TITLE	**Primary Schools Provision Strategy 2013-16**
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	School Admissions Forum on 11 December 2012
WARD	None Specific
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR	Pauline Maddison, Strategic Director Children's Services

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

1.1 To secure sufficient primary capacity to meet rising demand within the Borough and to serve new housing development sites.

1.2 To meet the Council's duty to secure sufficient school places overall, and support the Council's key priority to improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential.

1.3 To meet the objectives established in the Council's Core Strategy, in particular those relating to education, the delivery of Strategic Development Locations and reducing traffic congestion.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Forum

1. Notes the Strategy adopted by the Executive on 25 October 2012, and the actions being taken to increase the supply of Primary School Places in the Borough from 2013 through to 2016.

2. Notes the Executive's recommendation, in adopting the Strategy, that, as part of the consultation on 2014/15 admission arrangements, catchment areas in identified hotspots be reviewed and the priority given to out of catchment area siblings in school admissions oversubscription criteria.

3. Takes account of the Strategy and recommendation regarding admissions, in considering the separate report on the Local Authority's proposed Consultation on 2014-15 School Admission Arrangements.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Wokingham's Primary School Provision Strategy 2013-16 was agreed by the Executive on 25 October 2012 (annex A).

The need to provide additional school places in the Borough due to an established trend of rising numbers of children of primary school age in the Borough, has previously been considered by the Executive and School Admissions Forum in 2011. The Strategy establishes the Council's process and programme for continuing to meet its statutory duty to secure sufficient school places over the next four years.

The Strategy identifies 'hot spots' of rising pupil numbers and pressures on school places within the Borough, in which statutory proposals will be brought forward to provide additional school places in 2013-14:

- South West of the Borough (and in particular the Shinfield / Spencers Wood
- area);
- Wokingham Town (and in particular west of the Town Centre); and
  North of the Borough (Twyford / Charvil).

The strategy sets out three priority actions, to

- improve communication with parents and communities;
- provide additional capacity through the development of new school sites; and
- review of catchments and oversubscription criteria for primary school admissions.

A copy of the Strategy is attached as annex A.

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Date 30 November 2012	**Version No.** 1.0

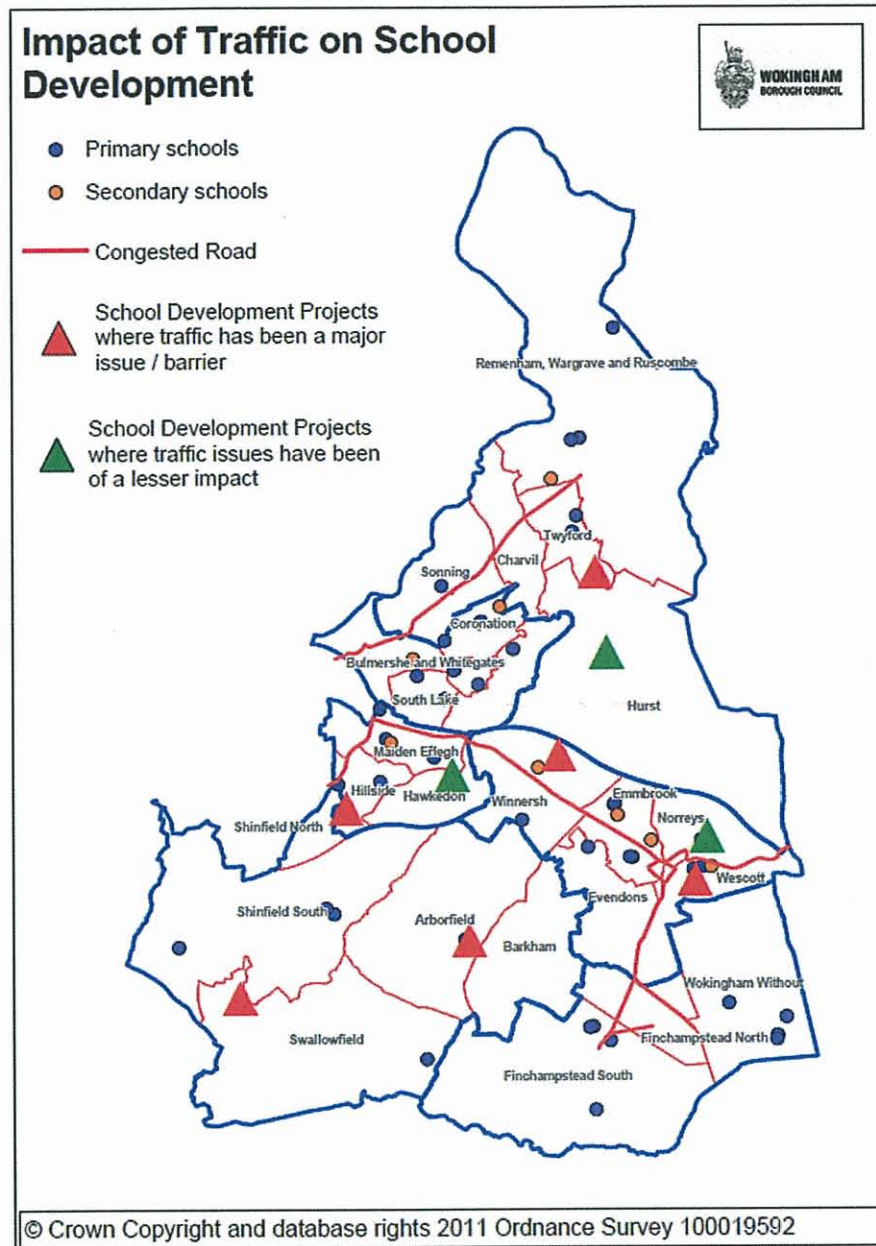# Wokingham Primary School Provision Strategy 2013-2016

1. Purpose and objectives of this Strategy

1.1 This document sets out Wokingham Borough Council's strategy for the expansion of Primary school places in the Borough to meet rising demand. It proposes a set of recommendations and also sets out the background and context to these recommendations

1.2 The objectives of this strategy are:

- Through provision of quality primary school provision meet the Council's key priority to improve educational attainment and focus on all children achieving their potential.

- To meet the objectives established in the Council's Core strategy in particular those regarding education;

- To provide additional primary school capacity through a programme of new school provision to meet rising demand within the Borough.

- To review, and improve if possible, the working of the present catchment area system and the priority given to out of catchment siblings 1.

- To improve communication with parents.

1.3 The emphasis of the strategy is on the need for places and the sizes and locations of the schools that will be needed. However, the strategy depends on and contributes to the continuing success of Wokingham's schools in maintaining and improving still further the high standard of Education provision for children and families in the Borough.

2 Context

2.1 Locally there is a rising trend in the birth rate, leading to pressure on primary school places.

2.2 Not only are we facing rising numbers, but Wokingham has been very efficient in minimising the number of surplus school places. Department for Education figures for May 2011 indicate that Wokingham had 6.9% of primary places unfilled. This compares to a national average of 10.4% and is the lowest percentage of any of the Berkshire unitaries (these range between 7.0% for Windsor and Maidenhead and 12.9% in Reading). On the face it this indicates there are (just) sufficient places here. However, these figures mask the effect of an unequal distribution of children between age groups. The unfilled places are in older age group classes and cannot be used to accommodate full Key Stage 1 and Reception classes in most cases.

2.3 We have already accelerated our planning in the areas of the Borough particularly affected. We successfully expanded our schools by an additional 145 places for 2012/2013 meaning we have been able to offer school places on time with a high degree of first preferences.

2.4 Until now we have met the needs of existing communities through the expansion of existing schools. Experience in Wokingham in recent years has been that primary school expansion is difficult to achieve without adverse impacts on local communities – particularly from additional

home to school run traffic. The map below shows the location of school expansion projects where school run traffic has been a significant issue in relation to known congested roads.


Impact of Traffic on School Development

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

- ● Primary schools
- ○ Secondary schools
- —— Congested Road
- ▲ School Development Projects where traffic has been a major issue / barrier
- ▲ School Development Projects where traffic issues have been of a lesser impact

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3   Demand and supply for places

3.1   In determining our demand "hot spot" areas we have used a number of data sources. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, we recognise that increasing the number of measures used increases the reliability of the analysis. Whilst roll projections are a useful tool, we can have greater confidence in their outcomes when other data also indicate similar trends. Secondly, no one measure captures all the dimensions of need. We have seen this year that simply providing sufficient local places does not always meet local community aspirations. Places have to be in preferred schools to maximise parental satisfaction.

3.2 Demand "hot spot" areas therefore have been identified through analysis of:

- Birth rate data;
- Admissions data;
- Pressure data – first preferences, diverts;
- Levels of Planned residential growth.

3.3 The graph below shows live births by area, with trend lines added to three areas (Wokingham Town, South West and the North) as these areas show consistent patterns of growth over the past ten years. Other areas (Earley, Woodley and the South East) have not grown consistently.
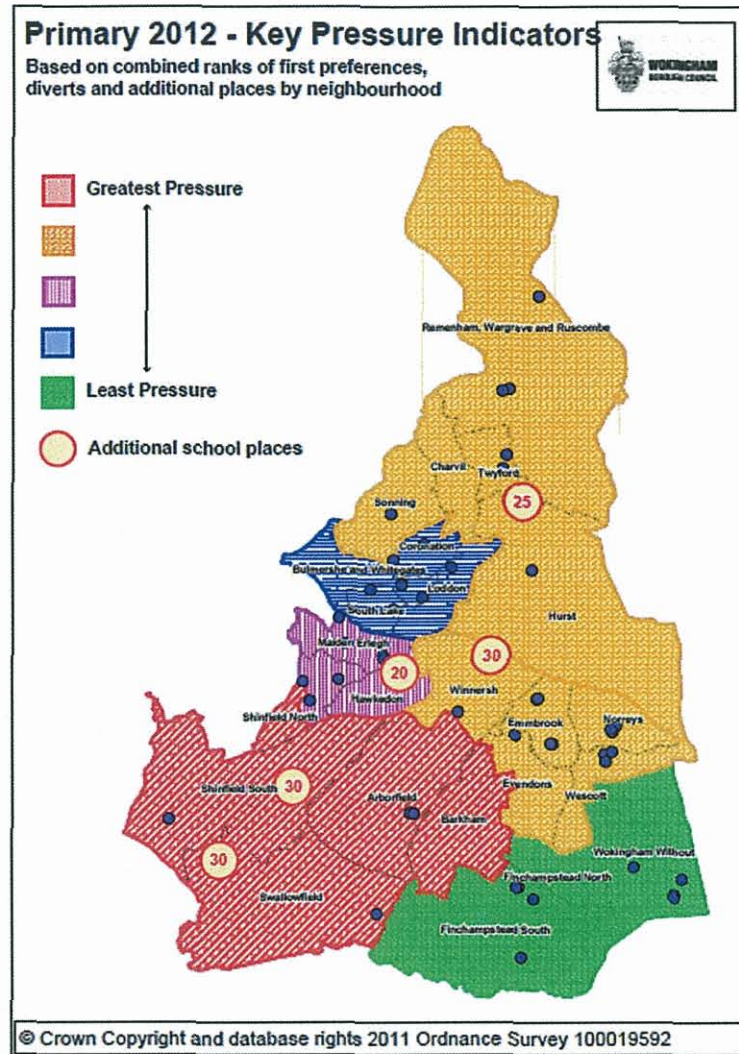
Live Birth Data by Area
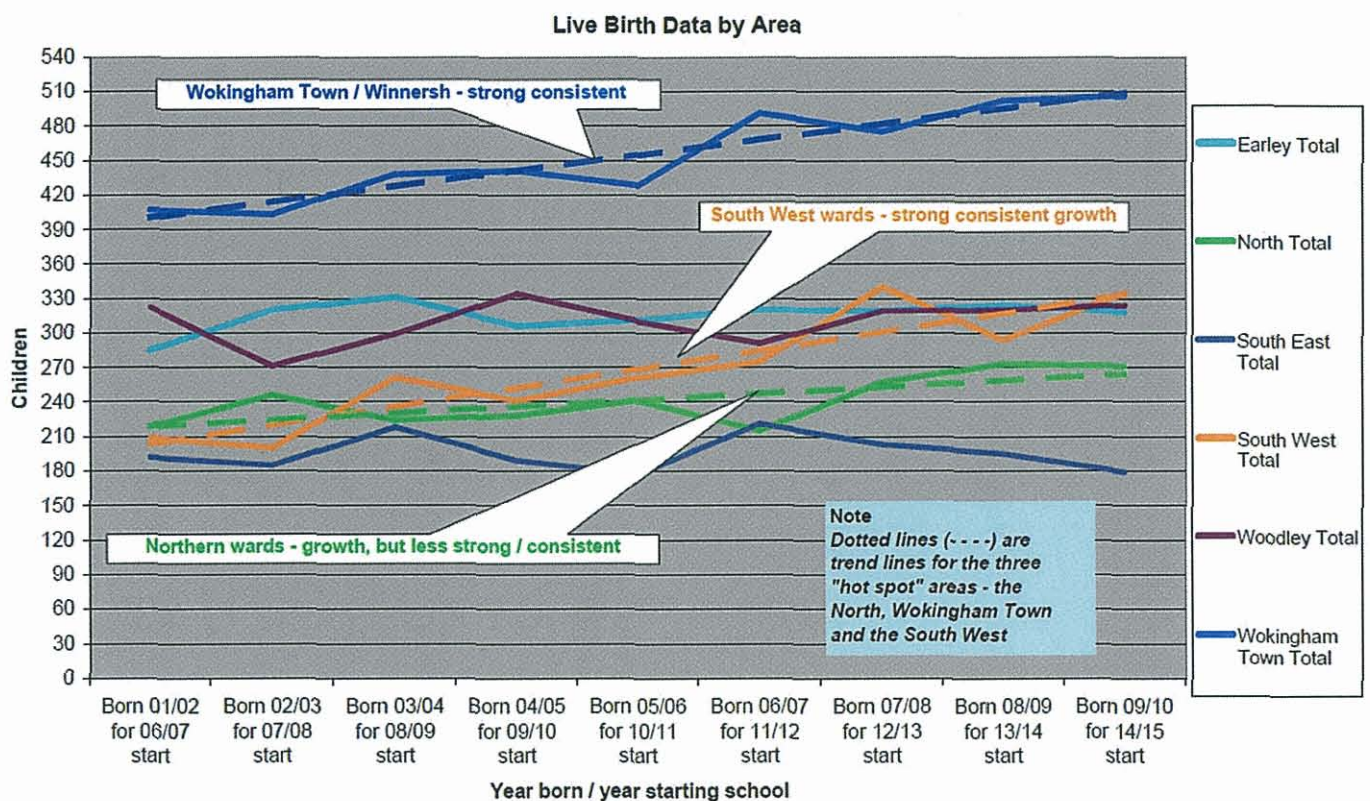
3.4 Of the three areas where growth has occurred the South West and Wokingham Town have shown the most consistent patterns (with the greatest rate of increase being in the South West). Northern ward birth numbers, although on an upward trend, are markedly more variable.
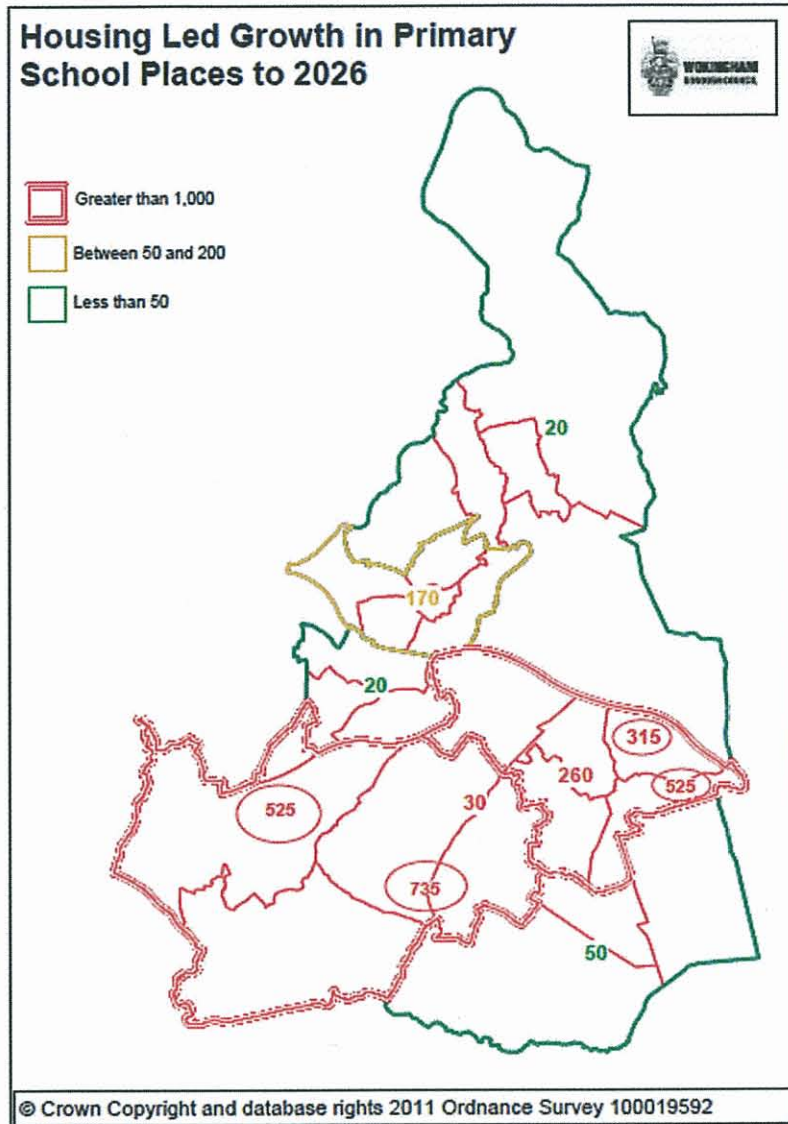
3.5 Within these three growth areas the most pressing issues are found in three "hot spot" areas (mapped below):

- South West – Shinfield South.
- Wokingham Town – Evendons / Emmbrook wards (south of the Reading Road).
- North – Twyford (the only northern ward with a consistent upwards birth trend).

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3.6   Many schools are already under pressure from the high demand for places. The areas where this is most acute are marked by a high proportion of parents who do not get their first school preference, or do not get any preferred school. These have been the areas where we have already had to provide additional places for September 2012. This highlights similar areas to the birth data, with the strongest pressures in the South West, Wokingham Town and the North of the Borough.

3.7   Additional places have been provided for this September's entry to primary schools in the North of the Borough - Colleton, Wokingham Town - Winnersh, South West - Shinfield and Lambs Lane schools, and in Lower Earley - Hawkedon school. The additional places at Winnersh, Shinfield and Lambs Lane schools are temporary extra classes whilst Hawkedon and Colleton schools are permanent expansions.

3.8   Many of the current school sites in these areas have increased their capacity to the point where there is limited scope to carry out further expansion. In order to consider both the short term and longer term needs of these areas consideration is being given to potential new school sites as well as any remaining capacity to expand current schools.

3.9   The map below sets out a matrix of these place pressures by area with the additional primary school places provided for 2012/2013 admission round identified in red. In the majority of areas of the Borough these key pressure indicators coincide with the highest Live Birth rise areas.

Primary 2012 - Key Pressure Indicators
Based on combined ranks of first preferences, diverts and additional places by neighbourhood

Greatest Pressure

Least Pressure

Additional school places

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3.10 In the future, our analysis will take into account the increase in numbers as a consequence of Wokingham Borough' considerable expansion through development. This includes four major new Strategic Development Locations (SDLs), in the pipeline, with residential developments totalling over 13,000 homes expected to be built by 2026 that could generate over 2,500 additional primary age children. The LA also experiences some pupil migration, including both inward and outward migration.

3.11 The map below identifies projected additional places that will be required by 2026 if all SDLs result in maximum housing build and capacity. The final pupil numbers generated will reflect the mix of property type and tenure, however.

Housing Led Growth in Primary School Places to 2026

Legend:
- Greater than 1,000
- Between 50 and 200
- Less than 50

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3.12 Development of school places must support other borough priorities. In particular the siting and sizes of schools must take account of the need to reduce traffic congestion. One major contributory factor is school run traffic. New provision must be planned to reduce reliance on the car where possible.

4   Engagement and feedback

4.1 An inter-departmental officer working group (Highways, Planning, Property, Children's Services) has been working to secure recommended options for Primary school places.

4.2 The officer working group reports to a Member working party with cross-party membership led by the lead member for Children's Services, Cllr Charlotte Haitham-Taylor and includes Cllr John Kaiser, Cllr Ian Pittock and Cllr Beth Rowlands.

4.3 Head Teachers have been engaged from an early stage in the development of this strategy. Full engagement with schools has taken place through their clusters, through the Secondary Head Teacher Federation, the Primary Head Teacher association and individually.

4.4 Consultation with school communities (as in 4.3 above) identified that there is widespread support for the proposed strategy and objectives including the need for additional primary provision. A strategic approach to delivering this strategy is also regarded as necessary, as opposed to piecemeal expansion by individual schools. This consultation exercise also identified risks associated with 'bulge' classes as a solution, particularly where teaching capacity is increased but not the supporting infrastructure. Consultation responses showed a recognition that many schools were now 'site-bound' but new-build would be an opportunity to design for modern needs (such as staff facilities for preparation and to meet the wider range of children's special educational needs in mainstream schools).

4.5 The consultation responses showed a recognition that transport / traffic issues are significant for any school sites, and that we should address both causes (such as split siblings and parents not choosing their local designated school) as well as measures to mitigate congestion, such as by incentivising and promoting sustainable modes of school travel. It was also suggested designated areas should be reviewed alongside the need to make additional primary provision.

4.6 Further avenues for investigation were identified in the consultation as follows:
- It was suggested that school collaboration through federations and other alternative models of provision could have a positive impact on admissions and provision of places;
- The benefits of improving the sharing of key information between the Local Authority, Health Authority, and Schools were pointed out. This would enable better and more timely planning at all stages through to admission, and also that parents should have access to more and better information and advice;
- There were some suggestions that the 2 and 3-form entry models of primary schools should be considered, in terms of the quality of learning each could provide, the suitability of existing site/buildings to accommodate additional pupils, and the viability and efficiency of these models in the longer term, in adapting to changing circumstances such as pupil numbers declining.

4.7 School development working parties have been set up in each of the 'hot spot' areas,. Membership of these includes Ward Members, Parents, residents, School and Town/Parish representatives. The role of the working parties is to engage with the issues and to shape the development of proposals to address community needs.

4.8 Public sessions have been held in hotspot areas and have been very well attended by over 700 parents so far. Further sessions are being held across the Borough as part of our ongoing engagement strategy.

4.9 At these meetings, parents have been generally supportive of measures to increase capacity set out in the plan. They have a concern over the quality of entirely new provision, but support measures to create new provision through the off-site expansion of popular and successful schools. They have not expressed a single view over changes to the admissions system, with significant lobbies both for the retention of and changes to the current sibling priority arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools. These arrangements currently give priority to all children resident in the schools designated area over other children (including siblings of children on roll at the school).

4.10 Parents identified the main issues as overall school capacity and the increased numbers of children needing school places. There are also issues with individual schools being heavily

oversubscribed, and the availability of places in particular local areas. The need to keep siblings together, as well as for children to be able to attend local schools, was amongst the main priorities and sources of worry that parents indicated. Communications, and concerns about additional places being available in time, were also amongst the key points raised. Parents were keen to have more information and certainty around school admissions and the availability of places. Parents also identified quality of teaching, Ofsted rating, and availability of early years and wrap around care as significant issues in choosing schools, and factors to consider in making additional provision.

4.11 Parents were keen to have further opportunities to talk about plans as they develop, such as further public events, and through social media and online surveys.
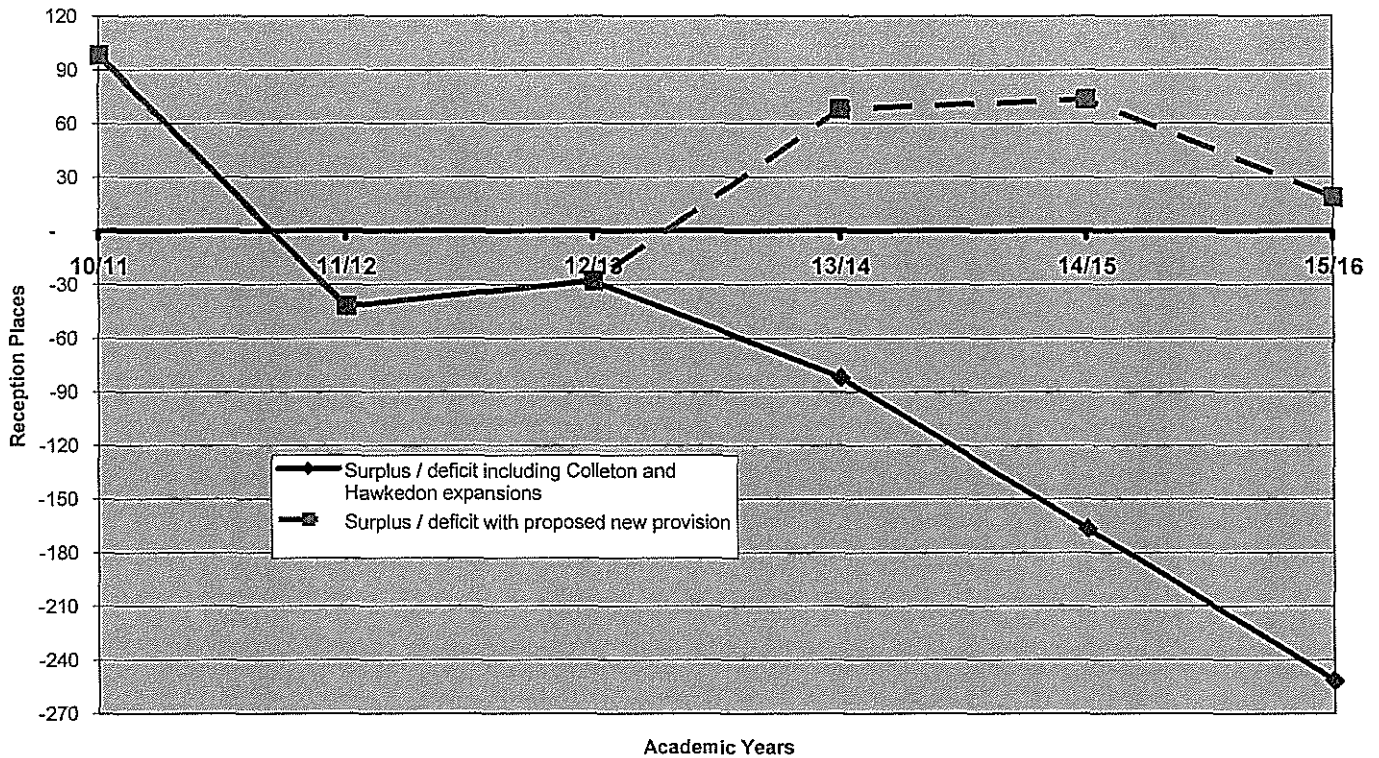

5 Strategy

The key objectives of the proposed strategy are as follows:

1   To review, and improve if possible, the working of the present catchment area system and the priority given to out of catchment siblings

2   To provide additional capacity through a programme of new school provision.

3   To improve communication with parents.

6 Priority 1: To provide additional capacity through a programme of new school provision.

6.1 Roll projections derived from population data indicate there will be a need for a sustained programme for the creation of new provision. The Borough's child population has grown consistently over the past decade and there is no indication that this upward trend has levelled off or reversed. Indeed the plans for continuing residential growth (both in and outside of SDLS) point to the need for new schools over a number of years. The graph below shows how the proposed expansion programme will move the borough from a position of too few permanent places to one where sufficient permanent places are provided to meet needs, at least in the short term. Where there is insufficient permanent provision additional temporary places would be required to meet the Authority's statutory duty. This approach is expensive, involves high levels of risk and is likely to result in poor outcomes for children. Note that the anticipated surplus is always less than 5% - which allows very little room for variation against these projections.

Borough shortfall in permanent Reception places

Chart: Reception Places (y-axis, from -270 to 120) vs Academic Years (x-axis: 10/11, 11/12, 12/13, 13/14, 14/15, 15/16)

Legend:
— Surplus / deficit including Colleton and Hawkedon expansions
—■ Surplus / deficit with proposed new provision

6.2   The work undertaken by the Borough, including the extensive consultation exercise described above, has led to the conclusion that new school sites are preferable to continued expansions of current sites. The reasons for this are as follows:

- we have already expanded a large number of our current sites;

- many are now site bound with further expansion difficult to achieve based on the physical geography;

- transport solutions can more readily be designed into new provision and where these are smaller schools they will serve a more local (and so less car dependant) community;

- parents are keen to walk to schools in their local community;

- parents often express a preference for a smaller school.

6.3   Table 1 below shows year by year area growth and proposed plans for additional capacity for the next three years in the first instance. It shows that within hotspot areas, Wokingham Town, the South West and the North part of the Borough will be the focus to deliver additional primary school places and the role we see the SDL led school developments will play in the meeting of overall need in the time of the proposed strategy.

6.4   An inter-departmental officer group (Highways, Traffic management, Property, Planning and Children's Services) has undertaken an option appraisal of potential sites for recommendation

to the Council's Executive in October. This has involved desk top analysis, site visits and some initial engagement with parish councils, schools parents and residents.

6.5   The aim is to maximise the opportunities afforded to us by the planned SDL sites for new schools where sites can build bigger schools and to focus on land sites owned b the Borough to minimise the land cost in the proposals.

6.6   SDL school sites are being negotiated with developers to meet the demand from the various proposed developments. However, the sites that have been identified across the Borough have the capacity to enable larger schools to be built which would enable us to maximise the opportunity the SDLs provide to meet new development led need and the already growing need for places in the Borough.

6.7   New provision must take account of plans for other service areas, and in particular Early Years and SEN provision.

6.8   The major factor that will affect Early Years provision is the government policy of providing 15 hours of free education and care to the 20% most vulnerable two year olds from 2013, increasing to 40% in 2014. This creates a need to retain (and in some cases a pressure to increase) existing provision, including provision on school sites. Locally the effect of the increase in the number of   on places for two-year-olds is being considered and there are some plans, (a separate paper has been written for the SLT and WBC Executive). However the number of two year olds for WBC will be 150 places in September 2013, and a further 300 places in 2014 and year on year thereafter.

6.9   Parents need flexible childcare to match their work requirements and any plans for new Foundation 1 (/ nursery) provision must reflect this requirement. Traditional models of part time AM and PM nursery provision become less sustainable given this requirement.

6.10   SEN provision strategy has been the subject of a separate review process. On 28June 2012 a report entitled " Review of Special Education Needs and Disability Provision in Schools" was considered by Wokingham's Executive. This review indicates that currently Resource Base capacity is underused but that the Borough places a high number of children in expensive out of borough provision. Clearly as overall numbers of children are expected to grow any rationalisation of places must ensure that provision keeps pace with demand.

7   A priority programme of capital projects to deliver new school places through new school sites for 2013/2014 admissions round.

7.1   The proposed expansion programme is summarised below.

Table 1: Planned New Reception Places

Hot Spot area	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Longer term	Total planned Reception places
Wokingham Town proposed provision					
Wokingham Town new school site	30				30
Winnersh expansion	30				30
Buckhurst Park (additional form of entry)		30			30
Buckhurst Park (for SDL)		30		30	60
South Wokingham SDL 2nd school				60	60
North Wokingham SDL				60	60
Total	**60**	**60**	**0**	**150**	**270**
South West Wokingham proposed new provision					
Spencers Wood School (SDL site)	30	30			60
Shinfield - new SDL school			30		30
Shinfield Infant / Shinfeld St Mary's Junior School	30				30
Arborfield Garrison			30	90	120
Other provision				30	30
Total	**60**	**30**	**60**	**120**	**270**
North Wokingham proposed provision					
New north ward school site	30				30
					0
In year planned new Reception places	**150**	**90**	**60**	**270**	**570**

8   Delivery of new schools

8.1   The role for the Local Authority in the provision of school places has changed. Whilst the legal responsibility to ensure sufficient school places is retained, the Education Act 2011 sets out a role as a strategic commissioner working with a reduced set of formal powers, but an expanded range of opportunities.

8.2   The Education Act 2011 makes it clear that the presumption is that where new schools are required because of rising numbers they will be Academies / Free Schools. There is a strong presumption against other forms of maintained schools and community school proposals are only permissible as a last resort.

8.3   The timescales available to us and the feedback we have received from parents means we are taking a pragmatic approach to school organisation arrangements for any new capacity in 2013. For 2013, we are looking to current schools to take on expanded responsibility and manage new school sites whilst we discuss with the department for Education how to deliver schools for the long term in the Borough. We are also considering options for accelerated development of Academies and Voluntary Aided schools as part of our contingency planning process.

8.4   In providing school places, we must focus on outcomes for Children and Young People. To this end Primary school development will also be guided by a Wokingham vision for learning, developed in partnership with primary heads and the Learning and Achievement Service. Locally, the vision will be developed through established clusters of schools.

8.5   Design and construction of premises will be a key issue. Progress in the building industry has led to an increase in the number of options for "off the shelf" school design, which will greatly reduce costs and reduce delivery time. Options for the design of build on new sites are in active development.

8.6   Where we are working with developers or a school promoter on new school options, the Borough is developing a brief for schools design in the light of changing national standards and to allow greater flexibility in size range. The brief is addressing a range of issues including how to deliver;

- a good quality educational environment;
- a sustainable building;
- long lived premises with low maintenance costs;
- low heating and lighting costs;
- good standards of design.

9   Priority 2 To review, and improve if possible, the working of the present catchment area system and the priority given to out of catchment siblings

9.1   Whilst this paper focuses on locations of school capacity and development, it is important that some of the current challenges and issues regarding school catchment areas and the priority given to siblings in our oversubscription criteria are understood. We currently prioritise children in a catchment area over siblings of children currently at a school but who live outside the catchment area.

9.2 Our first round of consultation shows that there are voices both for and against current arrangements in local communities. Remodelling the admissions round last year also indicates that prioritising out of catchment area siblings over local children would have led to a 25% increase in the number of parents who could not be offered a place at any of their choices of school.

9.3 Some additional protection has been introduced already in the 2013/14 year for families that tried but failed to place an older child in their local catchment area school for their younger children. Some have requested that we go further and give general priority for siblings. Any new arrangement must include a satisfactory balance of the interests of families with first and only children wishing them to enter a local school with those of families with children attending schools that may be local but are not their catchment area school.

9.4 As a complex issue, time should be given to build a clearer picture of impact and and to enable more detailed consultation and analysis to be undertaken before a recommendation regarding sibling priority change is considered by the Council's Executive in 2014.

10 Priority 3: To improve communication with parents.

10.1 There are two components to this aspect of the strategy. Firstly, there is a need to engage parents and the wider community on the scope of the issues to be addressed. The Borough needs to understand what kind of provision parents want and where it would be best located. Conversely, any development scheme necessarily has adverse impacts for some sections of the community. Wider public engagement enables the council to discuss why new provision is required, what form it should take and to identify and seek commitment to necessary mitigation. At best parents can become active partners – directly shaping new provision. Secondly, there is a need to communicate to empower parents. Parents need to have a full understanding of the way in which the admission arrangements in particular operate in order to make informed choices.

11 Funding the Strategy

11.1 The costs of implementing the strategy will be presented in following papers. An initial programme cost has been established, based on recent local and national experience. There will be a reliance on a wide range of different funding sources, and not all of these are completely secure. It may be that full implementation of the strategy is delayed or some specific elements abandoned if insufficient funding can be secured. At the same time it can be expected that the costs themselves are also subject to change, with the tightened economic situation leading to different expectations about the future sizes of schools and lower targeted building costs than in previous years. Following the implementation of the outcomes of the James Review, the Building Bulletin Area Guidelines (BB99) are expected to be superseded, possibly leading to a reduction in anticipated building costs. The interdepartmental officer group will continue to develop and monitor the programme costs.

11.2 A breakdown of costs against previously agreed extension schemes and new school provision in the three hot spots is:

Schemes	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	Total
Extensions	£2,524,040	£4,850,000	£261,400	£0	£7,635,440
New "hot spots" provision	£250,000	£10,000,000	£6,200,000	£3,500,000	£19,950,000
Total	£2,774,040	£14,850,000	£6,461,400	£3,500,000	£27,585,440

The "extension" schemes include the Colleton and Hawkedon primary expansion schemes. The new "hot spots" provision includes the new Winnersh, North Wokingham, Woosehill and Shinfield South provision.

11.3   The sources of funding for the strategy described are as follows:

- Basic Need Funding, from central government, directed towards local authorities with the steepest increases in pupil population. Wokingham is now benefiting from this funding. However, the immediate need is for primary school expansions and this will continue to be the case for a number of years. Birth data being received indicates continuing population growth. It will be some years before this can be used (or is likely to be needed) for secondary expansions. Therefore all Basic Need funding received by Wokingham until the 2015/16 year can be dedicated to achieving aims established in this strategy.
- Funding to improve the condition of buildings, provided by the Department for Education. This funding is direct to Academies, although a recommendation of the James Review was for some continuing local co-ordination of capital funding. This funding will revive the need for regularly maintained Asset Management Plans.
- Section 106 funding, which is the developer contribution to the additional public service needs arising from large scale new residential developments. The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) alongside S106 is a further unknown factor. It is expected that this will serve to encourage housing developments and ensure that developer contributions are targeted on new needs arising from the new residences and will not be able to be used to address other existing needs.
- Other one-off bids for funding, for example, the Priority Building Condition programme.
- Wokingham Borough Council's own capital pot, which can fund improvements to schools alongside other Council capital projects.
- Funding for free schools and academies will be provided direct from central government via the Education Funding Agency from 2012.
- Capital receipts if we partly vacate a site. The Secretary of State's decision that Oakbank School should be leased on a peppercorn rent has eliminated the option of a large receipt from that source (for example for Secondary provision) and we would anticipate a similar outcome if we proposed to vacate an entire Primary school site. However there may be options to release some land on a limited number of school sites in the Borough and we are investigating this opportunity.

- Schools continue to receive devolved capital funding, but this has been heavily reduced and depends on individual school decisions regarding its use. However, this source is more substantial and significant in the Secondary sector than Primary.

11.4   Section 106 developer contributions will form a considerable part of the available funding. There is considerable negotiation, debate and dispute with developers which can often require resolution through the formal appeal system. There is a lack of clarity at the moment, therefore, about how much might be forthcoming from this funding source, as well as some lack of clarity about the rate at which houses will be built.

11.5   Funding allocated to date (for 2011/12 and 2012/13) will help deliver programme objectives for 2013/14. Funding provisionally allocated in the MTFP and 10 year vision will be required to fund the programme in 2014/15 and beyond. It is likely that additional funding will be required even above this level.

12   Risks to Delivering the Strategy

12.1   A risk management strategy is an important part of achieving confidence in its deliverability. The key risks being managed through our strategy can be summarised as follows

12.2   **Funding.**

Risk: Insufficient funding will be available.

There are risks to each of the possible streams described above:

- S106/CIL funding is dependent on the rate of house building in the borough and in particular the rate at which SDLs are developed, and the success in negotiating with developers about the size of the contribution.
- Capital receipts are likely to be limited, as described above.
- The Council's capital pot has other large-scale calls on this funding source.
- Schools receive devolved capital, and it is possible that some elements of this could be forthcoming to help deliver the strategy. However, this funding source is dependent on the schools committing themselves sufficiently to the strategy to agree to this, and they will also wish to retain funds for other needs.

12.3   It is positive that there is a wide range of different funding sources, and it is always a major risk in relying on only one or two possible streams. However, there are risks to achieving the funds envisaged from a number of them and it is unlikely that a shortfall from one source will be compensated from another. The appendix gives an indication of the estimated funding required to achieve the strategy, and of the funding sources that will be needed to achieve it.

12.4   **Budget costs:** Cost figures and benchmarks against current schemes have been identified.

Risk: Budget required is greater than has been estimated

They have a basis in national experience, but require more work. Issues identified to date include:

Issue	Commentary
Cost of land	New Schools will require additional land – some of which will need to be purchased. It is hoped that this will be at educational use value – but some may need to be purchased at the markedly higher residential use value. The strategy does though minimise land purchase requirements.
Size of Premises	It is anticipated (but not confirmed) that DfE will revise space downwards in the near future. This will reduce building impact costs.
Cost per m2 (1)	It is anticipated that DfE will adopt a far more prescriptive approach to new school provision – leading toward simplified, less expensive designs (compared to new schools built in the last decade).
Cost per m2 (2)	No new school project is sufficiently advanced to allow any estimate of site specific costs. These will be established by October 2012 and finalised by December 2012.
Cost per m2 (3)	New schools will be built over a number of years – a period in which there may be marked inflation in building costs. The intention is to mitigate this through negotiation in contract.
Other mitigation	A major component of recent scheme costs has been the need for off-site work to mitigate traffic impacts. Even with new schools in new communities the borough can expect to occur costs for additional mitigation, over and above that required to meet the needs created by the new communities themselves.

12.5 **SDL Development.**

Risk: Pupil yield from SDLs will vary from the present estimates

The rate of development of the SDLs is not certain and will be dependent on external factors, including the national economy. Although the best possible predictions are made relating to pupil yield, these are disputed by the developers. This presents a risk in terms of planning provision in advance, to avoid over reliance on SDL progress to utilise SDL – identified school sites.

12.6 **Planning and community engagement.**

Risk: Key Stakeholders will not continue to support the strategy

To deliver new school sites year on year will need effective engagement with communities, regarding proposed sites and growth. We have made significant inroads and engaged extensively over the past three months however we will need to engage more on an ongoing basis particularly at local levels where communities may be impacted. Continued local ward member involvement in this engagement will be critical.

12.7 **Securing partners for new school proposals**

12.8 **Continuing engagement of schools** with the strategy. Primary school heads have been a key driver and partner in the work so far. However schools have their own agendas and may begin to move from the strategy at certain points if they perceive advantages in so doing. It is crucial that the LA continues its present positive engagement with schools, enabling them to benefit from working together and with us. The LA works with schools to broker and commission the support they need. Working together on developing the modern relationship between the LA and schools (and between schools), will enable a planned strategy to be possible and relevant.

12.9 Risk: **Under estimation of the number of places needed.** There is a risk of under estimating the number of pupil places that will be needed. The reasons for this could include:

- Risk: The pattern of admissions to schools which underpins the strategy alters as a result of changes in the popularity of schools. This will have an impact particularly if it leads to more pupils from neighbouring local authority areas (n.b. Reading) coming into Wokingham schools. For example, if there was an increase in the number of out-of-borough pupils obtaining a place at ahead of Wokingham resident pupils, there would be a `knock on` impact on other schools in the borough which are already full or close to full.
- Under-estimation of the pupil yield from new housing developments and/or insufficient developer contributions leading to funding shortfalls.
- Rising number of pupils entering primary schools from within the present Wokingham population. **Access to Health data would make a significant impact on this risk.**

12.10 Risk: **Over-estimation of the number of places needed**; this could impact on the business planning of current schools and could arise from:

- Changes in the number of available places at schools in neighbouring Local Authorities, and/or the popularity of their schools, leading to less inward migration to Wokingham schools. This is unlikely as other neighbouring Local Authorities are also experiencing increases in pupil numbers.
- Fall in birth rate.
- A slower pace of residential development than was planned could occur.

13   Priority Actions

13.1 The 2013/14 action plan will be appended to this strategy. The primary focus is on securing sufficient places for September 2013 in the three "hot spot" areas with the following priority actions between September 2012 and the end of the year:

- Completing options appraisal to deliver four recommended priority sites for Executive committee consideration for 2013/2014 expansion.
- Securing School partners to expand to new school sites.
- Securing Department for Education or other consent to school proposals.

- Securing temporary arrangements for school site opening (if required).
- Procuring designers and school buildings.
- Securing planning consent for schemes.

Brian Grady, Strategic Commissioner for Children Young People and Families