

**Additional information for CYP Overview and Scrutiny Panel 29 July 2016 report**  
**“Harris Wimbledon Secondary School - to agree required site approvals”**

## **Supply and demand for secondary school places**

### **Introduction**

The main Cabinet report presented to CYP overview and scrutiny panel concentrates on site approvals for Harris Wimbledon school rather than whether there is a ‘basic need’ for a school, but references previous Cabinet report from 11 November 2013 to January 2016 where the need was evidenced.

A new secondary school in the area has the potential to change admissions patterns of existing schools, and it is natural that these schools feel an element of threat when a new school is proposed. In this context, Merton Secondary Heads’ meeting has raised concern regarding whether there is a need to provide a new school, especially when three of LB Merton’s 8 secondary schools have not been able to fill all their places for this September 2016, collectively meaning there are presently 128 vacancies. With an allowance for some further late applications and placements it is expected there will be around 110 spare places (6.5%) in the official roll count.

### **Review of demand –Cabinet paper on Secondary School expansion 18 January 2016**

Due to the wide variety of choice for secondary education, the key challenge in forecasting secondary school numbers is the retention rate between year 6 and year 7 (the first year of secondary school). The Cabinet paper on 18 January 2016 reviewed the supply of demand of school places on the basis of 2015/16 academic year rolls, and preference information for 2016/17 year 7 entry. This identified that:

- Our analysis from the number of resident admissions applications for September 2016 shows that the expected additional number of pupils up to September 2016 requiring a secondary school place is as forecast - there have been over 200 additional on-time admissions applications from Merton residents from 2014 to 2016 (139 extra in 2015 and a further 66 in 2016).
- However, to date this extra demand has not fully translated itself into numbers on roll in LB Merton state funded secondary schools in September 2015, or projected through the admissions preferences for LB Merton secondary schools for September 2016 which have recently been received

It concluded that the demand for secondary school places may not be as high as previously forecast due LB Sutton ‘front loading’ its expansions, and that while the council should proceed with plan for the new school (6 forms of entry) and the expansion of Harris Academy Merton (2 forms of entry), officers should continue to monitor the position before committing to the expansion of Harris Academy Morden and St. Mark’s Academy.

### **Latest position**

LB Merton projects secondary places through a local model based on historic retention panels from previous school year groups, and from a more sophisticated model by the GLA. The latest GLA model forecasts a slightly lower demand than the LB Merton model for places up to 2018/19, but a higher demand from 2020/21. The tables below are based on the Merton model as it is more flexible to adjust:

**TABLE 1 - SHOWS ACTUAL AND FORECAST RISE IN YEAR 6 NUMBERS, ACTUAL YEAR 7 NUMBERS AND FORECAST BASED ON CIRCA 79% RETENTION RATE**

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Year 6 roll actual/forecast											
Merton model	1837	1817	1848	2024	2081	2133	2378	2369	2332	2380	2392
Year 7 roll actual/forecast											
Merton model	1457	1454	1465	1492	1578	1651	1687	1879	1873	1844	1882
Transfer percentage	84.5%	79.2%	80.6%	80.7%	78.0%	79.3%	79.1%	79.0%	79.1%	79.1%	79.1%

Note - should read diagonally to see the transfer i.e. 2014/15 year 6 is 2015/16 year 7. Forecasts in italics, others actual roll. 5% is circa 100 pupils, so 100 pupils 'lost' in 5 years

**TABLE 2 - SHOWS ACTUAL AND FORECAST SURPLUS YEAR 7 PLACES AGAINST ADMISSION NUMBERS WITH EXPANSION PLANS**

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total planned admission number*	1669	1669	1669	1669	1669	1699	1729	1909	1909	1909	1909
Surplus places	212	215	204	177	91	48	42	30	36	65	27
Surplus percentage	12.7%	12.9%	12.2%	10.6%	5.5%	2.8%	2.4%	1.6%	1.9%	3.4%	1.4%

\*Based on current PAN then expansion of Harris Merton (30 extra in 2016/17 and 60 from 2017/18), and Harris Wimbledon opening 2018/19  
If Harris Wimbledon opens in September 2017 with 120 places, surplus forecast in 2017/18 would be 162 (8.8%)

Traditional recommendation from Audit Commission is 5-10% surplus places for ideal balance between efficiency and parental preference

These tables show how the year 6 roll has risen by 264 over the past 3 years, but only about half of this has translated into additional year 7 places. Over the 2 years to 2017/18 (which will be year 7 in 2018/19) there is forecast to be a further 297 year 6 children requiring secondary school places.

On the basis of a consistent retention rate of 79% the plans for Harris Wimbledon and Harris Merton forecasts that the council will be providing sufficient places, but with a surplus of only circa 2%; this is lower than the traditional recommendation from the Audit Commission to balance parental choice and efficiency.

If the new school opens in September 2017 as preferred by the EFA then the forecast is for 8.8% surplus places in 2017/18; this may impact on the roll and budget of existing schools.

The very latest admissions information shows that the retention rate for 2016/17 will be only 76%, and if this continues the surplus in 2018/19 and beyond would be closer to 5%. However, even this will be lower than the current year and significantly lower than in recent years for LB Merton secondary schools.

## Conclusion

The latest admissions information confirms that the retention rate from year 6 to year 7 will be lower in 2016/17, but this may well be temporary as LB Sutton has 'front loaded' its school expansions of popular schools. In the 5 years from 2012/13 to 2017/18, the rise in year 6 places will be 561 pupils, yet Harris Wimbledon and Harris Merton will only collectively provide an additional 240 places.

Any new school provides some risk to existing schools but a new school is needed to meet basic need. Indeed, the greater long-term risk is that the council will not be providing sufficient places. This is alleviated by its contingency plan of being able to expand existing schools at short notice, particularly St. Mark's Academy and Harris Morden. Opening the new school in 2017/18 is likely to lead to more surplus places than preferred for one year only.