

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 10 NOV 2011

PLANNING OF SCHOOL PLACES: SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

To consider revised options for secondary school provision based on future projections of pupil numbers within the Borough, and the funding available through the Building Schools for the Future programme, whilst responding to central government policy to expand the academy programme and build upon the success of leading providers across the Borough. To seek approval to consult stakeholders on the school organisation proposals contained in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet decide upon the future provision of secondary education in the Borough, taking account of the revised programme detailed in this report and authorise the Head of School Improvement to engage in formal consultation with key partners and stakeholders in respect of the following proposals:

- **To build a new ecumenical 1050 place Christian Academy for ages 11-18 on the proposed site in Priorslee which will incorporate the Blessed Robert Johnson Catholic College and will provide places for the communities of Priorslee, Redhill and St Georges;**
- **To build a new 1050 place 11-16 Co-operative Academy for the communities of Donnington, Oakengates, Trench and Wrockwardine Wood which incorporate the combined success and expertise of the Sutherland Business and Enterprise College and Wrockwardine Wood Arts College;**
- **To build a community facility that will develop The Lakeside co-operative educational campus on the Stirchley site encompassing primary, secondary and post 16 education.**
- **To build a new 1200 place school on the vacated Blessed Robert Johnson site to replace the Charlton School**

A further report will be brought to Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation process.

SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	<i>Children & Young People - supports cross cutting strategic priority for developing sports and learning communities across the borough.</i>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	<i>Children, young people, parents and the wider community served by each sports and learning community.</i>
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	<i>To make a decision on the future provision of secondary education between the academic years 2011/12 and 2015/16.</i>	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<p><i>A financial assessment of the full proposals has been carried out to demonstrate affordability and demonstrate a revenue impact saving totalling £0.76m cumulatively over the first 4 years of the programme. In respect of the proposals for Charlton School the financial modelling demonstrates an additional funding requirement of £9.2m for a new build Charlton proposal on top of the £7.0m of BSF funding allocated to the school to deliver DfE Policy following the national review of the BSF Programme. A number of other funding options totalling £7.5m have been identified to reduce this shortfall to £1.7m to be met from prudential borrowing. There are a number of financial risks which need to be taken into account when considering these funding options as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The affordability shortfall for a new build Charlton and the proposals for the new Grange Park Primary School rely on the successful negotiation regarding a cost neutral land swap with the diocese for the BRJ site with the Catholic diocese.</i> <i>• The risk of the non approval of the DfE to reallocation of £2.2m of funding already approved for specific schemes</i> <i>• use of £3.2m of programme contingency therefore reducing the level of contingency held to below that anticipated for the size of the programme</i> <i>• Use of £2.1m of future allocations of Modernisation Grant with the risk of current levels (or any level) of this grant not being maintained into the</i>

		<i>future. /</i>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	The Council is required to comply with its statutory duty in relation to future secondary school provision within the Borough to include compliance with legislation governing school organisation and any changes thereto. Legal Services will continue to advice in respect of these matters as and when required.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	<i>Changes to attendance areas could impact on home to school transport costs. Changes to Legislation on school organisation (i.e. Academies and Free Schools, expansion of popular schools) could impact on the Authority's ability to regulate the number of available places within the Borough.</i>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	<i>There is potentially Borough wide impact due to parental preference in choosing which schools children attend.</i>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. It must also promote diversity and increase parental choice.

In addition the Council will also seek to:

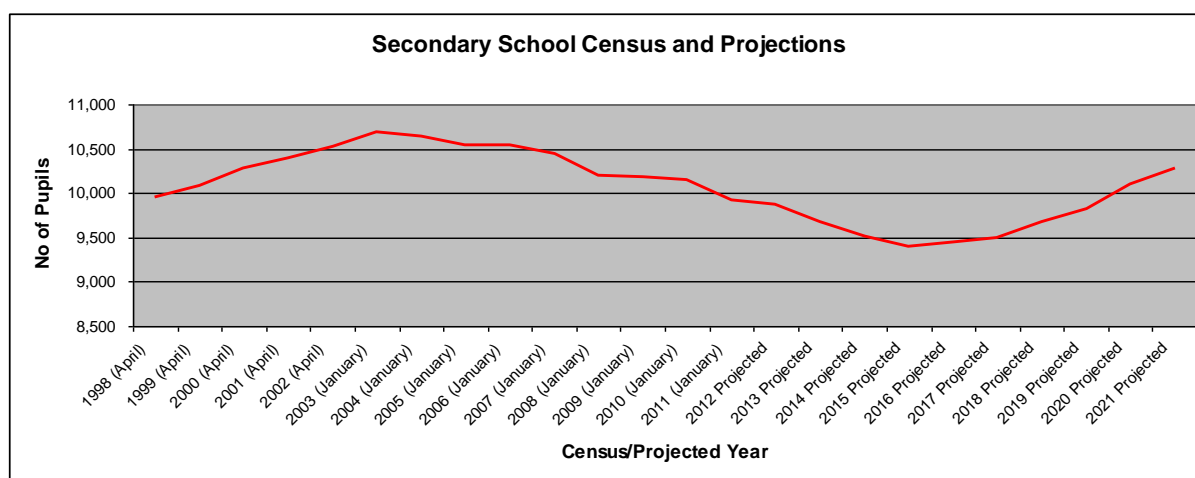
- Ensure that the BSF programme strategy to build upon the council's aspiration to develop new build schools in preference to remodelled wherever financially viable is adhered to. The educational benefits of this strategy are that less disruption occurs to pupil learning during any building programme and the new school buildings will be more efficient and lead to reduced revenue costs for the schools in the future.
- Improve educational outcomes by ensuring access to high quality provision;
- Ensure cost effective provision through removal of surplus places, by developing links to other initiatives such as extended services and early years provision, developing formal collaborations with partner organisations and actively seek developer contributions where available;
- Provide or assist in procuring local schools for local children by promoting community cohesion, and ensure the provision of new schools which are in the right place to serve their communities;
- Facilitate the diversity of school provision by offering a range of provision to promote choice to parents;
- Maintain the sustainability of schools in terms of financial, social and environmental impacts;
- Consult with stakeholders over school organisation proposals and as part of the commissioning process.
- An outline of these plans has already been submitted to The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education, Lord Jonathan Hill of Oareford who has registered no objections.

In order to achieve these outcomes, first and foremost it is necessary to ascertain the future pupil places needed within the Borough. Individual school level projections are undertaken annually to ensure that there is sufficient data available to support proposals for school organisation, whether that be a new school, expansion, merger or removal of surplus places. The Government's expectation is that through BSF investment, Local Authorities would achieve a surplus place target of less than 5% based on pupil projections for the future

INFORMATION

In recent years the Borough has experienced a decline in the primary school population, which has been in part due to larger year groups leaving school and smaller year groups starting in Reception year. This has been exacerbated by a much lower number of completions of new homes within the Borough over the last decade.

Although the numbers within primary schools are beginning to rise again there are still significant surplus places at secondary school level which look set to continue over the next few years. These new proposals seek to reduce the overall number of secondary places in line with projections whilst maintaining the government target for surplus places outlined above.



The chart above shows the change in secondary pupil numbers historically, and those projected over the next 10 years. The projection takes account of figures of known children from the primary care trust, the trend in Yr 6 to Yr 7 transfers over the previous 5 years and a moderate level of new housing annually.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The impact of this allows for different options to be considered for the provision of secondary places through the Building Schools for the Future programme. The decision to re-visit the scope of the original plans has been initiated by a change of central government policy and reflects a desire by elected members to build new schools in existing communities as part of a desire to create a Co-operative Council. The new plan will provide a platform for enhanced school to school support, linked to an overarching partnership model, which will incorporate existing academies and trust schools, including the designated Teaching School for Telford and Wrekin. We intend to develop three new academies, as part of the move to the establishment of a Co-operative Council, to drive up standards and ensure that high quality provision is in place across the Borough, especially in our most disadvantaged communities.

Priorslee

Plans include a new school in Priorslee to meet the needs of proposed expansion of housing in the area. In order to make this school more viable for the future we intend to incorporate the current Blessed Robert Johnson Catholic College (BRJ) in Wellington within the school in Priorslee as a new ecumenical Christian faith academy. The new school would provide places for those pupils living in the Priorslee, Redhill and St Georges area but would be open to catholic and other Christian faith groups from across the Borough.

This is in line with our original proposals to ensure that there is an accessible Co-operative Learning Community at the heart of each local area which will raise aspiration and equip more young people with high level employability skills. The relocation of BRJ, which currently has a very small Post 16 cohort, will enable us to develop a more viable Post 16 offer, in partnership with other providers, for the local community, which will be essential under the new funding model for Post 16 which favours larger sixth forms.

The development of a new school as a sponsored ecumenical academy would bring additional diversity in our provision and would complement the current planned provision at the edge of the Borough.

Oakengates Leisure Centre Site

We will work with trustees of both schools to explore the co-location of Sutherland Business and Enterprise College with Wrockwardine Wood Arts College to form a new Co-operative academy on the site of the Oakengates Leisure Centre. Both schools will work together in order to further develop school to school support and develop best practice. The proposal to create one larger school site means that more students will be able to access secondary provision closer to their home than the previous plan which required students living in the Wrockwardine Wood catchment area to travel to Priorslee. The new academy will also provide better value for money and will be a more sustainable long term solution for the area as it will capitalise upon existing leisure and recreation facilities on the site.

Stirchley

We will explore the creation of a new Co-operative academy in south Telford, supported by the Schools Co-operative Society academy chain, to incorporate the existing Lord Silkin Science and Maths College and Grange Park Primary School. Although the previous plans were to refurbish the current buildings there is a strong desire within the community to create a new school on the current site, to address the identified condition/suitability issues. The proposal is to build a Learning Campus which will incorporate primary, secondary and Post 16 provision.

This will be strongly supported by its partners to build upon recent successes in performance but make the step change to ensure that we are creating a learning climate which will enable the students living in this disadvantaged community to raise their aspirations. We would expect the new academy to have a strong STEM based curriculum which would provide progression into further and higher education.

Wellington

We are also keen to improve successful schools, where possible, in order to meet parental preference, such as the high performing Charlton School in Wellington, which is consistently over-subscribed. The current school buildings are cramped and offer little scope for expansion. The current site is only suitable for a 1050 place school but at the moment has to cater for 1175 pupils.

The plan to move BRJ out of Wellington would enable us to effect a land transfer with the diocese which would free up the current BRJ site and give us the potential to relocate Charlton School in order to create a new Co-operative school of 1200 places which would provide enhanced curriculum opportunities. Linked to the planned new build of a 900 place school at Ercall Wood Technology College instead of a 750 places this would create first class facilities for all secondary aged pupils living in Wellington.

Both new schools would work closely with our other proposed academies as part of the Telford and Wrekin Learning Partnership. This would be the key driver for improving standards working closely with : Sutherland Business and Enterprise College, Wrockwardine Wood Arts College and Lord Silkin Science and Mathematics College, which are already Co-operative Trust schools. We would expect that all these schools will become more autonomous and able to respond to local need by sharing good practice and expertise across the Borough, with the external challenge and support of the highly successful Schools Co-operative Society.

Further details on proposed capacities and pupil projections are detailed in **Annex B**.

Conclusion

The amended plans will need to go to consultation but our initial discussions with all relevant partners, including our local Members of Parliament, suggest that there is likely to be widespread support for the proposals, as more communities will benefit from having high quality provision geographically closer than at present.

Telford's secondary school performance is improving year on year and is now at national averages. However, there is still variable performance across the Borough and it is believed that the establishment of Co-operative academies will raise aspirations and ensure that all schools are fit for purpose and delivering the highest quality provision for all our young people.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

24 Nov 2008 – Planning of School Places – Campus Telford & Wrekin – Approval of the Outline Business Case – Cabinet Minutes - CAB11MIN

15 Sept 2009 – Planning of School Places – Borough Towns Initiative Sports and Learning Communities – Phoenix new-build approval – Cabinet Minute CB60

23 March 2010 - Final Business Case and Award of Contracts for BSF and Abraham Darby - Cabinet Minute CB180

11 January 2011 – BTISLC Update - Cabinet Minute CB109

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Building Schools for the Future – Strategy for Change Parts 1 and 2.

Cabinet 24 November 2008 Planning of Places: Campus Telford & Wrekin.

Building Schools for the Future – Outline Business Case.

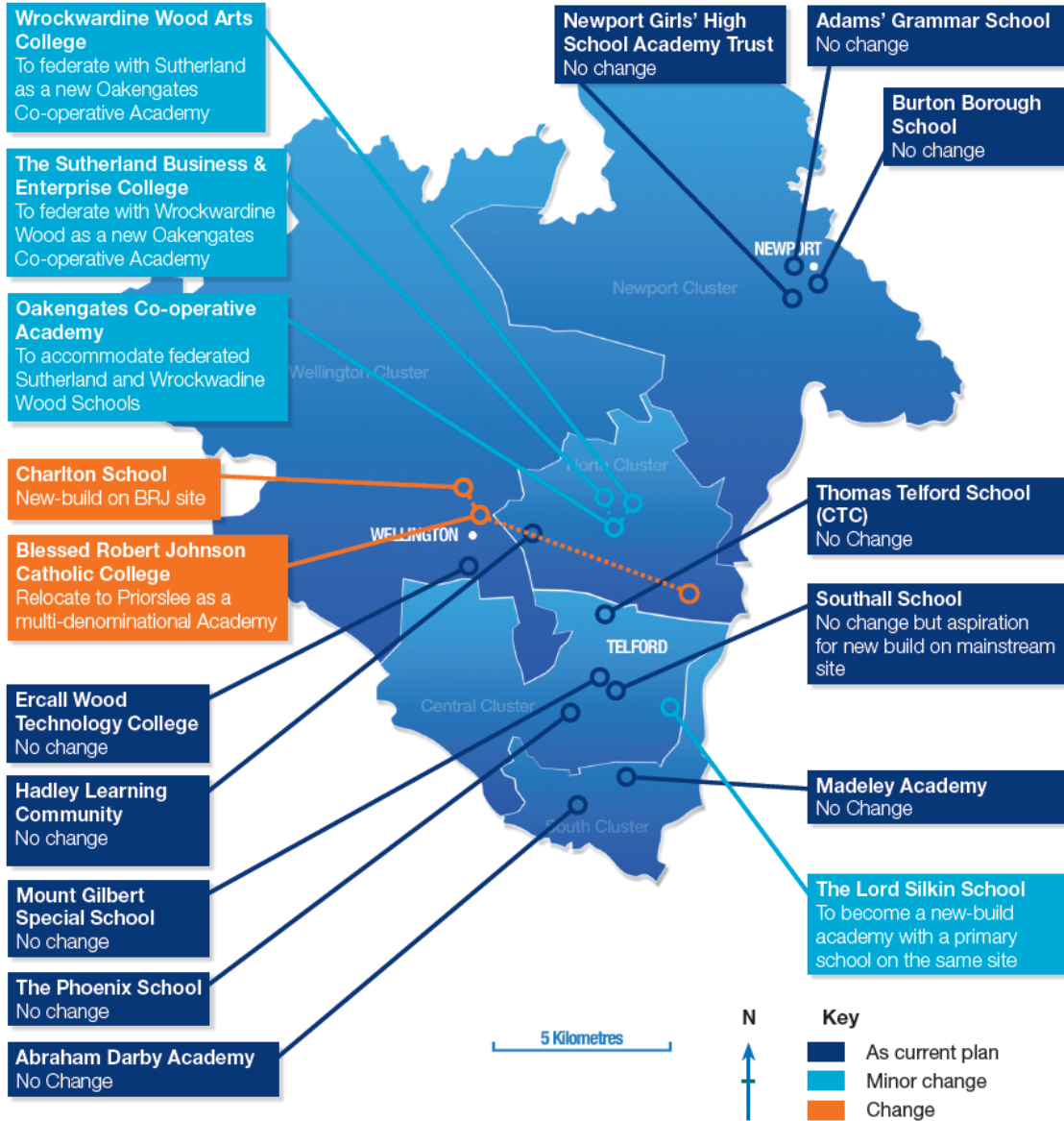
Cabinet Paper 23rd March 2010 – BTISLC Final Business Case and Award of Contracts relating to BSF and Abraham Darby.

Cabinet Paper 11th January 2011 - BTISLC Strategic Review, Approval of Final Business Case for Madeley Academy and Update re School attaining Academy Status.

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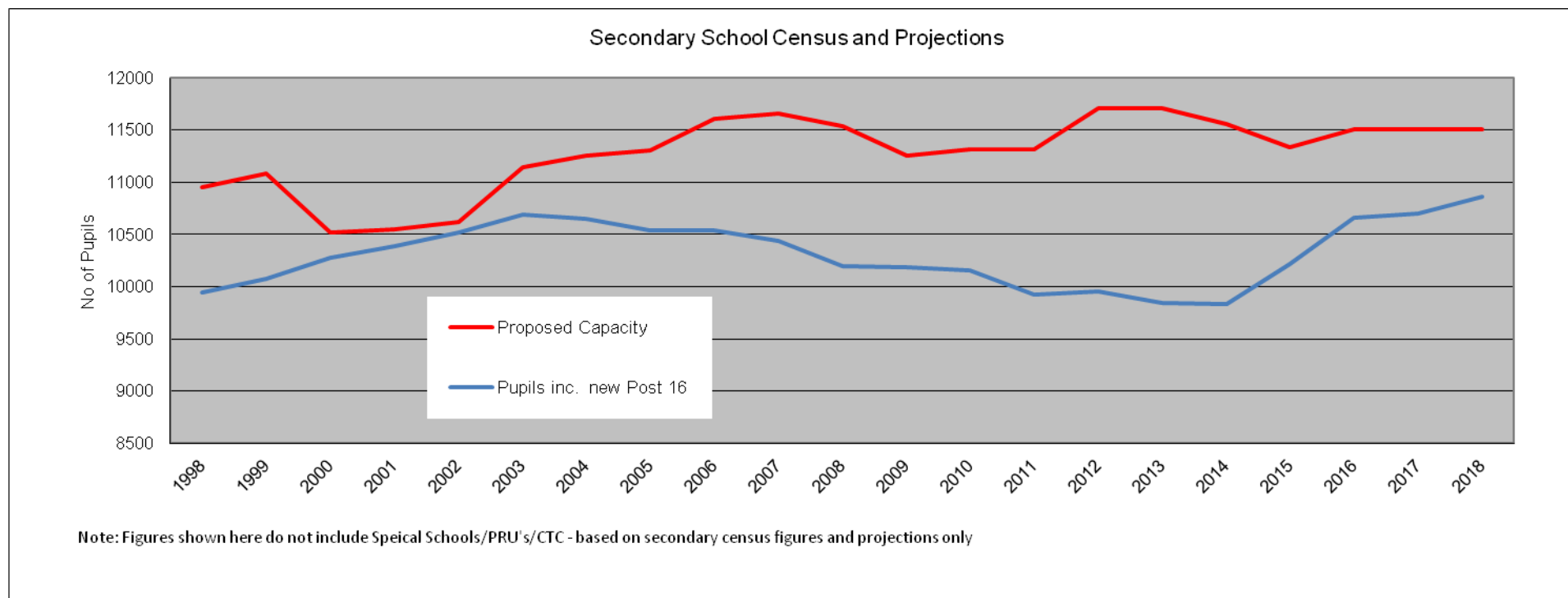
Building Schools for the Future Proposals for Discussion

September 2011

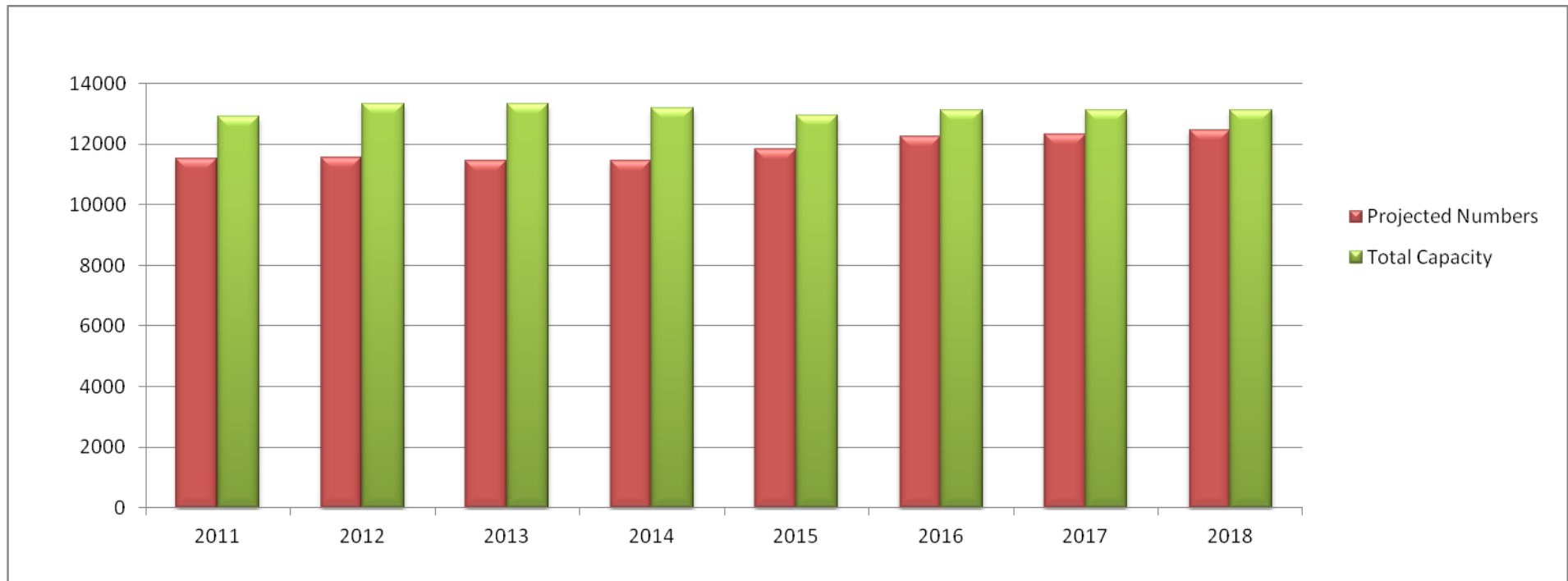


Pupil Projections

The issue of falling roles within primary schools has been experienced within the Borough over the last few years. Smaller year groups have reached secondary transition age as larger year 11 groups have left, creating a trend of declining secondary rolls over time. Projecting forwards, this is due to continue over the next few years as shown in the chart below:



However, the impact of new housing, combined with the expected growth in Post 16 and retention of pupils previously leaving the Borough in Year 7 shows the secondary total begin to increase towards the end of the decade. By revising the capacity at a number of schools we are able to bring the projected surplus to a manageable level, whilst offering greater opportunity to meet parental preference by providing sufficient quality school places in each local community:



School	Proposed completion date	Projections by 2016	Proposed Capacity
Abraham Darby	Sep-12	1100	1100
Adams Grammar	Dec-13	760	760
Blessed Robert Johnson	-	0	0
BRJ New Priorslee site	Sep-14	846	1050
Burton Borough	Apr-14	1230	1230
Charlton	Sep-16	1140	1200
Ercall Wood	Jan-14	745	900
HLC	-	905	900
Lord Silkin	Sep-15	755	800
Madeley Academy	-	1100	1100
Newport Girls' High	Dec-12	420	420
Phoenix	Sep-13	701	900
Sutherland	-	0	0
Thomas Telford	-	1283	1283
Wrockwardine Wood	-	0	0
New Oakengates	Sep-14	961	1050
Mount Gilbert	Dec-12	38	38
Southall	-	158	158
KS3/4PRUs	-	62	62
The Bridge	-	74	74
Totals		12277	13025

