

## **Manchester City Council Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 5 February 2020  
Executive – 12 February 2020

**Subject:** School Place Planning and Admissions

**Report of:** Director of Education

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### **Summary**

This report provides an update on school admissions for academic year 2019/20 along with plans for creating additional capacity in response to forecast demand across primary and secondary schools.

### **Recommendations**

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee are asked to comment on the contents of the report. Executive are recommended to:

1. Note the data relating to September 2019 admissions;
  2. Note the pupil forecasts submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) during summer 2019
  3. Support the principle that Basic Need funding is used to fund the new high school and contribute towards the development of the city centre school;
  4. Agree that the Council undertakes consultation to gather views on the plans to develop a new primary school in the city centre and a new secondary school in east Manchester as a first step towards identifying a provider for the new school;
  5. Delegate responsibility to the Director of Education in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services to:
    - progress the publication of a specification for each new school and invitations to sponsor based on the outcomes of the consultation
    - Identify a preferred sponsor for each school to be recommended to the DfE
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**Wards Affected:** All wards are affected.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and	The ongoing growth of the City's education sector will continue to create opportunities for employment

distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	in schools and those businesses which are involved in the supply of goods and services.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	A sufficiency of high quality education provision will provide future generations with the skills and behaviours to benefit from the City's economic success.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Schools are environments in which the diversity and talent of Manchester's children and young people is celebrated. Pupils are supported and encouraged to achieve their aspirations and maximise their potential.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Investment in modern, energy efficient and high quality education infrastructure drives reductions in carbon across the estate of schools.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Investment in existing and new education provision will enhance the City's attractiveness to potential residents and contribute to the development of high quality neighbourhoods.

**Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for**

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

The additional school places will be funded from Dedicated School Grant. The funding is based on pupil numbers and pupil characteristics. Start-up costs of new schools set-up through Local Authority free school presumption will be funded by Manchester's Dedicated Schools Grant growth fund.

Existing revenue reserves will be used to fund the costs incurred on Matthews Lane, as noted in the capital consequences below.

### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

The current forecast of unallocated Basic Need grant funding is c. £61m which, based on other similar projects, should be sufficient to fund the land acquisition, remediation and build costs for a new secondary school. The proposal to build a secondary school at Hyde Road, in preference to the site at Matthews Lane, is set out in the report.

The costs already incurred on Matthews Lane to date, totalling £4.4m and relating to site investigation and design works, cannot be capitalised (as that scheme is not currently proceeding) and therefore cannot be funded from Basic Need grant. Instead

they will need to be funded from existing revenue reserves, and the Basic Need grant originally allocated to them will be added back to the Education Capital Programme.

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

1. Report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 30 May 2018
2. Report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 5 September 2017
3. Report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 6 December 2016
4. Report to Executive – 6 October 2015
5. Report to Young People and Children Scrutiny Committee – 29 September 2015
6. Report to Young People and Children Scrutiny Committee – 26 May 2015
7. Report to Young People and Children Scrutiny Committee – 13 January 2015
8. Report to Young People and Children’s Scrutiny Committee – 8 July 2014
9. Report to Young People and Children’s Scrutiny Committee - 8 January 2013
10. Report to Executive 16 January 2013 - School Organisation and Capital Investment Strategy
11. Report to Young People and Children’s Scrutiny Committee – 21 May 2013
12. Report to Executive Committee – 29 May 2013

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Manchester Strategy 2016 “Our Manchester” provides the following key commitments to children and young people:
- Ensure that all children and young people have access to high quality learning, suited to their individual needs. All children should attend and be ready to learn and have the opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and abilities. It is our ambition that all schools in Manchester are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.
  - Celebrate the diversity and talent of Manchester’s children and young people. We value the range of backgrounds, heritage, and experiences of our children and young people and will strive to ensure that this is recognised and that they are supported to achieve their aspirations, however diverse.
  - Ensure that all children and young people are prepared for life and citizenship and have the necessary skills for employment. To support this priority we will ensure that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have opportunities for training and employment.
  - Build children and young people’s confidence, resilience, social skills, communication skills and social capital to support success from the earliest years of a child’s life.
- 1.2 Ensuring that residents have access to high quality schools within their local area is central to achieving this strategy. Achieving a sufficiency of high quality school places to meet need continues to require considerable investment, strategic planning and partnership with schools and school providers across the City, as the primary, secondary and special school pupil populations continue to increase year on year and, increasingly, throughout each year.
- 1.3 The provision of high quality school places in areas of pupil demand will improve the outcomes of Manchester’s children and young people as well as reducing their travel times to access education.

## **2.0 School Admission Applications 2019/20**

- 2.1 The October 2019 school census identified 7079 reception age children on roll at a Manchester mainstream primary school and it is expected that additional children will arrive throughout the academic year. All children who applied on time for a reception place starting in September 2019 received an offer with 90.9% allocated their 1<sup>st</sup> preference school on national offer day.
- 2.2 Manchester’s year 7 mainstream cohort was 6295 and further demand is anticipated throughout the year as families continue to arrive in the city. All children who applied on time for a year 7 place received an offer with 77% being allocated a place at their 1<sup>st</sup> preference school on national offer day.
- 2.3 Manchester’s statistics for both national offer days are published on the Council’s website and are attached as an appendix to this report.

**3.0 School Population Forecast**

- 3.1 Manchester’s population has continued to grow from our 2011 Census figure of 503,000, and our forecasts for population growth are estimating that by the mid-2020s the city of Manchester will have a population of circa 644,000. This population growth is driven by the continued, and forecasted continuation, of economic growth. It is within this context that ensuring a sufficient supply of high quality school places will remain a critical component of the Council’s work in improving outcomes for Manchester residents and delivering the ambitions outlined in our ten year plan for the city – “the Our Manchester Strategy”.
- 3.2 The range of factors which have given rise to the recent increased demand for school places is extensive and complex. It includes increased birth rate, migration to and movement around the City, the impact of welfare reforms, new housing developments, and changing patterns of parental preference for schools, restrictions on the supply of school places outside the City, changing economic circumstances and successful regeneration.
- 3.3 The City Council has an extensive and ambitious regeneration agenda, a crucial element of which is major housing development. Accurately assessing pupil numbers arising from new housing is an important aspect of pupil number forecasting. Getting this right will help school planning and drive regeneration activity rather than responding to it. Education Services are actively engaged with key residential growth projects to ensure school provision is incorporated into master planning and available to meet the needs of growing communities.
- 3.4 New housing is not the only factor which gives rise to an increase in the demand for school places. The way in which the existing housing stock is being used is a more significant contributory factor but is also more difficult to predict. Levels of housing occupation vary making it challenging to predict future saturation levels.
- 3.5 The annual school census completed in October 2019 identified 79,429 pupils attending Manchester Schools compared to 77,372 pupils in October 2018 – this snapshot shows growth of 2,057 pupils across the mainstream primary and secondary phases within a year.
- 3.6 Projections of anticipated pupil demand were submitted to the DfE in June 2019 as part of the School Capacity Survey (SCAP) 2019. The forecasts will identify the projected number of places required to meet the Council’s sufficiency duty and determine its Basic Need funding allocation for future years.

Forecast	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Sep-20	7247	7253	7124	7356	7326	7337	7318
Sep-21	6787	7370	7311	7175	7422	7381	7417

Forecast	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11
Sep-20	6732	6505	6277	6220	5548
Sep-21	6952	6806	6560	6352	6164
Sep-22	7046	7028	6864	6639	6295

#### 4.0 Approach to Securing Sufficient School Places

- 4.1 In response to the increasing demand for primary places the Council continues to work with its partners to develop additional places in targeted areas, utilising capital funding (referred to as Basic Need funding) provided by the Government to the Council for this purpose, as well as through access to some additional sources of funding where possible and the development of free schools.
- 4.2 The development of new schools by a local authority requires that the DfE free school presumption process is undertaken. The presumption process is the main route by which local authorities establish new schools in order to meet the need for additional places, both in terms of basic need and the need for diverse provision within their areas.
- 4.3 Local authorities are responsible for determining the specification for the new school and will fund and deliver the site and buildings through its Basic Needs Funding allocation, and work with the approved sponsor to establish the school. All new schools established through the presumption process are classified as free schools. This reflects the fact that 'free school' is the department's term for any new provision academy. 'Academy' is the legal term for state-funded schools that are independent of local authority control and receive their funding directly from the government.
- 4.4 The presumption process requires local authorities to seek proposals to establish a free school where they have identified the need for a new school in their area. The process is broadly outlined as follows:

Step	Description
Local authority consultation	Stakeholder views gathered on proposed new school and used to inform specification
Impact and equalities assessment	Identify impact of proposed new school on existing educational institutions and pupils
School specification	Development of specification to enable proposers to understand the needs of the local authority and submit the strongest proposal possible

Seeking proposals	Marketing of the presumption competition as widely as possible to ensure that the broadest possible range of groups or organisations that might be interested in establishing the new school are aware of the opportunity to do so and have sufficient time to develop proposals
Assessing proposals	Submitted proposals to be assessed and scored by the local authority
Local authority recommendation	Local authorities should provide their assessments of each application to the Secretary of State at the earliest opportunity, including the scoring given for each proposal. This assessment will enable the RSC, on behalf of the Secretary of State, to decide on the most suitable proposer to take forward the new free school

4.5 In recent years the Council has undertaken two successful free school presumptions which led to the establishment of two new secondary schools: Dean Trust Ardwick in 2015 and Manchester Enterprise Academy Central in 2016.

4.6 New schools established through the Free School Presumption route will be expected to work to local admission arrangements and contribute to the City's priorities for its children and young people.

## **5.0 Actions to Secure Sufficient School Places**

5.1 The continued attractiveness of the city centre as a place to live and work and ongoing residential growth is expected to result in additional demand for primary school places as more residents choose to remain in the area when starting a family.

5.2 In response to this forecast demand the Council is working with Renaker Build to establish a new primary school as part of the Crown Street phase 2 development. The school is expected to provide 210 places for primary age children along with a 26 place nursery and be integrated in the masterplan for the area. Renaker Build is committed to a S106 contribution towards development of the school with the Council expecting to commit an element of basic need capital. It is anticipated that the school will be ready to admit pupils in 2024 and a provider will be secured by undertaking a free school presumption during 2020.

5.3 Olive School - a centrally funded free school - remains in the pipeline pending acquisition of a permanent site. The School will be part of the Star Academies Trust and is currently forecast to open in 2023.

- 5.4 As previously noted in this report, the larger primary cohorts have been driving increased demand at secondary schools. In response to this demand the Council commissioned a significant programme of expansions and new schools funded from Basic Need capital and worked with the DfE to secure the delivery of centrally funded free schools. The following table identifies the work undertaken at secondary phase in response to increased demand for places.

School	Age Range	Delivery Route	Opened	Places
Dean Trust Ardwick	11-16	MCC Free School	2015	1200
MEA Central	11-16	MCC Free School	2016	1050
Eden Boys Leadership Academy	11-18	DfE Free School	2017	600
Eden Girls Leadership Academy	11-18	DfE Free School	2017	600
CHS South	11-16	DfE Free School	2018	1200
Co-op Academy Manchester	11-16	MCC Expansion	2018	720
Didsbury High School	11-18	DfE Free School	2019	1050

- 5.5 An expansion of Dean Trust Ardwick has been commissioned in preparation for September 2020 admissions round which will increase its capacity by a total of 150 places (30 per year group). Work is also being progressed to identify opportunities to create additional secondary capacity in north Manchester where continued demand for places is forecast. A site in the ward of Miles Platting and Newton Heath has been identified as potentially being suitable to accommodate future education development.
- 5.6 The Council commissioned a 1200 place secondary school at Matthews Lane which secured planning permission in May 2018 and was proposed to open in readiness for September 2020. This scheme was paused whilst the Council awaited the outcome of Wave 13 free school applications submitted to the DfE by multi-academy trusts however, no successful bids were received.
- 5.7 It had also been expected that the Dean Trust / UK Fast free school approved in wave 12 would secure a permanent site and could open in readiness for academic year 2021/22. Unfortunately a site has still not been secured by the DfE and the Council will therefore need to take steps to meet its sufficiency duty by developing additional secondary provision.
- 5.8 The Council has continued to seek sites to safeguard for future development as a secondary school in east Manchester to meet the growing need for places. On this basis, a proposal has been to Executive regarding the acquisition of the Showcase Cinema site on Hyde Road, some of which will be the preferred option to develop a new secondary school, subject to site investigations. This would mean that the proposed school at Matthews Lane



will not be progressed. This decision has been informed by the outcome of detailed site investigations, which indicate that the design response required to construct a school at Matthews Lane would result in significant cost exceeding DfE affordability measures, and also that the change in location from Matthews Lane to Hyde Road provides improved access whilst still being well situated to meet the forecast demand for places. The Council could not have anticipated that the Hyde Road site would become available at the time Matthews Lane was being considered as a site for a new secondary school.

- 5.9 Development of a new secondary school at the Hyde Road site will require a free school presumption to be undertaken so that a preferred sponsor can be recommended to the RSC. It is expected that this process will commence in February and conclude in late summer or early autumn. The school will then enter the pre-opening phase so that places can be made available to children for September 2021 admissions round. Opening of the school for September 2021 will require the use of temporary accommodation for a period of up to 3 years while the permanent build is completed.

## **6.0 Contributing to the Manchester Strategy**

### **(a) A thriving and sustainable city**

- 6.1 The ongoing growth of the City's education sector will continue to create opportunities for employment in schools and those businesses which are involved in the supply of goods and services.

### **(b) A highly skilled city**

- 6.2 A sufficiency of high quality education provision will provide future generations with the skills and behaviours to benefit from the City's economic success.

### **(c) A progressive and equitable city**

- 6.3 Schools are environments in which the diversity and talent of Manchester's children and young people is celebrated. Pupils are supported and encouraged to achieve their aspirations and maximise their potential.

### **(d) A liveable and low carbon city**

- 6.4 Investment in modern, energy efficient and high quality education infrastructure drives reductions in carbon across the estate of schools.

### **(e) A connected city**

- 6.5 Investment in existing and new education provision will enhance the City's attractiveness to potential residents and contribute to the development of high quality neighbourhoods.

## **7.0 Key Policies and Considerations**

### **(a) Equal Opportunities**

- 7.1 The proposals in this report will ensure that there is sufficient educational provision in the City for children to attend high quality schools close to where they live so that they may fulfill their potential.

### **(b) Risk Management**

- 7.2 Risk issues and appropriate mitigations are addressed within the report.

### **(c) Legal Considerations**

- 7.3 Legal considerations are addressed in the body of the report.