

Cabinet Member for Finance

The proposed expansion of primary and secondary schools in West Sussex from September 2017

March 2017

Report by Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment

**Ref No: FIN09
(16/17)**

**Key Decision:
Yes**

Part I:

Electoral Divisions
Angmering & Findon
Bourne
Chichester West
East Grinstead
Meridian
East Grinstead South & Ashurst Wood
Littlehampton Town
Sompting & North Lancing

Recommendations

(1) That the proposed expansion of nine individual schools for September 2017 is approved:

- Angmering Secondary School increase from a Published Admission Number of 252 places to a 9 forms of entry (270 places) per year;
- St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Angmering, increase from a Published Admission Number of 20 places to 1 form entry (30 places) per year;
- Chidham Parochial Primary School, increase from a Published Admission Number of 20 places to 1 form entry (30 places) per year;
- Compton and Up Marden CE Primary School increase from a Published Admission Number of 15 (105 places) to a Published Admission Number of 20 (140 places) per year;
- Funtington Primary School, increase from a Published Admission Number of 15 places to a Published Admission Number of 20 places per year;
- Bourne Community College, Southbourne, increase from 5 forms of entry (150 places) to 6 forms of entry (180 places) per year;
- The Meads Primary School, East Grinstead, increase by an extra class (30 places);
- Sompting Village Primary School, increase from a 2 form entry school (60 places) to a 3 form entry (90 places) per year
- St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Littlehampton, increase from a 1 form entry school (30 places) to a 2 form entry (60 places) per year.

(2) That the expansion of Blackwell Primary School is not supported as the numbers of children for entry in 2017 are lower than anticipated and expansion has been opposed by the wider community. The original

proposal was for:

- Blackwell Primary School, East Grinstead, increase from a 2 form entry school (60 places) to a 3 form entry (90 places) per year.
- (3) That the planning application and procurement process is commenced for the schemes outlined in (1) above.

1. **Background and Context**

1.1 The County Council has a statutory duty to commission sufficient school places for children and young people across the county. Officers have been closely monitoring the number of children to ensure schools can meet the demand for places. The County Council has received evidence of further growth in the number of children both at primary and secondary level. This is in part due to an increase in the birth rate and also in response to migration and housing building.

1.2 The County Council together with local schools have put forward proposals to cater for the extra numbers. These proposals have been subject to full public consultation and the individual governing bodies, with the exception of Blackwell Primary School in East Grinstead, have agreed in principle to progress with building projects. Planning applications must be made to ensure the places can be delivered for September 2017. The proposal is subject to final decisions being taken by each school affected.

2. **Consultation**

2.1 An initial briefing was given to the Cabinet Member, County Local Committee Members, the Chief Executive of the District and Borough Councils, the Teaching Associations and Unions and the local MPs before consultation began on 21 November 2016.

2.2 On the 21 November 2016, the public consultation booklet was distributed to the following:-

- Members of Parliament,
- Members of County Local Committees ,
- District, borough and parish councillors,
- Union representatives,
- Neighbouring authorities,
- Parents, staff and governors of all the schools, and
- The neighbouring schools in each locality where a proposal was made (Angmering, Bourne, East Grinstead, Lancing and Littlehampton), Early Years providers, local libraries, the Diocese of Chichester, and the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

The consultation document was also published on the Internet and the proposals received local press coverage. During the period 29 November to 13 December 2016, three public consultation drop in sessions were held at Blackwell Primary School, Bourne Community College and The Angmering School, at which some 100 people attended. At each session, officers from the Admissions Team and School Planning Teams were available to discuss proposals and notes were taken of concerns and

issues that parents, staff and local residents raised. Attendees were encouraged to participate in the online survey or write to the school planning team.

- 2.3 Responses to the consultation were received from the online survey, the response form in the consultation document, by letter and by email. Letters supporting the County Council's proposals were also received from the heads and chairmen of the governing bodies of all the schools. This was with the exception of Blackwell Primary School where the decision was discussed in depth at a meeting of the Governing Body who concluded not to proceed with immediate expansion. The meeting held on 16 January 2017 was attended by County Council officers including a Feasibility Architect, Feasibility Manager, Admissions Manager and School Planning Officer. It was agreed that the scheme should be put on hold pending review of numbers in the future and travel arrangements/pick up and drop off areas.
- 2.4 The consultation period ended on the 21 December 2016. A total of 195 responses were received, either online or in writing or using the response form at the back of the consultation document – the written submissions were included in the online survey database in order to record all responses in one place. No forms were discounted from the overall total with the exception of one posted letter, which was postmarked 26 Jan 2017, a month after the consultation had ended, and was therefore not included.
- 2.5 A summary report of consultation responses is provided at Appendix 2. A set of documents providing the responses by reference to each school is available but not for publication as it contains personal or confidential information.
- 2.6 Three schools had the most responses:- Blackwell Primary School, East Grinstead, Chidham Parochial Primary and St Catherine's Catholic Primary in Littlehampton. These three schools accounted for nearly half of the responses received.
- 2.7 Of the 32 responses regarding Blackwell, 28 objected particularly with regard to traffic safety, lack of access to appropriate drop off and pick up areas and parking but also concerns about the loss of playing fields and the disruption from building works. It has been agreed to not go forward with this project at this time and monitor future numbers carefully.
- 2.8 Of the 28 responses regarding Chidham Primary, 18 responses objected to the proposals. All of the objections were related to the narrow access to the school, the speed of traffic, damaged pavements, road safety and lack of adequate access for emergency vehicles. Both the Board of Governors of the school and the Parish Council however support the proposal as long as appropriate measures can be taken to address the access issues. Discussions are taking place with the Safer Routes to School Team about how this can be addressed. The school has also proposed a staggered start time for different age groups to take the pressure off the road network. Other suggestions include a park and stride scheme. These proposals will be tested with local residents during the planning application process. There were no objections on education grounds.
- 2.9 Of the 32 responses regarding St Catherine's Catholic Primary in Littlehampton there were 29 objections regarding traffic safety, lack of sufficient pick up and drop off area, lack of parking and lack of adequate

access for emergency vehicles. There was also a petition signed by nearly 150 residents raising concerns about the traffic. There were concerns about retaining the school to serve the catholic community rather than the wider community and the loss of the small school ethos. The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton is very keen to expand the number of catholic places in the area and the Board of Governors support the expansion of the school. The Safer Routes to School Team is working with the capital planning team to ensure measures are incorporated in the planning application to address the travel planning issues. These proposals will be tested with local residents during the planning application process.

- 2.10 The consultation process for the other schools created fewer responses but similar themes were raised. The governing bodies involved have read the full transcript of responses and discussed how concerns can be addressed with appropriate planning. All of the governing bodies of the schools identified for expansion, have now given their support to the proposals.

3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 That the proposed expansion of nine individual schools for September 2017 is approved:

- Angmering Secondary School increase from a Published Admission Number of 252 places to a 9 forms of entry (270 places) per year;
- St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Angmering, increase from a Published Admission Number of 20 places to 1 form entry (30 places) per year
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- 3.2 That the expansion of Blackwell Primary School is not supported as the numbers of children for entry in 2017 are lower than anticipated and expansion has been opposed by the wider community. The original proposal was for:

- Blackwell Primary School, East Grinstead, increase from a 2 form entry school (60 places) to a 3 form entry (90 places) per year.

- 3.3 That the planning application and procurement process is commenced for the schemes outlined in 3.1 above.

4. **Other Options considered**

- 4.1 The alternative to expanding existing schools would be to build new schools. In this instance, new schools were not proposed because of the lack of site availability, the complexity of and time required to identify sponsors and funding for new schools (the Local Authority no longer has the power to start new schools. Academies and free schools can only be set up by central government and the Department for Education). Also the localised increased demand, in some instances, is not sufficient to require a whole new school. This is particularly the case for new secondary schools which are recommended to be built at a minimum of 900 places in order to be viable. The demand anticipated in the Bourne and Angmering localities are 150 places.

5. **Resource Implications and Value for Money**

- 5.1 The proposals offer value for money and are carefully tailored to the resources available. The County Council's approved Capital Programme 2017/18 has already identified and allocated funding for capital works at the schools. The budget is based on initial feasibility work completed by architects working for the County Council's Capital and Asset Management Team. The costs required for the proposed schemes will be managed within the allocated funds in the programme. On 16 December 2016, the County Council approved a budget of £23.9m for Basic Need to meet the 2017 academic need within the Capital Programme for 2017/18.
- 5.2 The expanded schools will be efficient to run because they will meet current building regulations and energy efficiency standards.
- 5.3 Revenue funding for increased numbers of both teaching staff and teaching assistants will be allocated from the Dedicated Schools Grant on a per pupil basis. In some cases, the schools will be eligible for Growth Funding which is an additional grant for extra pupils available until the next school census takes place ie from September 2017 to April 2018.

6.1 **Impact of the proposal**

The County Council is under a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for children within their communities. By providing additional accommodation in local schools, children will be more likely to attend a school of choice or a school close to their homes. Should there be a delay to the capital building programme, there is a chance that local children will have to travel to neighbouring localities or outside the county for their education and siblings would not be able to attend the same school.

6.2 **Equality Duty**

An Equality Impact Report has been compiled and is detailed below or attached as Appendix 1. Providing sufficient places in appropriate school buildings will allow children of both sexes, of all religions, and those with a disability, to attend a school near their homes wherever possible. Negative impacts on the road infrastructure will be mitigated by school

travel planning which is required for planning applications to be agreed and approved.

6.3 **Crime and Disorder Act Implications –**

Having sufficient school places for children should reduce potential anti-social behaviour and crime.

6.4 **Human Rights –**

Everyone has the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act. The impact of any proposed changes on the right to family life will be taken into consideration. Article 1 of the First Protocol is the right to education. No person shall be denied the right to education. The proposals therefore support this right as school places will be available in the local area for all children of school age.

6.5 **Social Value** – the recommended proposals are intended significantly to benefit future pupils, whose interests and aspirations are the most important.

7. **Risk Management Implications**

7.1 Should there be a delay to the capital build there is a chance that local children will have to travel outside their localities or outside the County for their education and that siblings would not be able to attend the same school. Places for secondary school pupils have already been offered for these schools so could lead to a shortage of accommodation at schools for September 2017.

7.2 There is a possibility that the scheme may cost more than the feasibilities suggest as outlined in the identified risks. The County Council's Capital Planning Project Managers will manage these risks carefully with the architects and building contractors employed by the County Council.

Lee Harris

Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Report

Appendix 2 - A summary report of consultation responses

Background Papers

None

Equality Impact Report

Title of proposal	The proposed expansion of primary and secondary schools in West Sussex
Date of implementation	From September 2017
EIR completed by:	Name: Graham Olway, Principal Manager, Capital Planning and Projects 0330 222 3029 Tel:
1. Decide whether this report is needed and, if so, describe how you have assessed the impact of the proposal.	
An impact assessment is required for this decision because there are both positive and negative implications for certain sectors of the community as described below.	
2. Describe any negative impact for customers or residents.	
There may be some disruption to existing pupils during the building phase although plans are for most of the works to take place during school holidays. Residents may also be disrupted by construction traffic and increased traffic if more children come on site. Concerns will be raised during the planning process and will need to be addressed in order for planning permission to be granted.	
3. Describe any positive effects which may offset any negative impact.	
Children are more likely to secure a school place at a school of choice in the area. Children may need to travel less distance. Siblings can go to the same school. Investment will create jobs both for construction and for teaching the increased number of children. It will reduce the pressure on neighbouring schools which are seeing a high demand for places.	
4. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.	
All the schools to be expanded are co-educational. Their admissions criteria are compliant with the national Schools Admission Code.	
5. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	
Equal access will be promoted by providing enough places for children from all sections of the local community. Disability access will be considered and included in the design of new buildings.	
6. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	
Equal access will be promoted by providing enough places for children from all sections of the local community. Disability access will be considered and included in	

the design of new buildings.

7. What changes were made to the proposal as a result? If none, explain why.

The proposal was changed as one of the schools, Blackwell Primary School in East Grinstead is no longer being proposed for expansion. – This is the result of the responses to the consultation, the views of the school leadership and governors, the feasibility and management implications of a further expansion to the school (the school moved from a one form entry to a two form entry five years ago). Also upon the advice of the County Council’s Learning Advisor, the Safer Routes to School Team, the Highways Officer, the Capital Planning Feasibility Team and Admissions Teams.

8. Explain how the impact will be monitored to make sure it continues to meet the equality duty owed to customers and say who will be responsible for this.

The impact of the proposal will be monitored by the School Leadership Teams, and the Learning Advisory Service and Admissions Teams within the County Council. The build process will be monitored by the Capital Planning Team and the impacts on travel, monitored by the Highways Department.

To be signed by an Executive Director or Director to confirm that they have read and approved the content.

Name	Lee Harris	Date	08.03.17
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Your position	Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment
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