

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 16 March 2021  
**Report for:** Information  
**Report of:** Karen Samples, Director of Education

### Report Title

School Place Planning for New Developments

### Summary

This report sets out the way in which the Council coordinates school place planning with new development, providing further information about the role of strategic planning and a high level overview by school place planning area.

### Recommendation(s)

That the contents of the report are noted.

### Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Sarah Butters, Head of Early Years, School Places and Access  
Extension: 3233

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Effective pupil place planning is a fundamental element of the Local Authority's role as strategic commissioner of good school places and ensures the statutory duty to provide sufficient school places is met.
- 1.2 Decisions on how to achieve this are taken at local level. A detailed description of the approach to school place planning in Trafford was provided in the report to Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on 4 February 2021, '*Trafford School Sufficiency and Place Planning*'.
- 1.3 Key strategic priorities:
  - Expand existing schools to protect financial viability. The DfE no longer supports the creation of schools with one form of entry (FE).
  - Remove mixed age classes where these exist by increasing to full forms of entry (FE).
  - Amalgamate separate infant and junior schools unless there are reasons not to, such as size and location.

This maximises the impact of basic need funding, whilst providing opportunities to improve the suitability and condition of the existing stock.

- 1.4** Between 2010 and 2022, Trafford received £78m of basic need funding which has been used to commission the expansion of 29 schools and provide an additional 3,681 places. Trafford has been identified by DfE as an exemplar local authority with regards to its effective and efficient use of basic need funding.
- 1.5** The DfE school places scorecard for Trafford indicates:
- Primary forecast accuracy of within 0.1% for 1 year ahead and 1.3% for 3 years ahead and also shows the cost of providing a permanent school place in Trafford is lower than the national figure.
  - Trafford's secondary scorecard indicates forecast accuracy of within 0.9% for 1 year ahead and 0.9% for 3 years ahead.
- 1.6** The DfE scorecards indicate an estimated number of additional places needed by 2021/22 based on the DfE's school capacity assessment. An important point to note is that the DfE calculation deploys a methodology which assumes that local authorities will provide places for all pupils who wish to access one in their area. This differs from the local sufficiency assessment methodology which is to ensure that the local authority meets its duty to ensure sufficient places for all pupils resident in our area.
- 1.7** Trafford has good transport links and high performing, popular schools, many of which are oversubscribed, making it an attractive option for pupils from outside of our area. The 3 year average indicates 4% of primary pupils in reception year are not Trafford resident. This figure increases in border areas, for example 8% in Sale East and 6% in Stretford (Annex 1). For secondary pupils in Year 7, the 3 year average is much higher with 16% of pupils not resident in Trafford. Selective schools are a significant contributory factor with 29% of Year 7 pupils in this sector not resident in Trafford (Annex 2).
- 1.8** Trafford being a net importer of school places creates a significant difference between the DfE estimation of additional places needed and the number of places indicated in our local sufficiency assessment.
- 1.9** Demand for school places is influenced by a broad range of social, economic and demographic factors, reflecting wider trends within community and society at a given point in time. Due to this complexity, providing a place for every Trafford resident child is not easy to achieve but Trafford continues to meet the statutory duty, making every effort to accommodate preference but noting this is not always possible.
- 1.10** Achieving the right balance between sufficient places and overprovision is critical to maintain stability within the existing school system and to avoid compounding financial challenges.

## **2. Role of Strategic Planning**

- 2.1** One of the duties of the Council as a planning authority is to prepare a statutory development plan to guide new development (housing, employment, infrastructure etc) and be the 'benchmark' for the determination of planning applications. Accordingly, the Council already has a good grasp on where new residential development will occur – and certainly the details of any developments already granted consent. As set out in more detail below, the challenge often lies in the timing of developments and coordinating these with other unrelated demographic factors.

- 2.2** To ensure we are addressing the needs of education in new developments the Strategic Planning Team has been working alongside Development Management and Education to assist with school place planning in Trafford and has worked together on drafting future development plan policies. Housing land supply information is shared amongst the services to establish where new homes are going to be delivered, in what numbers and in which years going forward. This allows for the future planning of school place provision.
- 2.3** The draft Trafford Local Plan is currently out to public consultation, it contains a draft policy relating to “Education and Skills” requiring that in order to give its residents the best start in life through maintaining excellent educational standards the Council will work with the relevant organisations to ensure:
- A sufficient supply of early years provision is made available to give children a good start in life;
  - Good quality primary and secondary school places are provided within a reasonable distance to Trafford’s main residential areas; and
  - Support the enhancement of higher education provision to equip residents with the skills and qualifications needed to be successful throughout their working lives.
- 2.4** To ensure that new development does not over burden the capacity of existing educational facilities, applicants for major residential proposals will be encouraged to undertake early engagement with Trafford’s Education Services to determine the educational requirements associated with new development. The draft Trafford Local Plan policy aims to address the issue of the cumulative impact of residential developments, and not just the impact of large scale developments. Draft policy suggests this is achieved through the Development Management process seeking contributions to mitigate any cumulative impacts when necessary. Draft Local Plan policy states that existing schools should be expanded where possible with the provision of new facilities considered where this is not possible. Developer contributions will be sought to deliver educational facilities in Trafford.
- 2.5** The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) 2020 is no longer being progressed however its content is expected to be used in a new strategic plan for Greater Manchester known as ‘Places for Everyone’. The GMSF 2020 identified strategic allocations at both New Carrington and Timperley Wedge, part of the Medipark allocation. Both allocation policies recognised the need for new educational provision to accommodate the increased provision of new homes.

### **3. Role of Planning Applications**

- 3.1** Notwithstanding what may be set out in development plans most new development requires planning permission and the submission of a planning application.
- 3.2** A very notable exception to this are the conversion of office buildings to residential under permitted development rights. Whilst these rights bring flexibility and a source of additional housing into the market, they are not accompanied by any of the customary obligations attached to other developments. Consequently they can have a very limited role in building ‘place making’ and do not contribute towards school place funding. Office conversions under permitted development remain an important component of housing completions in Trafford.

**3.3** Otherwise, all Major Planning applications for housing (5 units or more) are the subject of consultation with the relevant Education teams. This consultation will then establish first of all whether there is a need for school places in the vicinity – and whether it is for primary or secondary pupils. It should be noted that if there is no shortfall in school places locally, then there will not normally be any requirement for a development to make an education contribution. All contributions are designed to offset and mitigate the impact of the development. If it is found that there is a need for school places locally, then a formula is employed to calculate a funding requirement proportionate to that need. It is also important, in accordance the Community Infrastructure Regulations to identify the project to which funding will be assigned (e.g. a new classroom or related facility).

**3.4** Once this formula has been calculated, the planning case officer will then negotiate the relevant sum from the applicant, often as part of a wider package of mitigations or benefits. These will be reported to and considered by the Planning & Development Committee where they have a determining role. (NB should development be refused but subsequently allowed on appeal, the determining Planning Inspector will make judgements on school place contributions as part of their overall assessment of the application). Ultimately contributions towards education provision are secured via a planning obligation – in effect a legal contract – usually either an agreement under section 106 of the planning act or as a unilateral undertaking.

#### **4. School Planning Area Overview**

**4.1** This section provides an overview of each school place planning area to show the number and type of schools, supply of places and surplus places. It also indicates a pupil yield calculated from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2020) and allocations in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF 2020).

**4.2** In Trafford, the pupil yield rate for the primary and secondary sector averages 3 additional pupils per school year, per 100 homes. Historically, families did not tend to live in apartments but this has changed over time and our data indicates that apartments now also generate pupils, especially those located within the catchment areas of popular schools. Therefore the pupil yield calculation is applied to apartments and houses which have 2 or more bedrooms. Further analysis of the pupil yield is planned in the summer term to better understand how the yields may vary between new housing and existing housing, by area and by type of unit. Once the yield work is complete, the forecast will be updated accordingly.

**4.3** The SHLAA provides a long term picture of developments so number of units and timescales are estimates which can change, particularly for those which have not started. Where the breakdown of unit type is not yet know, it is estimated that 66% of units will be two or more bedrooms. This pupil yield analysis of the SHLAA is updated annually.

**4.4** Trafford has determined 6 primary and 5 secondary school planning areas:

<b>Primary</b>		<b>Secondary</b>	
Altrincham	Partington	Altrincham	Partington
Stretford	Urmston	Stretford	Urmston
Sale East	Sale West	Sale	

## 4.5 Altrincham School Place Planning Area

This table shows a breakdown of the supply of places in the Altrincham area:

Schools in Altrincham	Community	Academy	Voluntary Aided	Voluntary Controlled	Foundation	Total No. Schools	Total No. Places	No. Surplus Places	% Surplus Places
Primary	10	3	4	0	0	17	6,755	368	5%
Non selective secondary	0	3	1	0	0	4	3,870	33	1%
Selective secondary	0	4	0	0	0	4	3,185	0	0%

The combined impact of the 84 developments in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2020) and the Timperley Wedge (GMSF 2020) indicates the following additional demand for school places:

Timeframe	Primary			Secondary		
	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE
<5 years	130	0.62	0.5	93	0.62	0.5
5-10 years	190	0.90	1.0	135	0.90	1.0
10-15 years	167	0.79	0.5	119	0.79	0.5

A desktop analysis of the existing school estate data indicates that there is potential to expand existing primary schools by a total of 3 FE, subject to engagement with local schools.

Some of the schools in this area are close to the border with around 5% of primary school pupils coming from outside Trafford. This increases to 19% of secondary pupils, broken down to around 31% within selective schools and 8% within non selective schools. An increase in the Trafford population could free up some existing 'capacity' in these schools as it could push out some of the non-Trafford residents.

Altrincham Grammar School for Boys and Altrincham Grammar School for Girls both had successful Selective School Expansion Fund (SSEF) bids, which will create an additional 295 additional places in Year 7 to Year 11.

Land has been identified for a potential new 2 FE primary school within the Timperley Wedge allocation phased in 2028. However in the first instance, expansion of existing schools would be carried out to protect their sustainability, subject to engagement with local schools.

In addition, the calculated developer contribution requested towards secondary places is £2.6m.

## 4.6 Partington School Place Planning Area

This table shows a breakdown of the supply of places in the Partington area:

Schools in Partington	Community	Academy	Voluntary Aided	Voluntary Controlled	Foundation	Total No. Schools	Total No. Places	No. Surplus Places	% Surplus Places
Primary	0	2	1	0	0	3	840	121	14%
Non selective secondary	0	1	0	0	0	1	640	216	34%
Selective secondary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a

The combined impact of the 11 developments in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2020) and the allocation for New Carrington (GMSF 2020) indicates the following additional demand for school places:

Timeframe	Primary			Secondary		
	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE
<5 years	85	0.41	0.5	61	0.41	0.5
5-10 years	256	1.22	1.0	183	1.22	1.0
10-15 years	252	1.20	1.0	180	1.20	1.0

A desktop analysis of the existing school estate data indicates that there is potential to expand existing primary schools by 3 FE, subject to engagement with local schools.

The former Moss View Primary School site in Partington is an alternative option being considered for creation of a new 2 FE primary school to serve this area should this be required.

Developer contributions have been recently requested totalling £9.7m for primary places and £2m for secondary places. These are not yet agreed and would be phased alongside development.

#### 4.7 Sale School Place Planning Area

Sale is split into Sale East and Sale West for the purpose of planning primary school places, but is considered as just one area for planning secondary school places.

This table shows a breakdown of the supply of places in the Sale area:

Schools in Sale	Community	Academy	Voluntary Aided	Voluntary Controlled	Foundation	Total No. Schools	Total No. Places	No. Surplus Places	% Surplus Places
Primary – Sale East	5	1	3	0	0	9	3,255	40	1%
Primary – Sale West	4	2	3	0	0	9	2,765	31	1%
Non selective secondary	0	1	0	0	1	2	2,260	68	3%
Selective secondary	0	1	0	0	0	1	900	0	0%

The combined impact of the 32 developments (19 in Sale East and 13 in Sale West) in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2020) and the allocation in Sale

West linked to New Carrington (GMSF 2020) indicates the following additional demand for school places:

Timeframe	Primary – Sale East			Primary – Sale West		
	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE
<5 years	20	0.09	0.0	24	0.11	0.0
5-10 years	41	0.20	0.0	142	0.67	0.5
10-15 years	0	0.00	0.0	110	0.53	0.5

Timeframe	Secondary – All Sale		
	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE
<5 years	31	0.21	0.0
5-10 years	131	0.87	1.0
10-15 years	79	0.53	0.5

A recently completed expansion at Worthington Primary School has provided an additional 0.5 FE to Sale East. Analysis of the existing school estate data indicates there is potential to expand by a further 2 to 3 FE in this area should it be needed, subject to engagement with local schools.

Some of the schools in Sale East are close to the border with around 8% of primary school pupils coming from outside Trafford. This increases to around 14% of secondary pupils, with a similar rate seen across selective and non-selective schools. An increase in the Trafford population in these catchment areas could free up some existing ‘capacity’ in these schools as it could push out some of the non-Trafford residents.

A proposal is underway to expand Firs Primary School in Sale West by 1 FE from September 2022. Analysis of the existing school estate data indicates there is potential to expand by a further 1 to 2 FE in this area should it be needed, subject to engagement with local schools

Developer contributions have been recently requested totalling £3.2m for primary places and £3m for secondary places. These are not yet agreed and would be phased alongside development.

#### 4.8 Stretford School Place Planning Area

This table shows a breakdown of the supply of places in the Stretford area:

Schools in Stretford	Community	Academy	Voluntary Aided	Voluntary Controlled	Foundation	Total No. Schools	Total No. Places	No. Surplus Places	% Surplus Places
Primary	7	3	4	1	0	15	4,788	364	8%
Non selective secondary	1	1	0	0	1	3	2,340	506	22%
Selective secondary	0	0	0	0	1	1	640	0	0%

The combined impact of the 64 developments in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2020) indicates the following additional demand for school places:

Timeframe	Primary			Secondary		
	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE
<5 years	303	1.44	1.5	217	1.44	1.5
5-10 years	652	3.10	3.0	466	3.10	3.0
10-15 years	490	2.33	2.0	350	2.33	2.0

A desktop analysis of the existing school estate data indicates that there is potential to expand existing primary schools by 4 to 5 FE, subject to engagement with local schools.

Stretford Grammar School had a successful Selective School Expansion Fund (SSEF) bid which will create an additional 160 additional places in Year 7 to Year 11.

Land and provision of a 2 FE school has been identified on the Kelloggs site, with a financial contribution option retained as an alternative, subject to further pupil yield analysis.

Developer contributions have been requested totalling £15m for primary places and £12m for secondary places. These are not yet agreed and would be phased alongside development.

#### 4.9 Urmston School Place Planning Area

This table shows a breakdown of the supply of places in the Urmston area:

Schools in Urmston	Community	Academy	Voluntary Aided	Voluntary Controlled	Foundation	Total No. Schools	Total No. Places	No. Surplus Places	% Surplus Places
Primary	6	1	5	0	0	12	3,605	161	4%
Non selective secondary	0	2	0	0	0	2	1,800	306	17%
Selective secondary	0	1	0	0	0	1	750	0	0%

The combined impact of the 32 developments in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2020) indicates the following additional demand for school places:

Timeframe	Primary			Secondary		
	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE	Pupil Yield	Calculated FE	Estimated FE
<5 years	18	0.09	0.0	13	0.09	0.0
5-10 years	13	0.06	0.0	9	0.06	0.0
10-15 years	9	0.04	0.0	6	0.04	0.0

Should this position change, a desktop analysis of the existing school estate data indicates that there is potential to expand existing primary schools by 5 FE, subject to engagement with local schools.

Requested contributions of £173k for primary and £175k for secondary have been calculated. These are not yet agreed and would be phased alongside development.



## **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1** There is ongoing joint work between Strategic Planning and Education to better understand differences in pupil yield for existing housing and new housing and to differentiate by area and type of unit. Once this work is complete, the forecast can be updated accordingly as this could significantly impact the projected places.
- 5.2** The annual School Capacity Survey (SCAP) was one of the data collections cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. Planning work for the 2021 SCAP is underway and once complete, this survey will provide more detailed pupil forecasts to feed into local place planning.
- 5.3** Catchment areas identify priority areas for admission to community schools, voluntary controlled schools, and to some academies. These areas are reviewed annually to ensure that sufficient places exist in each area, or neighbouring area, to accommodate all the children resident in that area. It is accepted that in some years, a very few schools may not be able to allocate places to all the residents, however, when this occurrence becomes routines, or where there is no suitable alternative provision elsewhere, the provision of additional places or amendments to the relevant catchment areas will be considered.
- 5.4** Where there is an assessed need for additional places to be provided through expansion of existing schools, the school will be selected according to the following criteria:
- Location of the school relative to population / catchment area
  - Access for pupils by public transport and other sustainable modes of travel
  - Current size of the school
  - Practicalities of expansion on the existing site
  - Costs of expansion
  - Latest Ofsted judgement is good or outstanding
- 5.5** Demand for school places is influenced by a broad range of ever changing social, economic and demographic factors. The education system in Trafford is a complex interconnected network, similar to an ecosystem, where a small change in one factor can create a broad reaching ripple effect felt in multiple other areas. This means it would be both ineffective and inefficient to select specific schools for future expansion many years in advance, and that long term strategic planning is more suitable at planning area level.