2017):

National Curriculum Year Group (2017/18)	Total Places	Level of Surplus %
R	3530	7
1	3665	3
2	3725	3
3	3510	4
4	3411	4
5	3381	3
6	3260	2
Total	24,482	4

3.4 In recent years, primary school cohorts have grown significantly in-year e.g. the current Year 6 cohort has grown by more than 175 pupils (6%) since the cohort started in Reception. This in-year growth has impacted detrimentally upon available levels of surplus; consequently, the City has observed increased pressure on school places, a sustained volume of appeals and increasing challenge in allocating in-year applicants to schools within a reasonable distance of their home address.

3.5 The unprecedented growth has also resulted in the need for the Council to work closely with schools to introduce additional capacity into existing cohorts to cater for rising demand as required. Since September 2016, seven primary schools have agreed to provide additional in-year capacity in hotspots across the City. Council representatives continue to liaise with school leaders to identify appropriate solutions.

Secondary Provision:

3.6 The Secondary Sufficiency Strategy 2016-2018 recommends that a minimum level of surplus within each year group of six percent (against admission limits) is available at a citywide level.

3.7 As illustrated in Figure 2, levels of surplus in each secondary year group currently exceed the minimum threshold.

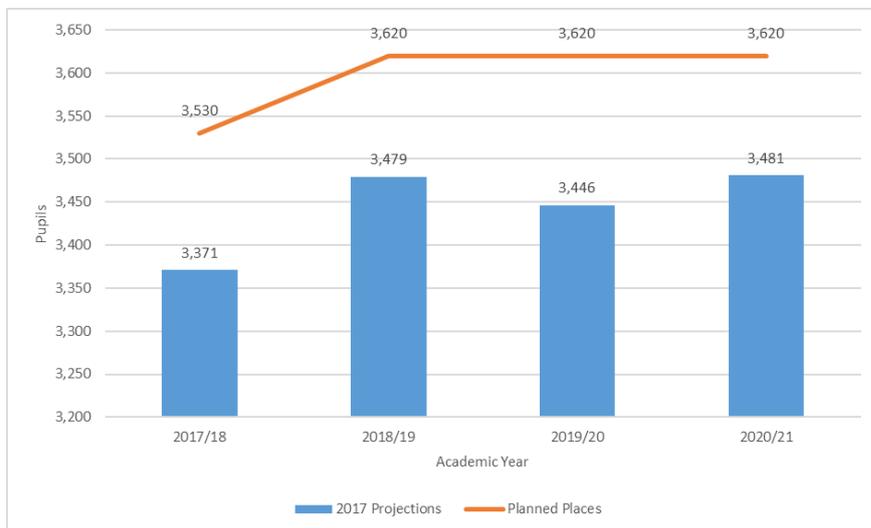
3.8 Figure 2: Levels of Surplus by Year Group (25 September 2017):

National Curriculum Year Group (2017/18)	Total Places	Level of Surplus %
7	3275	7
8	3189	7
9	3135	7
10	3103	11
11	3113	16
Total	15,815	9

4.0 Projections of Demand

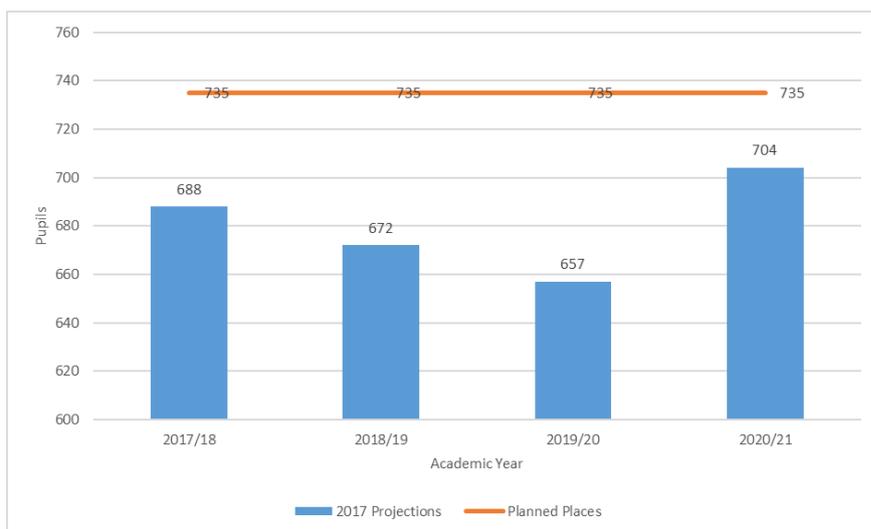
Primary Projections:

- 4.1 For the purposes of primary school place planning the City is divided into four primary planning areas; this enables a more precise identification of local circumstances and a clearer definition of local needs. The locations of these planning areas and schools within them are illustrated in Appendix A.
- 4.2 Primary projections are produced on an annual basis. In recent years, projections have proved robust and have supported the development of appropriate expansion schemes across the City. The employed methodology takes both pupil yield from housing regeneration and recent changes in cross-border movement into account.
- 4.3 Figure 3: Projected Citywide Reception Cohorts



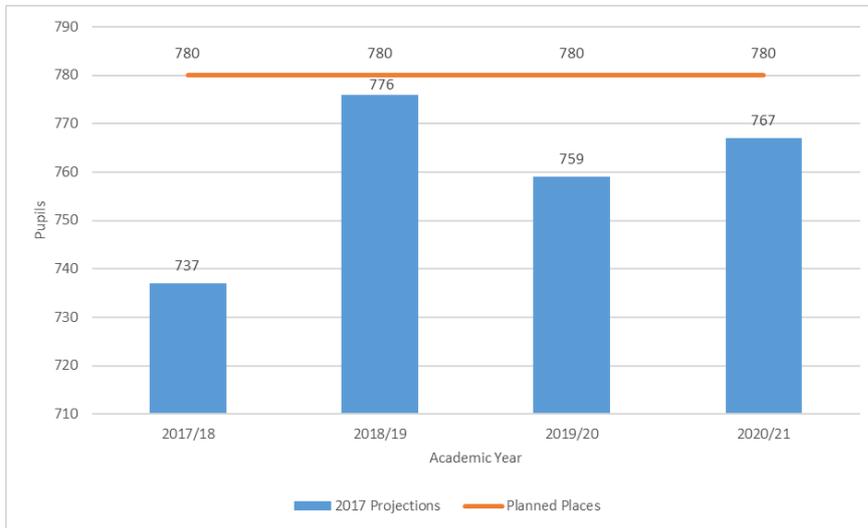
Please note that the reported planned places featured in Figure 3 above include the proposed uplift in capacity within the Council's Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020 as detailed in Section 5.

- 4.4 As illustrated in Figure 3, Citywide Reception cohorts are expected to increase in the short to medium term.
- 4.5 Figure 4: Projected Reception Cohorts in Planning Area 1



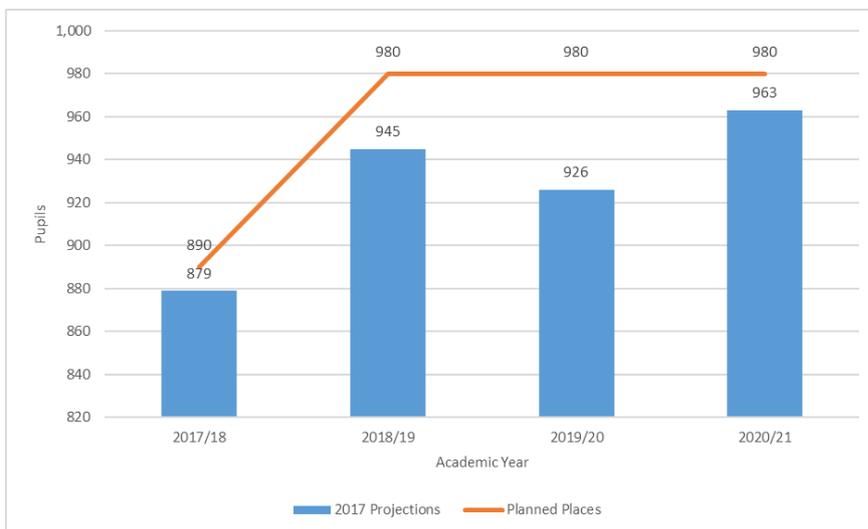
4.6 As illustrated in Figure 4, Reception cohorts in Planning Area 1 are expected to reduce in size in the short term and then increase in 2020/21.

4.7 Figure 5: Projected Reception Cohorts in Planning Area 2



4.8 As illustrated in Figure 5, Reception cohorts in Planning Area 2 are expected to increase in size in the short to medium term.

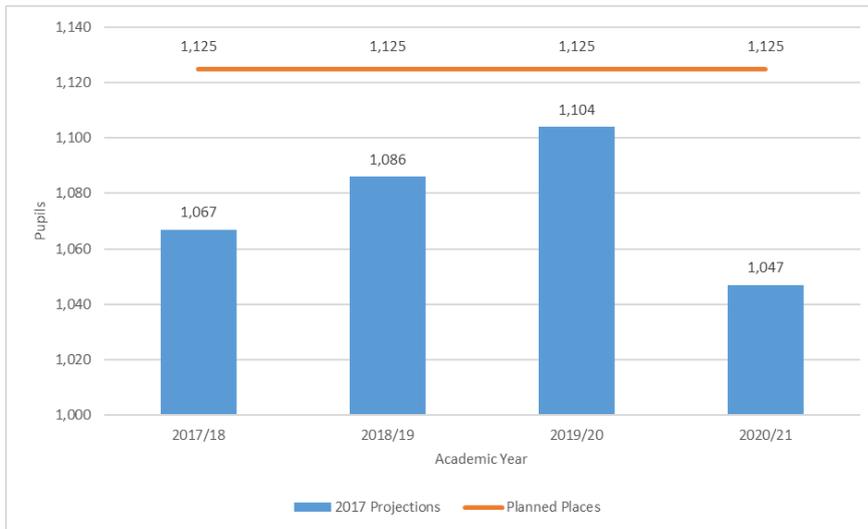
4.9 Figure 6: Projected Reception Cohorts in Planning Area 3



Please note that the reported planned places featured in Figure 6 above include the proposed uplift in capacity within the Council's Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020 as detailed in Section 5.

4.10 As illustrated in Figure 6, Reception cohorts in Planning Area 3 are expected to increase in size in the short to medium term.

4.11 Figure 7: Projected Reception Cohorts in Planning Area 4



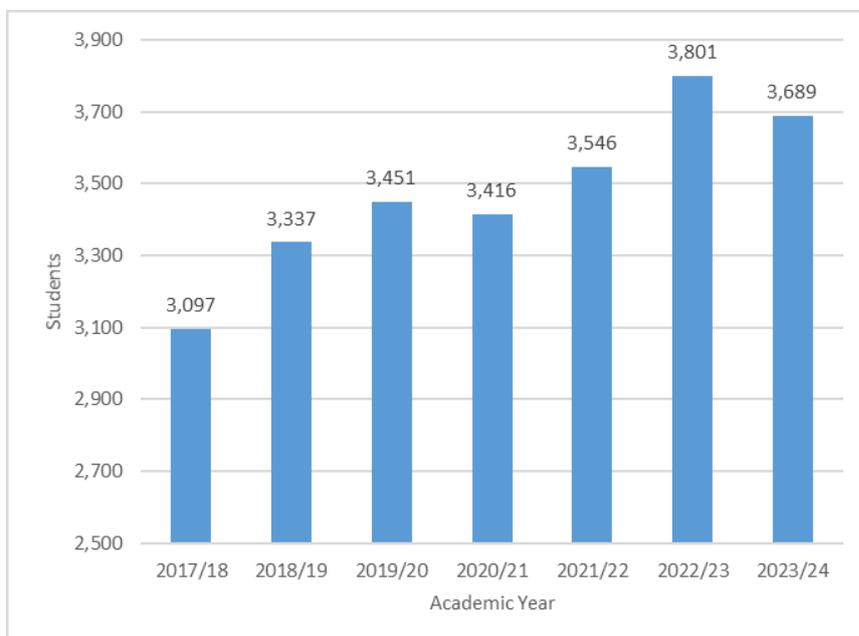
4.12 As illustrated in Figure 7, Reception cohorts in Planning Area 4 are expected to increase in size in the short term and then decrease in 2020/21.

Secondary Projections:

4.13 For the purposes of secondary school place planning the City is divided into three secondary planning areas; this enables a more precise identification of local circumstances and reflects both the unique educational offer available at the West Midlands Construction UTC and its wide catchment. The locations of these planning areas and schools within them are illustrated in Appendix B.

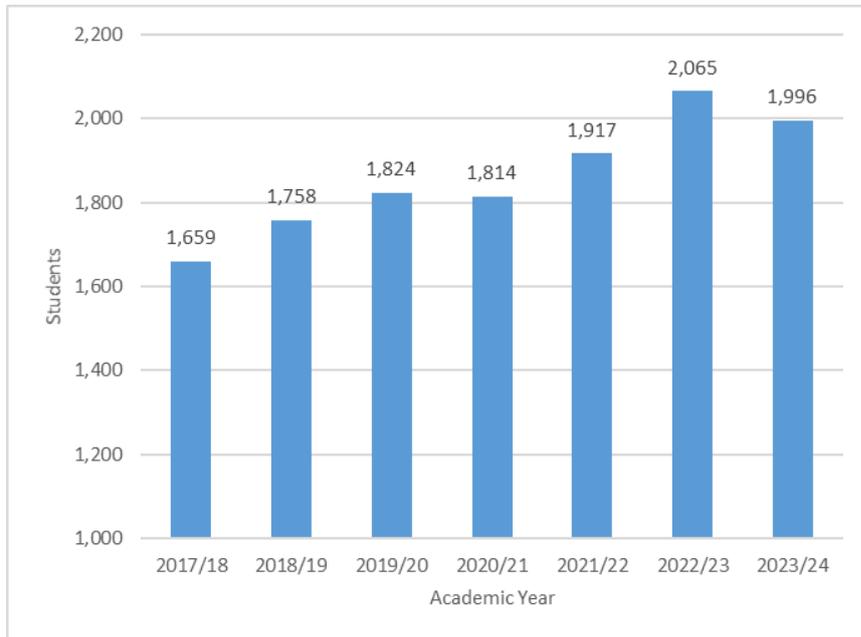
4.14 In recent years, secondary projections have proved robust; the employed methodology takes both pupil yield from housing regeneration and recent changes in cross-border movement into account.

4.15 Figure 8: Projected Citywide Year 7 Cohorts



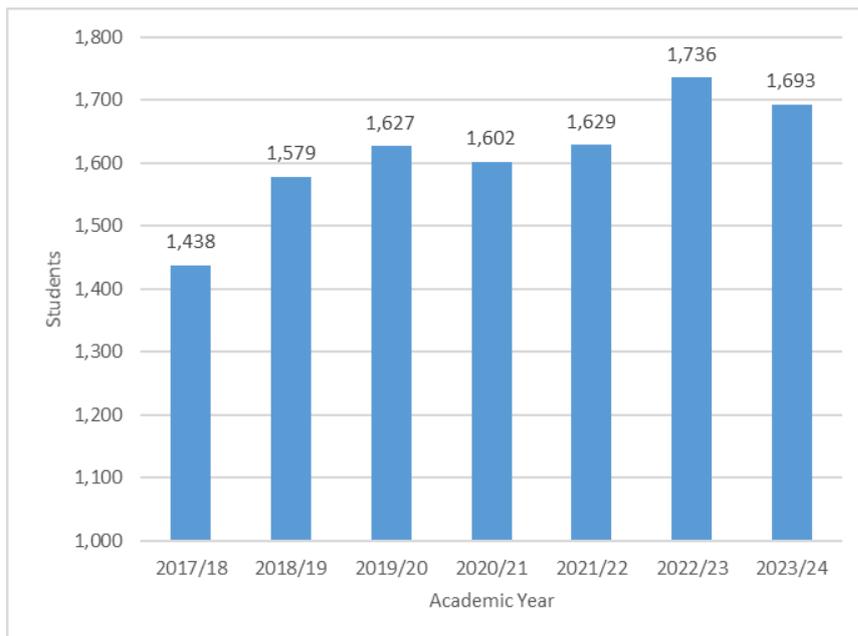
4.16 As illustrated in Figure 8, levels of citywide demand for secondary provision are expected to increase significantly in the short to medium term (23% increase between 2017/18 and 2022/23).

4.17 Figure 9: Projected Year 7 Cohorts in Planning Area 1



4.18 As illustrated in Figure 9, Year 7 cohorts in Planning Area 1 are expected to increase significantly in the short to medium term (24% increase between 2017/18 and 2022/23).

4.19 Figure 10: Projected Year 7 Cohorts in Planning Area 2



- 4.20 As illustrated in Figure 10, Year 7 cohorts in Planning Area 2 are expected to increase significantly in the short to medium term (21% increase between 2017/18 and 2022/23).
- 4.21 To ensure the continued sufficiency of provision a significant uplift in capacity will be required in the short to medium term.

5.0 Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020

- 5.1 The proposed Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020 has been developed to provide required additional capacity in September 2018 and beyond. The schemes proposed for inclusion in the Programme were developed in line with the Council's approved and published strategic policy as outlined in the Primary School Organisation Strategy 2016-2018.
- 5.2 The proposed Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020 features the expansion of three existing community primary schools in the south east of the City; Loxdale Primary (Bilston East Ward), Spring Vale Primary (Spring Vale Ward) and Stowlawn Primary (Bilston North Ward). Further information (including details of specific proposals) is available within the 'School Place Planning' Cabinet report from June 2017 and has also been shared with Members of the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel during consultation.
- 5.3 When proposing significant prescribed alterations to schools, local authorities must follow guidelines as detailed within the 'Making 'Prescribed Alterations' to Maintained Schools: Statutory Guidance for Proposers and Decision-Makers' (DfE April 2016) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
- 5.4 On 27 June 2017, Cabinet approved the undertaking of required statutory processes in relation to the proposed Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020. Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Education in consultation with the Strategic Director of People, to consider the responses to the initial consultation and determine whether or not to proceed to Stage 1 of the statutory process in relation to schemes included in the Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020.
- 5.5 Initial Consultation on the proposed expansions commenced on 3 July 2017 and concluded on 30 July 2017. The outcomes of consultation were reviewed by the Cabinet Member for Education, in consultation with the Strategic Director of People, during the summer 2017 and approval was granted to progress to the statutory consultation process.
- 5.6 Formal Consultation (Representation) commenced on 18 September 2017 and concluded on 15 October 2017. The outcome of consultation will be reported to Cabinet on 29 November 2017 where a final decision on the proposals will be sought.

6.0 Secondary School Expansion Programme 2017-2019

- 6.1 The proposed Secondary School Expansion Programme 2017-2019 has been developed to provide required additional capacity in September 2018 and beyond. The schemes

proposed for inclusion in the Programme were developed in line with the Council's approved and published strategic policy as outlined in the Secondary Sufficiency Strategy 2016-2018.

- 6.2 The proposed Secondary School Expansion Programme 2017-2019 features the expansion of five existing academies in the City as detailed below.
- 6.3 **Aldersley High School:** Aldersley High School is a secondary academy located within the Oxley Ward. In order to ensure sufficiency of provision, it is proposed that Aldersley High School is permanently expanded. The academy is providing 180 Year 7 places in 2017/18 and it is proposed that with effect from 2018/19 and beyond the academy offers 210 Year 7 places. In addition, it is suggested that post 16 capacity is increased to support the Trust's aspiration to enable post 16 students from Moreton School (Fallings Park Ward) to be taught at Aldersley High School.
- 6.4 **Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Academy:** Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Academy is a secondary academy located within the Bushbury South and Low Hill Ward. In order to ensure sufficiency of provision, it is proposed that Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Academy is permanently expanded. The academy is providing 170 Year 7 places in 2017/18 and it is proposed that with effect from 2018/19 and beyond the academy offers 210 Year 7 places. In addition, and to ensure the sustainability of the expansion post 16 capacity would be increased.
- 6.5 **S Peter's Collegiate Church of England School:** S Peter's Collegiate Church of England School is a secondary academy located within the Park Ward. In order to ensure sufficiency of provision, it is proposed that S Peter's Collegiate Church of England School is permanently expanded. The academy is providing 220 Year 7 places in 2017/18 and it is proposed that with effect from 2018/19 and beyond the academy offers 280 Year 7 places. In addition, and to ensure the sustainability of the expansion post 16 capacity would be increased.
- 6.6 Representatives of the City of Wolverhampton Council are currently in negotiations regarding the proposed expansion of two further academies.
- 6.7 Academies must follow guidelines as detailed within 'Making Significant Changes to an Open Academy: Departmental Advice for all Types of Academy Trust' (DfE March 2016) when proposing significant changes. The DfE expects that only academies that are rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' will seek to expand their premises, in order to increase their intake." (DfE March 2016).
- 6.8 Council representatives are supporting the aforementioned academies to both undertake appropriate consultation activities and complete the required processes. Please note that the Regional Schools Commissioner is responsible for determining whether or not academies can expand.

7.0 Addressing Future Needs

7.1 Immediate Priorities:

- Primary - Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020.
- Primary - Ongoing monitoring of existing cohorts and implementation of appropriate in-year solutions as required.
- Secondary - Secondary School Expansion Programme 2017-2019.
- Secondary - Development of the Secondary School Expansion Programme 2019-2020.
- Primary and Secondary - Identification of contingency sites across the City.
- Primary and Secondary - Continued close monitoring of the key factors that influence demand for educational provision including births, migration (internal and external), the cross-border movement of pupils, and parental preference.

7.2 Medium Term Priorities:

- Primary - Exploration of opportunities to meet anticipated medium term primary challenges in 2020/21.
- Secondary - Exploration of opportunities to meet anticipated medium term secondary challenges in 2021/22 and 2022/23.

8.0 Financial implications

8.1 At the meeting on 20 September 2017, Council approved a capital budget of £34.3 million to support the schools' expansion programmes.

- Primary Expansion Programme 2018-20
- Secondary Expansion Programme 2017-19.

8.2 Any future programmes will create a further financial pressure which as yet is unknown. The level of this pressure will depend on the future government funding capacity and the volume of spaces required.

8.3 Basic Need Allocation grant is provided by DfE to cover the costs of required expansion programmes, however the allocation for Wolverhampton falls short of requirements. In relation to the proposed expansion programme, it is estimated that the Council will need to provide borrowing of £30 million. The annual revenue costs of this borrowing is approximately £1.8 million per annum.

8.4 It is a significant challenge to accurately quantify future capital requirements; however, it is thought prudent to be aware of a future ask in the short to medium term of as least equivalent to the total estimated costs of the Primary Expansion Programme 2018-20 and Secondary Expansion Programme 2017-19.

9.0 Legal implications

- 9.1 Under s.14 of the Education Act 1996, a local authority shall secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in their area. Sufficient means sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education. In meeting this duty, a local authority must do so with a view to securing diversity in the provision of schools and increasing opportunities for parental choice.

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10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 Both the Primary School Organisation Strategy 2016-2018 and the Secondary Sufficiency Strategy 2016-2018 have been subject to consultation and appropriate reviews of equality implications. There are no equality issues from this work that are not covered.

11.0 Environmental implications

- 11.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

12.0 Human resources implications

- 12.1 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report.

13.0 Risk implications

- 13.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council has a duty to ensure sufficiency of school places; should this duty be breached there would be severe implications for local communities and the Council's reputation.

14.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 14.1 There are no direct corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

15.0 Schedule of background papers

- 15.1 Council (20 September 2017) School Expansion Programmes
Cabinet (13 September 2017) School Expansion Programmes
IEDN (Summer 2017) Outcome of Initial Consultation on the Proposed Primary School Expansion Programme 2018-2020
Cabinet (27 June 2017) School Place Planning
Cabinet (20 July 2016) School Place Planning

Appendix A: Primary Planning Areas

