

Committee: **Lead Cabinet Member for Learning and School Effectiveness**

Date: **10 September 2013**

By: **Interim Director of Children's Services**

Title of the report: **Proposed expansion of Ringmer Primary School**

Purpose of Report: **To seek Lead Member approval to publish statutory notices in respect of a proposal to expand Ringmer Primary School by September 2015.**

Recommendation:

Lead Member is recommended to:

- (1) authorise the publication of statutory notices in respect of a proposal to expand Ringmer Primary School by 105 places from September 2015; and**
 - (2) delegate authority to the Interim Director of Children's Services to amend the proposals prior to their publication if required.**
-

1. Financial Appraisal:

1.1 Revenue: this proposal will not affect the Schools Funding Formula. Each school's budget share will increase in accordance with rising pupil numbers.

1.2 Capital: capital investment will be required to expand Ringmer Primary School. Approximately £17.5m is identified in the Council's Capital Programme, approved by Full Council on 7 February 2013, to deliver additional places across East Sussex, including Ringmer. Feasibility design work is currently being undertaken at the school to determine the level of capital funding required to deliver those additional places.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Pressures on primary places in Ringmer are being driven mainly by births in the Ringmer area which have risen from a low of 23 in 2001/02 to 54 in 2009/10 and 42 in 2010/11. Since 2010/11 the Published Admission Number of 30 at Ringmer Primary School has been insufficient to meet local demand for Year R places. A shortfall of up to half a form of entry is forecast for 2013/14 and until 2016/17. A significant amount of new housing is proposed for Ringmer which is expected to sustain this level of demand in the medium to long term.

2.2 In response, the Council undertook a period of public consultation between 26 June and 24 July 2013 on a proposal to expand Ringmer Primary School. The proposal would provide an extra half a form of entry (15 places per year group, 105 places in total) at the school.

2.3 This report details the responses received during the period of public consultation and seeks approval from the Lead Member for Learning and School Effectiveness to publish statutory notices.

2.4 Proposed changes to the organisation of schools have to follow a prescribed process established by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2007 which came into force on 21 January 2008 and The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009 which came into force on 1 September 2009). This process complied with these requirements.

2.5 Public consultation took place over a four week period between 26 June and 24 July 2013. Approximately 770 consultation documents were distributed to interested parties in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007

(as amended). The full distribution list can be found as part of **Annex 1**. The consultation document was also made available on the County Council's website.

2.6 By the close of the consultation period, 100 replies had been received. This equates to a response rate of 12.99% (100 out of 770). Of the responses:

- 80 (80%) supported the proposal
- 5 (5%) neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal
- 15 (15%) did not support the proposal

2.7 The majority of responses came from parents and carers (51) followed by members of staff and governors (14). Nine members of the local community responded to the consultation. The breakdown is as follows:

- 1 (1%) were pupils at Ringmer Primary School
- 51 (51%) were parents/carers of a child at Ringmer Primary School
- 12 (12%) were members of staff at Ringmer Primary School
- 2 (2%) were members of the governing body at Ringmer Primary School
- 9 (9%) were members of the local community
- 25 (25%) were identified as 'other'

2.8 The main reasons for people not supporting the proposal were: potential impact on teaching and learning, parking and traffic congestion.

2.9 While these are valid concerns, the Council would ensure that any design solution for expansion makes best use of the site to create an environment that has a positive impact on teaching and learning. Issues about traffic and parking would be addressed through the statutory planning process the Council has to go through before it is able to start building on site. This would provide people with a further opportunity to raise concerns about these particular issues.

2.10 **Annex 1** provides detailed analysis of the consultation process and responses received.

2.11 The majority of people who responded to the consultation agree with the proposal to expand Ringmer Primary School as there is a pressing need for additional places in the village. This leads us to recommend that we should continue with the proposal to expand the school.

2.12 The next stage of the process is to publish statutory notices. The publication of notices would trigger a further four week period of consultation, known as the representation period, when people can again have their say on the proposal. Within two months of the end of the representation period, the Lead Member for Learning and School Effectiveness must determine the proposal taking into account the views of all those affected by the proposal or who have an interest in it, including for example: pupils; parents and carers; staff; other schools; local residents; diocesan bodies and other providers. It is envisaged that a final decision would be made at the Lead Member meeting on 9 December 2013.

3. Conclusion and reason for recommendation:

3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet current and future demand. In light of the pressing need for additional primary places in Ringmer and the overwhelming support for the proposal, it is recommended that the Lead Member for Learning and School Effectiveness:

- i) Authorises the publication of statutory notices in respect of a proposal to expand Ringmer Primary School by 105 places from September 2015
- ii) Delegates authority to the Interim Director of Children's Services to amend the proposals prior to their publication if required.

GED ROWNEY

Interim Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Gary Langford, School Place Planning Manager

Tel: 01273 481758

Local Members: Councillor Rosalyn St Pierre

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

1. Background:

- 1.1 East Sussex County Council undertook a consultation between 26th June and 24th July 2013 on a proposal to expand Ringmer Primary School by 105 places.
- 1.2 The proposal would provide an extra half a form of entry (15 places per year group, 105 places in total) in Ringmer by September 2015.

2. Purpose of report:

- 2.1 This report is in two parts:
- Part 1: the consultation process
 - Part 2: analysis of consultation responses

3. Part 1: the consultation process:

- 3.1 Approximately seven hundred and seventy (770) consultation documents were distributed in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended). Consultees included for example: pupils; parents and carers; staff; other schools in the local area; the local MP; the District Council; diocesan bodies and local early years providers. The full distribution list is provided in Table 1 below. The consultation document explained the proposal and provided a range of means to respond. These included: by freepost reply, online questionnaire or by emailing East Sussex County Council. The consultation document was also made available on the County Council's website.

Table 1: Consultation distribution list

Organisation	No. of copies
Ringmer Primary School – pupils and parents/carers	240
Ringmer Primary School – staff	50
Ringmer Primary School – governors	15
Ringmer Primary School – spares for main reception	30
All local primary schools	15 copies each
All local secondary schools	15 copies each
Sussex Downs College	5
ESCC Councillors	50
ESCC Chief Officers Management Team	7
ESCC Children's Services Senior Management Team	5
ESCC contractors (e.g. catering, cleaning etc)	1 copy each
Norman Baker MP	5
DFE	1
Lewes District Council	45
Ringmer Parish Council	15
Diocese of Chichester (Church of England)	5
Diocese of Arundel and Brighton (Catholic)	5
Anchor Field Surgery	30
Sussex Voluntary and Community Learning Consortium	10
Ringmer Library	30
Ringmer Children's Centre	30
Ringmer Nursery School	30
Hollyhocks Montessori Playschool	30
Trade Unions (e.g. Association of Teachers & Lecturers / NASUWT / NHT / NUT / Voice of the Union of Education Professionals / GMB / UNISON)	1 copy each
Total	770

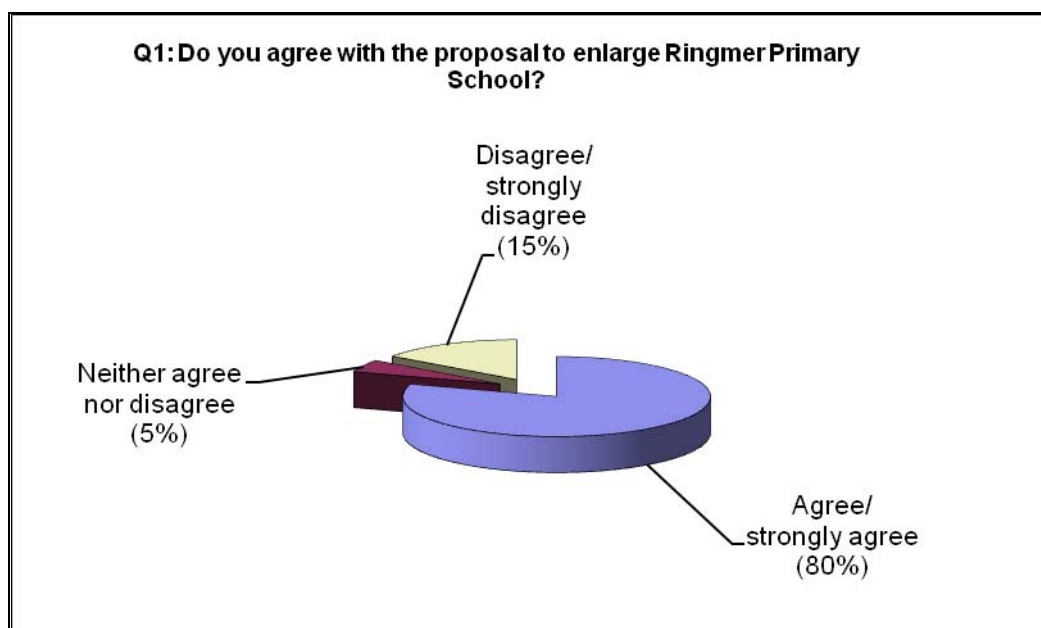
3.2 The consultation period ran from Wednesday 26th June to Wednesday 24th July 2013.

4. Part 2: analysis of consultation responses:

4.1 Question 1 on the response form asked people to indicate whether they agreed with the proposal to expand Ringmer Primary School. 100 people responded to this question, which equates to a response rate of 12.99% (100 out of 770). From the 100 responses:

- 80 (80%) supported the proposal
- 5 (5%) neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal
- 15 (15%) did not support the proposal

4.2 The chart below illustrates the breakdown of responses.



4.3 Question 2 asked people to give reasons for their answers to question 1. The main areas of concern were:

- Potential impact on teaching and learning
- Parking
- Traffic congestion

4.4 While these are valid concerns, the Council would ensure that any design solution for expansion makes best use of the site to create an environment that has a positive impact on teaching and learning. Issues about traffic and parking would be addressed through the statutory planning process the Council has to go through before it is able to start building on site. This would provide people with a further opportunity to raise concerns about these particular issues.

4.5 Table 2 below provides a selection of comments received. A full list of comments is available for inspection.

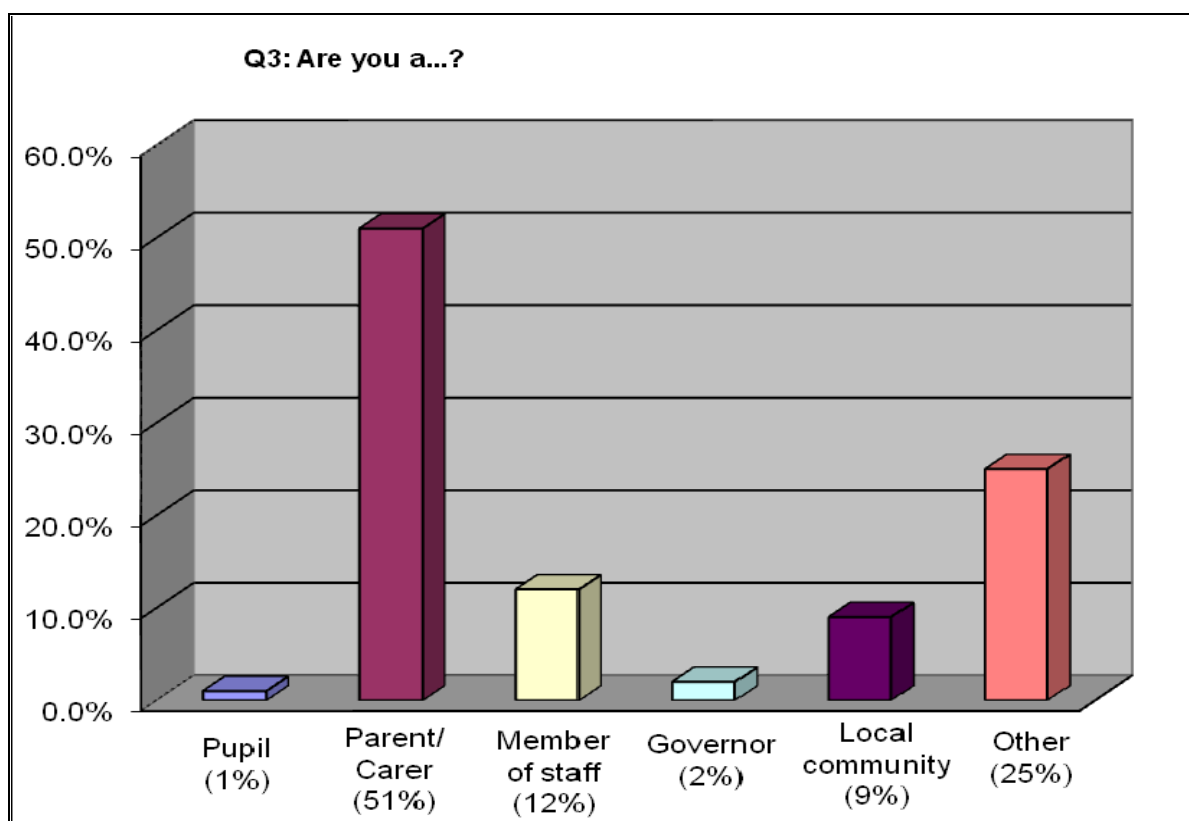
Table 2: Selection of comments received

Comment summary	
1	Agree. I agree that the school does need to be enlarged, but first consideration needs to be given to how the infrastructure will be changed in order to accommodate this. Surrounding roads are already congested.
2	Strongly agree. The school is already admitting around 45 children per year group. Officially enlarging the school will allow it to build the infrastructure it needs in order to accommodate the growing demand. It will also ensure that Ringmer children can go to a Ringmer school, thereby keeping the community together and reducing traffic.
3	Agree. Ringmer is a growing village. It would be unacceptable for children not to have the choice of receiving their education within their own community. However if the school expands then consideration of child safety is paramount which should include safe road crossing areas (particularly the main road and Harrisons Lane), parking facilities, speed restrictions down Harrisons Lane and changing the bus route from this area.
4	Strongly agree. Village is growing why should village children have to travel and be schooled outside a village splitting siblings and friends. But adequate parking should be made available. Plus school crossing on main road and lowering speed limits through the village past Ringmer Community School as at present very dangerous.
5	Strongly agree. As the village expands there is a need for more classrooms at Ringmer Primary, therefore it makes sense for there to be an expansion of Ringmer to incorporate more children and to ensure that all children are in classroom sizes that ensure they get the right education.
6	Strongly agree. I think the proposal is valid - too much overcrowding at the school currently restricts effective education. Parking issues should be consider and addressed.
7	Strongly agree. The village has increased in size over the years and the school needs to expand to accommodate everybody. Nobody wants to send their children to anywhere else on a bus.
8	Strongly agree. With proposed new development in Ringmer between now and 2030, it is important that the primary school is able to cope with the increase in pupils. Any new buildings need to be permanent and NOT mobile classrooms.
9	Disagree. There are too many cars at drop off and collect time as it is which impacts on the local community. This massive increase will exacerbate existing problems. If the school is enlarged then it should only be on condition that a traffic management plan is adopted to minimise additional traffic (encouraging greater use of walking, cycling etc).
10	Strongly disagree. Inadequate parking the area is highly congested dangerous for pupils and residents. School playing area will be reduced, teaching may also be affected. We are concerned about the level of teaching and care our children would receive if such a big proposal was to take place. Not happy with the size as it is too many children not enough teachers already.
11	Strongly disagree. By making our school bigger, we are more likely to become a town. We don't want to live in a town we want to live in a village!
12	Strongly disagree. Detrimental effect on quality of teaching within the school and mixing years could cause those to be held by the younger group.
13	Strongly disagree. Our concern is the budget being spent on the building and not the teaching staff. Already support staff are facing cuts. This dilutes the quality of teaching/care in classroom. The nursery facility should be removed from the primary school so that the space can be used by the primary school only. Also the lack of infrastructure, the roads to and from school and the lack of parking for parents to drop off children.
14	Strongly disagree. Do not like the idea of children being taught in split year groups - does this ensure individual children needs are being met or would school be given funding to become a 2 form entre? Where will classes go? School is already crowded at playtimes and dinner times.
15	Disagree. Changing the feel from a village school - less personal. Also less space for the existing children.
16	Disagree. If the primary school is allowed to enlarge, it gives the council added weight to building additional houses. Although the village accepts some housing is necessary, it is united in minimising the final number.

4.6 In answer to question 3, respondents classified themselves as:

- 1 (1%) were pupils at Ringmer Primary School
- 51 (51%) were parents/carers of a child at Ringmer Primary School
- 12 (12%) were members of staff at Ringmer Primary School
- 2 (2%) were members of the governing body at Ringmer Primary School
- 9 (9%) were members of the local community
- 25 (25%) were identified as 'other'

4.7 The chart below illustrates the breakdown:



4.8 Of the 51 parents and carers who responded, 37 (72.6%) support the proposal, while 9 (17.6%) do not. 5 (9.8%) do not have a view either way.

4.9 1 pupil attending the school replied to the consultation and disagrees with the proposal.

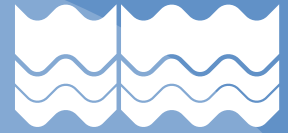
4.10 Of the 14 members of staff and governors who responded, 13 (92.9%) support the proposal while 1 (7.1%) does not.

4.11 9 members of the local community replied to the consultation. 7 (77.8%) support the proposal while 2 (22.2%) do not, generally for the reasons outlined in 4.3 above.

4.12 The 25 people who responded under the heading 'other' were generally made up of Parish and District Councillors, staff from Ringmer Community College and parents of children attending Ringmer Nursery school. 23 (92%) support the proposal, while 2 (8%) do not.

4.13 'About you' questions. We collect this information to ensure that we are seeking the views of everyone in our community and to demonstrate that we are complying with relevant diversity and equalities legislation. The responses to the 'About you' questions are available for inspection.

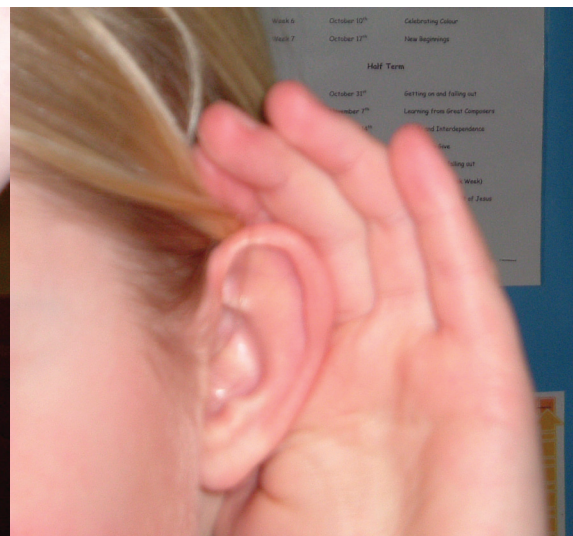
- 4.14 At the time of writing we had received 4 late consultation responses, none of which is taken into account in the analysis above.
- 4.15 A copy of the consultation document is provided in **Appendix A**.



June 2013

Have your say on a proposal to increase the size of Ringmer Primary School

The consultation runs from 26 June to 24 July 2013.



What is the proposal?

The proposal is to permanently enlarge Ringmer Primary School from September 2015 to serve its local community. The school would grow from 210 places to 315 places (ages 4-11). This would enable the school to admit up to 45 children in each age group.

This consultation document is for pupils, parents and carers, staff, the local community and other interested parties. East Sussex County Council will consider all the views put forward before a decision is taken by the Lead Members for Children's Services on whether to continue with the proposal to expand. We welcome your views on this proposal.

What is the background to this proposal?

Linked to the number of births in the local area, since 2010/11 the Published Admission Number of 30 at Ringmer Primary School has been insufficient to meet local demand for reception year places. An ongoing shortfall of places in reception year is predicted in the coming years and this level of demand is likely to be sustained in the medium to long term as a result of the significant amount of new housing currently proposed for Ringmer.

East Sussex County Council has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places available. In response to the rising demand for places, we are establishing a temporary class at Ringmer Primary School in 2013/14. The school has indicated that it wishes to permanently expand to one and a half forms of entry (315 places) from September 2015 in order to serve its local community.

What size would the enlarged school be?

We propose to increase the size of Ringmer Primary School from one form of entry (210 places) to one and a half forms of entry (315 places), enabling the school to admit up to 45 pupils in every year group. Ringmer's capacity would increase from 210 places in 7 classes to 315 places in 11 classes.

To support the expansion of the school, the premises would be extended to provide the additional classrooms and associated facilities. If approved, the Council intends to fund the building work from its capital programme.

The Council is very experienced in managing construction projects and the health and safety of children is paramount when any building project takes place. The build programme would be developed to minimise disruption to the school during this time. Concerns relating to planning and transport can be raised as part of the statutory planning process which is subject to a separate consultation.

The Council anticipates that building work would begin during summer 2014 with completion due in summer 2015.

Who makes the final decision and when?

The Council is the decision maker for this proposal. This is not a referendum but all of the views expressed during the consultation period together with other sources of information will be used to inform the decision.

Following consideration of the consultation responses we could choose to:

- stop the process - in this case the expansion of the school would not proceed;
- change the proposal - in this case the next steps would depend on what the proposed changes are; or
- continue with the proposal - we would publish a Statutory Notice for the expansion of the school in the local paper, probably in September 2013, which would be followed by a further 4-week period of consultation (known as the representation period).

We have a duty to make a final decision on the proposal within two months of the end of the representation period. In this instance, a decision would probably be taken in November 2013.

Who is being consulted?

We are consulting with pupils, parents and carers, staff, other local schools and trade unions. We are also consulting with a wide range of other groups including the Parish and District Councils, the local MP, the Church of England and Catholic dioceses and the wider local community.

How do I have my say?

This consultation runs until **24 July 2013**.

You can give your views by:

- completing the attached questionnaire and returning it in the envelope provided
- completing the online questionnaire at: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/haveyoursay
- emailing the County Council at school.consultations@eastsussex.gov.uk quoting Ringmer in the subject line.

Consultation – Response Form

Our proposal is to enlarge Ringmer Primary School from 210 places to 315 places by September 2015. This would enable the school to admit up to 45 pupils in each year group.

East Sussex County Council would welcome your views on the proposal. Please complete this response form and return it to the address at the bottom of the page no later than 24 July 2013.

Q1. Do you agree with the proposal to enlarge Ringmer Primary School?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q2. If you wish, you can give your main reasons for your answers to Q1 above, and/or any other options you think the Council should consider:

Q3. Are you a...?

- Pupil at Ringmer Primary School
- Parent/carer of a child at Ringmer Primary School
- Member of staff at Ringmer Primary School
- Member of the governing body at Ringmer Primary School
- Member of the local community
- Other (please say) _____

Once completed, please tear off this page along the perforation, fold and return it in the window envelope provided by **24 July 2013** to the address below.

Please ensure that the address is clearly visible in the window of the envelope.

You don't need a stamp.

**Primary School Consultation (Ringmer)
FREEPOST BR157
East Sussex County Council
County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes BN7 1SF**

About you... We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally and that no one gets left out. That's why we ask you these questions. We won't share the information you give us with anyone else. We will only use it to help us make decisions and make our services better.

If you would rather not answer any of these questions, you don't have to.

Q4. Are you.....? Male Female Prefer not to say

Q5. How old are you? **Q6. What is your postcode?**

Q7. To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong ? (Source 2011 census)

White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British
<input type="checkbox"/> British	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/> Irish	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/> African
<input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/Roma	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> Other*
<input type="checkbox"/> Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/> Other*	<input type="checkbox"/> Other*	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other*	<input type="checkbox"/> Arab	<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

***Other Ethnic Group** If your ethnic group was not specified in the list please describe your ethnic group:

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted or is likely to last at least 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, for example) are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Q8. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Q9. If you answered yes to Q7, please tell us the type of impairment that applies to you.

You may have more than one type of impairment, so please select all that apply. If none of these apply to you please select other and write in the type of impairment you have.

- Physical impairment
- Sensory impairment (hearing and sight)
- Long standing illness or health condition, such as cancer, HIV, heart disease, diabetes or epilepsy
- Other, please specify
- Mental health condition
- Learning disability
- Prefer not to say

Q10. Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion or belief?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Q11. If you answered yes to Q9 which one?

- Christian
- Hindu
- Muslim
- Any other religion, please specify
- Buddhist
- Jewish
- Sikh

Thank you for providing this information, your feedback is important to us.