PROPOSAL TO EXPAND SMITHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
REPRESENTATION (FORMAL CONSULTATION) OUTCOMES REPORT

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning, and the School’s Leadership Team with the outcomes from the formal consultation to expand Smitham Primary School.

1.2 Smitham Primary school is a Community School located at Portnalls Road, Coulsdon, Croydon CR5 3DE in the South West of the Borough. The school admits 2 classes, 60 reception pupils per year. The proposal is to permanently expand the school by one form of entry to offer an additional 30 reception places from September 2018.

1.3 A total of 90 places will be offered to children applying for reception places from September 2018. The school would continue to receive an additional class in reception each year, so that by 2024 the school would have an extra 210 pupils in total, with 90 pupils in every year group - from Reception to Year 6. A viability study has been undertaken which shows that the school site has the capacity to be expanded to accommodate the additional pupils.

1.4 Smitham Primary School is a popular and successful school with strong leadership and governance. The school has been judged by Ofsted as a school that is good in serving its pupils well. For 2015 admission, 296 applications were received for the 60 reception places available.

1.5 This report is based on responses received during the representation (formal consultation) period following the publication of statutory proposal where anyone with an interest could object or comment on the proposal to expand the Smitham Primary School.

2. Background

2.1 The proposal to permanently expand Smitham Primary School by one form of entry (an additional 30 pupils) is part of the Council’s supply strategy to ensure sufficient pupil places are available within the South West borough to meet its statutory duty.

2.2 The Schools’ Leadership Team, including the Governing Body have agreed in principle to the proposed expansion. A viability study has been undertaken which shows that the proposed expansion of the school site is both feasible and affordable.

2.3 The Council has a statutory duty for ensuring that a sufficient supply of school places is available within its Borough for every child of school age. It also has a duty to promote high educational standards, to ensure fair access to educational opportunity, and to help every child fulfil their educational potential. It must also ensure that there are sufficient schools in its Borough and promote diversity and parental choice.
3 Cross-border pupil mobility

3.1 The Greenwich Judgment makes it unlawful for admission authorities to give priority in school admissions to their own residents, allowing pupils free movement across borough borders. Cross border movement of pupils is one of the factors that can affect the demand for school places. The amount of pupils living in Croydon who attend schools in another borough can reduce the demand for school places; and the amount of pupils living in another borough and attend schools in Croydon can increase the demand for school places.

4 Parental preference - diversity of provision in the South West

4.1 There are 13 primary schools, including Smitham Primary, in the South West of the Borough. Of which:
- 6 are Community schools
- 4 are Academies
- 1 Church of England
- 2 Roman Catholic

5. Stakeholder Engagement

5.1 Engagement (informal consultation) on the proposed permanent expansion of Smitham Primary School ran from on 28th September to 19th October 2015, including a public meeting at the school on 08 October 2015.

5.2 Overall, the responses received during this engagement period indicate that the majority of respondents object to the proposed expansion of the school. The main comments/concerns cited on the questionnaire and mentioned at the public meeting fall under the following broad themes:
- Traffic related
- Loss of ethos / feel / atmosphere
- Disruption to teaching / learning
- Communal space
- Need to build a new primary school

5.3 Please refer to the full outcomes report – “Stakeholder Engagement Outcomes Report” Proposed Permanent Expansion of Smitham Primary School – for the Council’s response to concerns.

6. Publication / Representation (formal consultation)

6.1 For a proposal to permanently expand a school, where it would increase the capacity of the school by more than 30 pupils and 25% of the school’s capacity (the number of places and pupils in a school), the Council is required to follow a statutory process, including publication of statutory proposal; and a four week representation (formal consultation) period where anyone can comment on or object to the proposed expansion
6.2 In accordance with statutory regulations for making significant changes to schools, a statutory proposal was published, which started a 4 week representation period – 04 November to 02 December 2015 – which invited anyone with an interest to make representations – comment or object to the proposal.

6.3 The statutory proposal was published in the local Croydon Guardian newspaper; on the Council’s and school’s websites; displayed on the school gates; and in the local library. A copy of the statutory notice was sent to the Member of Parliament and Ward councillors.

6.4 Communication and Consultation activities
A consultation document, including a questionnaire was used as a basis of informing stakeholders, including parents/carers and local residents, about educational rationale and inviting feedback on the proposed permanent expansion of Smitham Primary School.

6.5 A range of modes and methods of communication were used to inform and facilitate feedback from stakeholders on the proposed expansion of Smitham Primary School. Stakeholders were given the opportunity to express their views in writing – via completion of questionnaire; email; and post – and verbally at the public meeting at the school.

6.6 Communication activities included the circulation of the consultation document, including questionnaire and leaflet via:

- **Schools E-Bulletin**
  ✓ Schools’ E-bulletin to all schools within the borough

- **Email:**
  ✓ Ward Councillors / MP
  ✓ schools within neighbouring/adjourning borough

- **Website:**
  ✓ consultation document including questionnaire published on the Croydon website
  ✓ Consultation document, including questionnaire on school’s website
  ✓ Online questionnaire (survey monkey)

- **Printed documents**
  ✓ consultation document /questionnaire available at school and from Council
  ✓ consultation leaflets distributed to local residents informing them about the consultation and invitation to public meeting - 858 leaflets were distributed to residents living within the vicinity of the school
  ✓ document sent/given to parents/carers by school
  ✓ Posters advertising consultation and public meeting date
  ✓ Leaflet displayed in local library
6.7 Public meeting at Smitham Primary School
A public consultation meeting at Smitham Primary School on 11 November 2015 where the educational rationale and consultation process for the proposed expansion were explained. Attendees were able to express their views and ask questions, raise concerns and offer suggestions.

6.8 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
A Question and Answer sheet was published and distributed to help answer some of the legitimate concerns raised by stakeholders about the proposed permanent expansion of Smitham Primary School.

6.9 Equality and Diversity Monitoring
As part of the consultation process, respondents were asked to complete an equality and diversity questionnaire, looking at Gender, Age, Ethnicity and Disability. The information collected will help identify any special requirements; promote equality; and improve choice and diversity.

6.10 Equalities Impact Assessment
An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been undertaken for the proposed permanent school expansion programme, including Smitham Primary School. The Equality analysis enables the Council to target its services, and budgets, more effectively and understand how they affect all our communities.

6.11 The conclusion of the EQIA is that increasing the number of school places through the proposed permanent school expansion programme will either have a positive or neutral impact on protected groups, including children, disability, ethnicity / race. The full EQIA is attached to the Education Estates Strategy report for the 18 January 2016 Cabinet meeting.

7. Summary of representations

7.1 Consultation questionnaire
A total of 40 completed questionnaires have been received. The majority (23) of respondents are 'Strongly against' the proposed expansion of Smitham Primary School; of which 19 are a parent/carer of child/children at Smitham Primary School.

7.2 Public consultation meeting
A total of 30 people attended the public meeting that was held at the school on 10 November 2015. The school's leadership team and Council representatives: explained the educational rationale for the proposed expansion of the school; sought your views on the proposal; and responded to questions.
Email responses
7.3 The Council also received an additional 5 representations via email. Of which 2 were against of the proposed expansion of Smitham Primary School.

7.4 Overall the responses received during the representation period indicate that a high majority of respondents object to the proposed expansion of Smitham Primary School. Of the 40 respondents were completed the questionnaire during the representation period:

- 23 “Strongly against”
- 9 “Not in favour”
- 3 “Strongly in favour” / “In favour”
- 5 “Not sure

8 Key issues raised during the representation period

8.1 The main comments/concerns cited on the questionnaire and mentioned at the public meeting fall under the following broad themes:

- Traffic related
- Loss of ethos / feel / atmosphere
- Disruption to teaching / learning
- Communal space
- Need to build a new primary school

8.2 A detailed analysis of responses, including equality and diversity monitoring is attached at Annex A below.

9 Response to concerns

9.1 Traffic/related
The Council will commission a transport impact assessment around the school to ascertain how the local area would cope with all modes of movements by people and vehicles, taking account of accessibility and safety issues. This assessment would take place at peak times, including when parents/carers ‘drop off’ and ‘pick up’ children; and would give an indication of any potential impact of traffic as a result of the additional pupils at school, and mitigating actions against any identified risks.

9.2 If Cabinet approve the implementation of the proposed school expansion project, planning applications will be required. Through the planning application process the impact of the additional pupils will be addressed.

9.3 The Schools’ Travel Plan will continue to encourage walking to school. The health and safety of the whole school community is paramount.
9.4 Loss of ethos / feel / atmosphere
Smitham Primary is a popular and successful school with strong leadership and governance. We are confident that the strong leadership and excellent teaching staff at the school will maintain the ethos/feel/atmosphere of the school if the proposal implemented.

9.5 There are also benefits to be derived from the expanding an existing school, such as, better recruitment and retention of good teaching staff; wider curriculum offer; and improved facilities.

9.6 Disruption to teaching / learning
The Council is experienced in successfully managing school expansion projects. If approval is given for the proposal to be implemented, the project will have a dedicated Council officer who will manage the construction process so that the Head teacher and staff can continue to focus on teaching and not having to deal with any issue arising from the construction.

9.7 The Council, in partnership with the architect and contractor, will ensure that any disruption to the school is minimised or eradicated through careful planning and delivery of the project, for example, using off site construction methods, and school holidays to carry out heavy construction works.

9.6 Communal space
Initial viability study shows that the school sites have the capacity to be expanded. If approval is given by Cabinet to implement the proposed expansions, a detailed feasibility study will be carried out as part of the planning process, where options will be carefully considered by the Council, school leadership team and the architect which include ensuring that the size of communal areas are maximized to accommodate the additional pupils at the school. The health and safety of the whole school community is of paramount importance.

9.7 A range of measures, e.g. staggered play and lunch times will be explored to enable pupils to have sufficient space.

9.8 The expansion proposal includes additional classrooms with associated cloaks/toilets required for the additional number of pupils.

9.9 Need to build a new primary school
A key part of the Council’s strategy for providing additional pupil places is to firstly invest in expanding existing successful and popular schools in areas of demand. This strategy helps in meeting parental preference as well as ensuring value for money for Croydon taxpayers.

9.10 Every year we project the number of school places that we will need in the borough in future years. The methodology we use to project pupil numbers includes the number of children we expect to live in new housing developments. Information from the Cane Hill housing
development is included in our most recent projections for pupil places required in the South West of the Borough.

9.11 The plan is for this additional demand to be met through the expansion of Smitham Primary School and other proposed school expansions in the South West of the Borough.

9.12 The option of building a brand new school on a new site to provide additional pupil places is a potential alternative. However, there are a number of reasons for considering the expansion of existing school site rather than building a new school.

9.13 These are:
- Changes in legislation - the Education Act 2011 changed the arrangements for establishing new schools and introduced section 6A (the free school presumption) to the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Where a LA thinks there is a need for a new school in its area it must seek proposals to establish an academy (free school).
- However, it is still possible to publish proposals for brand new maintained schools outside the competitive arrangements in certain circumstances, for example, where a competition does not identify a suitable academy/free school.
- As under the previous new school competition arrangements, the Local Authority is responsible for providing the site for the new school, and meeting all associated capital costs. Currently all funding from the latest financial settlement from central government have been committed to existing identified projects.
- Lack of Council owned sites
- High cost of other sites that could for educational use.
- Available sites not in area of demand for pupil places
- Building a new school takes a longer time to complete and might not be ready in time to meet the demand for pupil places.
- Expansion of existing school means that we have more certainty of high quality education.

10 Petition
In addition to the above comments/concerns, the Council was sent an 840 signature petition to “Build a new school in Coulsdon” during the representation period.

10.1 There are plans for new housing developments in the South West of the Borough, for example, the Cane Hill Housing Development. The mix of housing type will affect the number of new school places required. The potential child/pupil yield, including school age population - from the Cane Hill Housing Development has been accounted for in the Council’s latest annual projections for pupil places.
11 **Key point made in support of the proposed expansion**
Some of the respondents stated that they recognise the need for the expansion of Smitham Primary School given the increased demand for school places but have concerns about the disruption that will be caused and the traffic impact.

12 **General points**
If the proposal is approved, the Council and the school would work with the local community and parents/carers to explore ways to minimise any negative impact resulting from the expansion.

12.1 The Council will also work directly with school to further develop their School Travel Plan document, with an aim of discouraging car usage and encouraging pupils, parents and staff to use more environmentally friendly modes of travel to school. In addition, the school will highlight any road safety issues in relation to roads within the vicinity of the school, and capture these in their Travel Plan so that the Council can investigate and develop safety measures.

12.2 The representations will be shared with the Council’s Highways Improvement Team.

13 **Next steps**

13.1 Following the representation period, the Council’s Cabinet Committee will decide whether the proposal to permanently expand Smitham Primary School should be implemented. This will be based on responses received which will be balanced against the needs for pupil places.

13.2 **Education standards**
   . The Cabinet will also take into account the extent to which the proposed permanent expansion of Smitham Primary School is consistent with the government’s policy for there to be a presumption in favour of expanding popular and successful schools. Smitham Primary School has been judged by Ofsted as a school that is good in serving its pupils well.

14.2 In line with the Department for Education School Organisation guidance, **decisions must be made within a period of two months, by 02 February 2016**, of the end of the representation period or they must be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.

14.3 If approval is given by Cabinet to proceed to the implementation stage, stakeholders, including parents/carers and local residents will be consulted again at the planning application stage, when building designs and traffic considerations will be available.

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1 School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and Education Act 2011
Annex A

Smitham Primary School - Detailed Analysis of Responses

1. Please tell us who you are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who are you?</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent or carer of child/children at Smitham Primary School?</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent or carer of child/children at another School.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent or carer of a child/children not yet of school age</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pupil at Smitham Primary School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A member of staff at Smitham Primary School</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A member of staff at another school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A local resident</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Of the 19 parent or carer of child/children at Smitham Primary School:
  - 5 are also local residents and 1 of these are also a Parent/carer of child/children at another school and a School Governor at Smitham Primary School.
  - 1 is also a member of staff at another school and a local resident
  - 1 is also a member of staff at Smitham Primary School and a local resident
  - 1 is also a parent/carer of child/children not yet of school age and is also a member of staff at another school.

- Of the 2 parent or carer of child/children at another school, both are also local residents and 1 of these are also a parent or carer of a child/children not yet of school age.

- The 1 is a member of staff at another school is also a local resident
2. **What is your view of the proposal to expand Smitham Primary School to create places for 30 additional pupils each year?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly in favour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In favour</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in favour</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly against</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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</table>

- The 1 respondent strongly in favour is a parent/carer of a child/children not yet of school age.

- Of the 2 In favour of the proposal:
  - 1 is a local resident
  - 1 is a parent or carer of child/children at Smitham Primary School, a parent or carer of child/children at another school, a School Governor at Smitham Primary school and a local resident.

- Of the 9 not in favour of the proposed expansion:
  - 6 are local residents
  - 3 are a parent/carer of a child/children at Smitham Primary School, of these:
    - 2 are local residents and 1 of these is also a member of staff at Smitham Primary School.

- Of the 5 not sure about the proposed expansion:
1 is a member of Staff at Smitham Primary School
2 are a parent/carer of a child/children at Smitham Primary School and both are also local residents
1 is a parent or carer of child/children at another school and also a local resident
1 is a parent or carer of child/children not yet of school age.

- Of the 23 Strongly against the proposed expansion:
  4 are local residents
  1 is a member of staff at another school and also a local resident
  1 is a member of staff at Smitham Primary School
  1 is a pupil at Smitham Primary School
  1 stated other
  1 is a parent or carer of child/children not yet of school age.
  1 is a parent/carer of child/children at another school, a parent/carer of child/children not yet of school age and a local resident
  13 are parent or carer of a child/children at Smitham Primary School, of these:
    - 1 is also a local resident
    - 1 is also a parent or carer of child/children not yet of school age and a member of staff at another school
    - 1 is a member of staff at another school and a local resident.
## Diversity and Equality Monitoring

### Gender

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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![Gender bar chart]

### Age Range

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<tr>
<td>26-34</td>
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<td>35-44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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### Ethnicity

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<thead>
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<th>Ethnicity</th>
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<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not wish to declare ethnic group</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Age range**

[Age range chart showing distribution across different age groups.]

**Ethnicity chart**

[Chart showing bar graph for different ethnic categories with corresponding numbers and percentages.]
Disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes or no?</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100%</td>
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**Do you consider yourself to have a Disability?**

![Bar chart showing the distribution of Yes (2, 5%), No (37, 93%), and Blank (1, 2%) responses.]

Disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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</table>

**Disability**

![Bar chart showing the distribution of Mobility (1, 50%) and Blank (1, 50%) responses.]

END