

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 11 October 2016

By: Director of Children's Services

Title: Proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School, Lewes

Purpose: To make a final decision on the proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School, Lewes

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

Approve the closure of Pells CE Primary School, Lewes with effect from 31 August 2017.

1 Background

1.1 On 19 July 2016 Cabinet approved the publication of statutory notices in relation to the proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School on 31 August 2017. A copy of the report can be found at

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2604&Ver=4>

and in the Members and Cabinet Rooms. The proposal for closure is being made because of concerns about the long term sustainability of the school on the grounds of its capacity to secure and maintain improvements in standards and in the context of declining popularity and financial viability.

1.2 The Diocese of Chichester shares the Council's concerns and agrees with the proposal to close the school.

1.3 The statutory notice was published in the Sussex Express on 19 August 2016. The notice was also posted at the entrance to the school and in Lewes Library. The notice, together with a full copy of the proposal was sent to the school's governing body, the dioceses and the Department for Education. The notice and full proposal was also posted on the Council's website.

1.4 Publication of the statutory notice was followed by a four week period of representation, when comments or objections could be made to the Council in writing. The representation period closed on 16 September 2016.

1.5 The representation period elicited only one response, from Councillor O'Keeffe, as attached at **Appendix A**. The response related to pupil numbers in Lewes and the consideration of alternative options to closure. An analysis of the response can be found in **Appendix B**. Councillor O'Keeffe's response was in addition to representations she made in an email on 28 July 2016 in which she raised her concerns about school places in Lewes (attached in **Appendix A**).

2 Supporting information

2.1 The decision made by Cabinet on 19 July 2016 to publish statutory notices in relation to the proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School was based on a number of key concerns which are set out below and in the appendices to this report.

Pupil numbers

2.2 Information in relation to pupil forecasting and school places is set out in **Appendix C**. Pells CE Primary School has suffered from very low parental preferences for many years. Even at times of high demand for places in the town the school has been unpopular and unable to

attract sufficient pupils. The capacity of the school is 140. At the May 2016 census the school had 71 pupils on roll which reflects a downward trend over the last 12 years. This figure has subsequently fallen further - at the start of the current academic year there were 53 children on roll at the school.

2.3 Births in Lewes between 2003/04 (reception year intake 2008/09) and 2012/13 (reception year intake 2017/18) have fluctuated from a low of 156 in 2005/06 to a high of 201 in 2009/10. Since then, there has been a marked fall in the birth rate with numbers in 2013/14 (reception year intake 2018/19) at 137 and 2014/15 (reception year intake 2019/20) at 134.

2.4 GP registration data for Lewes, received in August 2016, provides further evidence of the general level of births in the town in 2015/16 which are likely to be in the region of 140 to 150. This gives the first indication as to the primary school reception intake number in academic year 2020/21 based on actual data on children already born rather than a demographic projection. These figures give a strong indication that, even taking into account migration factors and new housing, the 2020/21 reception year intake in Lewes will be under 200.

2.5 This latest data reinforces the evidence provided in the 19 July 2016 Cabinet report, and as detailed in **Appendix C** of this report, in which the Council stated its belief that 200 reception year places in Lewes will be sufficient to meet future demand for places.

Performance data

2.6 Pupils at Pells CE Primary School do not make expected levels of progress consistently enough by the time they leave Year 6. Children who start at a similar level in other schools make better progress. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 has been significantly below the national average in three of the last four years, and was significantly below again in 2016. The Council believes that children will achieve better outcomes if they attend other schools.

2.7 Data released since July 2016 shows that progress is below the national average for every indicator and below the floor standard for the combined outcomes of reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, this indicates that at Key Stage 2 outcomes will be below the floor standard when the final data is released in December 2016. For 2014 and 2015 outcomes at the school were below the coasting schools' criteria and although the government is yet to confirm any changes to the criteria for 2016, it is likely that the school will be classed as coasting once the final data is released in December 2016.

2.8 As the school has been judged 'Requires Improvement' twice in a row, it is very likely that Ofsted will place the school in a category of concern as the pace of improvement has not been swift enough over a number of years to address significant pupil underachievement.

Leadership Position

2.9 There is no permanent leadership solution for the school. The interim leadership being provided by the Council and the Lewes Co-operative Learning Trust is in place until 31 December 2016. The interim leadership arrangements are not financially sustainable from the school's budget; the Council is currently funding these arrangements. The Lewes Co-operative Learning Trust has confirmed that they do not have the capacity to sustain longer term leadership for the school. If the decision is reached that the school will close the Trust would be prepared to provide further interim leadership, in the interests of the children at the school, during the period of closure. However, these arrangements would cease should the decision be made to keep the school open. In this event, a different plan and increased leadership capacity would be required to take the school through very challenging circumstances.

2.10 Recruiting headteachers in all schools, but particularly small schools, is very challenging, both locally and nationally. The school will face an additional challenge in this respect as it is an underperforming school and it will have another Ofsted inspection within the

next year. Recruitment activity across the county indicates that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for Pells CE Primary to recruit to a headteacher vacancy.

Alternative options

2.11 The Council has been actively promoting federation with schools since November 2014 and has, along with the Diocese, spent a considerable amount of time exploring options for Pells CE Primary School. Despite the high profile of the school's circumstances at no stage during the original consultation period or the subsequent representation period has another school come forward with a partnership proposal for the school and no academy trust has expressed an interest in taking the school into their trust. The long term underperformance, low parental preferences and low pupil numbers means that it is very unlikely to be attractive to an academy trust.

2.12 Whilst the Lewes Co-operative Learning Trust have a commitment to improve the outcomes of all pupils in the town and is providing interim leadership, the Trust and other schools are not willing to federate or amalgamate with Pells CE Primary School.

2.13 On 29 June 2016 a proposal was submitted by Councillor O'Keeffe for a 'Farm School Approach' for Pells CE Primary School. This proposal was not shared with the school during the consultation period but was subsequently sent to the Chair of Governors. As requested by the Lead Member this proposal was fully evaluated by officers who assessed that the proposal did not address the key challenges that the school faces, it had not been costed by the proposer and no evidence was provided as to how it would address the priorities at the school in order to secure and maintain improvements in standards. The proposal and evaluation are provided in **Appendix D**

2.14 The proposal was costed by officers and was found to be unaffordable. The Farm school would cost at least £100,000 to set up, and cost £50,000 each year to cover running costs. In addition setting up a Farm School would require planning permission for change of use and constructing any necessary buildings. This process would take at least 6 months and would cost in the region of £20,000. Any loss of playing field space would also require Secretary of State permission. The proposal does not offer a financially viable solution for the school.

2.15 The Chair of Governors reviewed the plan and did not feel that it offered a sustainable way forward for the school in light of the significant challenges the school is facing.

2.16 The proposal has not been developed any further since its submission to the Council and evaluation by officers in June and no contact has been made by the proposer with the school with regard to developing the plan.

2.17 No other proposals have been submitted to the Council that are considered to offer a sustainable model for the school, both educationally and financially.

Equality Impact Assessment

2.18 Cabinet is required to have 'due regard' to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty, 'PSED') in determining these proposals. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been prepared for the proposal. The EqIA is carried out to identify any adverse impacts that may arise as a result of the proposals for those with protected characteristics, to ensure that there is no impact on relationships when carrying out any re-commissioning of services and to ensure that the proposals do not discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people. In order to comply with the PSED, Cabinet must have 'due regard' to the equality aims, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, and must read and take the findings of the updated EqIA, included in **Appendix E**, into consideration when determining the proposal.

3 Scrutiny Committee

3.1 At the recommendation of CMT, Scrutiny Committee considered the report on Pells CE Primary School at an additional meeting on Monday 4 July 2016. A summary of the Committee's discussion and responses to the proposal is included in **Appendix F**.

4 Statutory process

4.1 Closure proposals must be made in accordance with section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013. This process complied with these requirements.

4.2 The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 set out a number of factors that Cabinet should have regard to before making a final decision on the proposal to close the school. A detailed consideration of these factors is set out in **Appendix C**.

4.3 When deciding a proposal for the closure of a primary school, the decision maker must verify whether or not the school is designated as a rural primary school under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order. Pells CE Primary School is not designated as a rural primary school.

5 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 The representation period following publication of the statutory notices brought only one response to the proposal to close Pells CE Primary School. The response does not bring forward any new information or evidence to suggest the recommendation for closure should be reconsidered.

5.2 In conclusion, the Council remains extremely concerned about this very vulnerable school in terms of its long term sustainability on the grounds of its capacity to secure and maintain improvements in standards and in the context of declining popularity and financial viability. The Council believes that children will achieve better outcomes if they attend other schools.

5.3 For the reasons set out in this report and previous reports on the matter, Cabinet is recommended to approve the closure of Pells CE Primary School with effect from 31 August 2017.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Response received from Councillor O'Keeffe during the representation period
Appendix B	Analysis of responses to the statutory notice
Appendix C	Factors to be considered by Cabinet before reaching a final decision on the proposal
Appendix D	Evaluation of Farm School Proposal
Appendix E	Updated Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix F	Scrutiny Committee comments to Cabinet

Response received from Councillor O’Keeffe on 14 September 2016

Dear Consultation and Stuart

I am writing further to earlier representations concerning the proposals to close Pells School.

Lewes as a Town has significant housing development in progress which will lead by the County Council’s own predictions to around 1000 new homes by 2029, just over half of which already have planning permission and construction will be starting this year or early next.

The rest of the schools in the town are close to full.

We have significant in-migration, steady in nature and with a number of families with children each year. Looking at the County Council’s own figures for the last eight years for Lewes Town only once, eight years ago, were there more children born five years before that than entered the schools. Even taking this one year with a negative result into account there is an average of 12 more pupils at age five than there were children born five years previously, with over 40 more in one of the years.

Landport is a relatively deprived area of the town and their school is very important to them.

The County Council reports showed that numerically around 20% of Landport primary school aged children went to Pells and used this as a way of showing that it was not popular. However there are 222 Primary aged children on Landport at present and a maximum of 140 places at the school. 82 children could not go there because there are not enough places for them. After a year of consultation and speculation and many people telling them the school would be closing, including the families that put it as a first choice being written to by the Council to tell them to make another choice (five still put Pells first) the school still had about half the number of possible pupils from Landport which is very different to the impression given by the report. I have explained all of these figures at meetings.

Parents have petitioned, demonstrated and protested.

The town needs the school places to cope with the combination of immigration and new developments.

In order to explore all possible avenues to help the school to secure a “Good” rating I and a local headteacher have looked at a number of options, as you know.

One of these was to team the school up with a local and highly respected teacher training programme at Sussex University. The University, where Jo Tregenza, the course Director, was keen to set up a hub at the school and have a number of students on site all the time with tutors, working with the children and providing all sorts of extra resources.

When I heard the Prime Minister’s recent speech about Education and the future I was interested to hear what she had to say about the possibility of small schools making use of new partnerships including a mention of University/School partnerships.

I feel that the university partnership could be a pilot model for other small schools in need of further development and a real boost to the life chances of pupils like those at the Pells. I am very surprised that this option has not been fully explored, but appears to have been rejected very quickly. I am not aware of any detailed consideration.

I am writing to ask that more time is granted for Pells to explore this partnership and for the University to have a chance to work with the school to create something special.

kind regards

Ruth

Ruth O’Keeffe MBE

Response received from Councillor O’Keeffe on 28 July 2016

Dear Keith

I remain profoundly concerned about Lewes Town school places.

The PANS for the 6 Lewes Town Primary schools add up to 200.

If you take Pells out then with this PAN in 5 out of the 7 Primary age groups there is a deficit of places before a single house is built on either North Street or Malling Down. One of the year groups has an artificially high PAN (Y4) because of a bulge class leaving only 4 out of 7 (still over half) over numbers.

The County Council is estimating 1000-1100 new dwellings in the town by 2029 and there is continuing immigration of families with children. Our own ESCC figures show that in 7 out of the 8 last years, the most recent 7, the number of children entering primary school at age 5 overtopped the number of births by an average of 12. This includes the first year when it was - 7. One year it was over 40. There have been “bulge” classes put in twice at South Malling to cope with this.

Without Pells the figures show the following at the end of the present school year for which the figures are already known.

R +5
Y1 -17
Y2 +17
Y3 -2
Y4 -26 on usual PAN, +4 because of bulge class in hut
Y5 -2
Y6 -11

Further, I am very concerned that Stuart Galimore stated on television that over 160 children could go to Pells but their parents choose not to send them there.

I explained very clearly at the Council meeting why this is not correct.

There are 222 children on Landport at present of Primary age. There are only 140 places at Pells in total. 82 of the children could not go there even if their parents wanted them to. There are 72 children currently in the school, even after the closure discussions and decisions. So there are only 68 places available. This is nearly 100 fewer than the number that was stated in the clip on the television. This is wherever the present children in the school come from. 68 places is not “over 160”. It has a big effect on the percentages as well, meaning that in real terms it isn’t under a quarter of the families that could send their children to Pells do, it is nearly a half even after all of the things that have happened to do with the impending closure.

Pells School has been a good school and could be again. The school place situation will only get worse in Lewes, not better.

The PAN of 200 makes 1400 places for the town. There is a temporary 1430 because of the bulge class in year 4 but since the pupils coming in will be evenly spread and this bulge class has only 2 more years to run it isn’t going to be the solution.

These are the number of pupils I think from the figures that I have been given by the officers we will have:

1. Only adding in the average of 12 more pupils than the birth rate would suggest:

2018-19 1429 (-29)
2019-20 1413 (-13)
2020-21 1429 (-29)
2021-22 1403 (-3)

2. ESCC have used a multiplier of 0.25 for the new developments that are planned, and one of which, the larger, has already got full planning permission and construction is about to start.

This is just for the houses. For flats there is a much lower multiplier used. If you look at the Landport estate which has a mixture of houses, flats and sheltered housing with no children, the multiplier for the last few years is as follows, for the total number, so including those dwellings with no children at all. (Calculated using the figures in the ESCC report)

2013 0.26
2014 0.27
2015 0.27
2016 0.28

The present 790 mixed dwellings including a sheltered housing area with no children at all and a large number of flats have 222 Primary aged children living in them.

The 565 dwellings that are already planned for Lewes are estimated by ESCC to have a probable yield of "70-80" Primary aged children and I think that 70 has been put gradually into the figure totals we are given. 0.27 yield which is the average for the last 4 years on Landport and shows a gently upward trend gives just over 150 rather than 70-80 pupils.

Even if you shave off the bit over 150 (it is actually 152.5) and allow that 80 rather than the 70 I think were put in this is 70 more pupils over the next few years. If you give the development until 2023-4 to build up these child numbers, adding in 15 in 2018-19, 25 in 20-19-20, 35 in 2020-21 and 45 in 2021-22, then 55 before getting to 70 in 2023-24 you have the following:

2018-19 1444 (-44)
2019-20 1448 (-48)
2020-21 1464 (-64)
2021-22 1448 (-48)

3. ESCC further predict that by 2029 there will not be 565 new dwellings in Lewes Town but 1000-1100. This would presumably be through continued infilling and developments with relatively small numbers of dwellings rather than any more large ones. I know of proposals already that consultation has begun on which would indicate that this further 4-500 dwellings is not unrealistic. So if the figures that ESCC are using for yield are the same, this is another potential underestimate of 120 by 2029. I know there is a development of 20-30 family homes being proposed already up near the Nevill at the back of Houndean and the St Anne's site is likely to be for housing too for example.

Adding in just a few of this 120 per year so that a third are allowed for by 2021-22 these are the figures:

2018-19 1454 (-54)
2019-20 1468 (-68)
2020-21 1494 (-94)
2021-22 1488 (-88)

I do understand fully that we have been told the ESCC prediction team have been praised for their work. However I do know that there are other areas of the County where we have been taken by surprise by pupil numbers and overcrowding in schools has resulted.

I still feel that bringing the standard up at the existing school is the most sensible planning that we can have for the future given the number of pupils that in migration and housing developments will bring. The other schools' job in maintaining educational excellence for their pupils will be made unbearably difficult with every single class over numbers. There is not the physical space for every class to go over numbers in any case and there is the additional difficulty of Key Stage 1 classes not being allowed by law to go over. The -17 in Year 1 in the next school year without Pells is really worrying for example. Technically it should mean another bulge class is formed to accommodate them.

If we do not keep Pells School, and indeed I can see the land being sold for housing which will add even more children, then what additional provision are we planning for Lewes Town for Primary pupils? Surely it is economically as well as educationally more astute to use the provision we have rather than build new?

Thank you for reading this and for taking into account the information in it.

kind regards

Ruth

Ruth O'Keeffe MBE

Analysis of responses to the statutory notice

Comment / objection received	Response by the Council
<p>Submission by Councillor Ruth O’Keeffe on 14 September 2016 (organised by area of concern):</p> <p><u>Pupil numbers</u></p> <p>Lewes as a town has significant housing development in progress which will lead by the County Council’s own predictions to around 1000 new homes by 2029, just over half of which already have planning permission and construction will be starting this year or early next.</p> <p>The rest of the schools in the town are close to full.</p> <p>We have significant in-migration, steady in nature and with a number of families with children each year. Looking at the County Council’s own figures for the last eight years for Lewes Town only once, eight years ago, were there more children born five years before that than entered the schools. Even taking this one year with a negative result into account there is an average of 12 more pupils at age five than there were children born five years previously, with over 40 more in one of the years.</p> <p>The town needs the school places to cope with the combination of in-migration and new developments.</p> <p>Landport is a relatively deprived area of the town and their school is very important to them. The County Council reports showed that numerically around 20% of Landport primary school aged children went to Pells and used this as a way of showing that it was not popular. However there are 222 Primary aged children on Landport at present and a maximum of 140 places at the school. 82 children could not go there because there are not enough places for them. After a year of consultation and speculation and many people telling them the school would be closing, including the families that put it as a first choice being written to by the Council to tell them to</p>	<p><u>Pupil numbers</u></p> <p>The Council stands by its pupil forecasts as set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.5 of the main report and section 6 of Appendix D below, which are based on a number of factors including birth rate, housing, parental preference and pupil migration.</p> <p>To clarify, the Council did not ‘tell’ parents who expressed a preference for a place at Pells CE Primary School in 2016/17 to choose another school, as has been suggested. Rather, in March 2016 the Council wrote to parents who had expressed a preference for the school offering them the opportunity to change their preference if they wished to do so in light of the impending proposal to consult on the closure of the school. It was made clear that parents were under no obligation to change their preference.</p> <p>Although the response received suggests that there are children living on the Landport Estate who are unable to have a place at the school because of its capacity, the reality is that for the last twelve years pupil numbers have been on a downward trend meaning there have been unfilled places at the school for parents who wished to send their children there. However, the preference data for the school (as reported in Appendix B of the 19 July 2016 Cabinet report) tells us that parents who live on the Landport Estate, who could have had a place at the school, have chosen to send their children to schools elsewhere, generally further away from their home address. Even at times of high demand for places in the town the school has been unpopular and unable to attract sufficient pupils.</p>

make another choice (five still put Pells first) the school still had about half the number of possible pupils from Landport which is very different to the impression given by the report. I have explained all of these figures at meetings.

Parents views

Parents have petitioned, demonstrated and protested.

Alternative options

In order to explore all possible avenues to help the school to secure a "Good" rating I and a local headteacher have looked at a number of options, as you know.

One of these was to team the school up with a local and highly respected teacher training programme at Sussex University.

The University, where Jo Tregenza, the course Director, was keen to set up a hub at the school and have a number of students on site all the time with tutors, working with the children and providing all sorts of extra resources.

When I heard the Prime Minister's recent speech about Education and the future I was interested to hear what she had to say about the possibility of small schools making use of new partnerships including a mention of University/School partnerships. I feel that the university partnership could be a pilot model for other small schools in need of further development and a real boost to the life chances of pupils like those at the Pells. I am very surprised that this option has not been fully explored, but appears to have been rejected very quickly. I am not aware of any detailed consideration.

I am writing to ask that more time is granted for Pells to explore this partnership and for the University to have a chance to work with the school to create something special.

Parents views

The petition and responses received to the original consultation were addressed in the 19 July 2016 Cabinet report.

By the end of the representation period no parents had commented on or objected to the publication of statutory notices.

Alternative options

The proposal, which was submitted for a farm school approach, included a partnership with Sussex University for a learning hub for the PGCE course. As reported in Appendices C1 to C3 of the 19 July 2016 Cabinet report, the proposal was fully evaluated by officers who assessed that it would not address the key challenges that the school faces. It had not been costed by the proposer and no evidence was provided as to how it would address the priorities at the school in order to secure and maintain improvements in standards.

At no stage has the University of Sussex, or any other local university, expressed an interest to the Council, formally or otherwise, in partnering with or sponsoring the school.

The proposal was not developed in any respect with the school during the consultation period and only subsequently sent to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors reviewed the plan and did not feel that it offered a sustainable way forward for the school in light of the significant challenges the school is facing.

The proposal has not been developed any further since its submission to the Council and evaluation by officers in June and no contact has been made by the proposer with the school with regard to developing the plan.

No other proposal was received during either the consultation or representation periods.

Factors which the decision maker should consider before reaching a decision on the proposals

1. Did the publication of the statutory notice comply with the requirements of Section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013?

1.1 The statutory notice complied with the requirements set out above.

2. Is the proposal related to other published proposals?

2.1 The proposal to close Pells CE Primary School is not related to other published proposals

3. Is conditional approval being sought for the proposal?

3.1 When determining the proposal, the decision maker can:

- Reject the proposal;
- Approve the proposal without modification;
- Approve the proposal with such modifications as the decision maker thinks desirable, after consulting with the governing body
- Approve the proposal – with or without modification – subject to certain conditions being met

3.2 In this instance, Cabinet is recommended to approve the proposal without modification i.e. to close Pells CE Primary School with effect from 31 August 2017.

4. Was a statutory consultation carried out prior to the publication of statutory notices?

4.1 A six week period of local consultation was carried out between 15 April and 27 May 2016. The consultation report is included in **Annex 1** to this report.

5. How will the proposal affect education standards and diversity of provision, including the balance of denominational provision?

5.1 The Council has a duty to ensure all pupils receive a good standard of education. It is a matter of serious concern that the provision for the pupils at Pells CE Primary School does not enable them to make expected levels of progress consistently enough by the time they leave Year 6. Children who start at a similar level in other schools make better progress. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 has been significantly below the national average in three of the last four years, and is significantly below again in 2016. The Council believes that children will achieve better outcomes if they attend other schools.

5.2 Data released since July 2016 shows that progress is below the national average for every indicator and below the floor standard for the combined outcomes of reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, this indicates that at Key Stage 2 outcomes will be below the floor standard when the final data is released in December 2016. For 2014 and 2015 outcomes at the school were below the coasting schools' criteria and although the government is yet to confirm any changes to the criteria for 2016, it is likely that the school will be classed as coasting once the final data is released in December 2016.

5.3 The School is a Church of England voluntary controlled school. The Council does not believe the proposal will have a negative impact on diversity of provision, the balance of denominational provision and associated parental choice in the area were the School to close on 31 August 2017 - in the 2017/18 academic year there would be 1040 places at Church schools in the local area and it is estimated that there would be approximately 932 children on roll at those schools. This would leave 108 spare places to accommodate the 53 children currently on roll at the school should every parental preference be for a faith place.

5.4 The church schools in the local area are:

Iford & Kingston CE Primary School
Southover CE Primary School, Lewes
South Malling CE Primary School, Lewes
St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes

6. Pupil forecasting and school places

6.1 School place planning predictions are derived mainly from the Council's pupil forecasting model. The model produces forecasts of the number of children and young people in state funded primary and secondary schools in East Sussex (including maintained schools, free schools and academies).

6.2 The model forecasts pupil numbers:

- Countywide
- For each district and borough
- For each primary and secondary school place planning area (based largely on admissions areas)
- For each individual primary (including infant and junior) and secondary school

6.3 In producing pupil forecasts a number of key factors are taken into account. For the purposes of this report these include:

- Existing and planned capacities of school places as well as published intake numbers
- Existing numbers of pupils in schools (from pupil census data)
- Future births (from Office of National Statistics data) and resulting primary reception year intakes
- GP registration data
- Parental preference for primary reception year
- New housing development in each area and the likely pupil yield

6.4 In the absence of live birth data, longer term predictions are based on the Council's Policy Based Population Projections of future births.

Accuracy of forecasts

6.5 The Council's forecasts achieve a good standard of accuracy and compare well to other local authorities. For instance the accuracy of the one year ahead total primary number on roll forecast for the last four years is as follows:

One year forward primary number on roll forecast	
Academic Year	Accuracy
2012/13	+ 0.5%
2013/14	+ 0.4%
2014/15	+ 0.4%
2015/16	+ 0.1%

6.6 Note that the Council's forecasts tend to err on the high side.

New housing development

6.7 Based on data provided by Lewes District Council, the Council's pupil forecasts assume that between 1000 and 1100 new housing units will be completed in Lewes Town in the period 2015/16

to 2029/30. This includes the developments at North Street and Old Malling Farm as follows:

Development	Total Dwellings	Estimated Mix			Estimated Completion Timescale
		Houses	Flats 2 bed +	1 beds	
North Street	365	212	90	63	2017/18 - 2020/21
Old Malling Farm	200	147	13	40	2020/21 - 2024/25

Note: The dwelling totals for North St exclude 51 extra care units which are unlikely to house children

6.8 From past experience the Council has found that new housing often does not build out as quickly as completion timescales envisage, so the timescales set out above may be optimistic.

Births

6.9 Births are the major determinant of pupil numbers, as one birth more or less equates to the need for one school place five years later. Births tend to peak and trough in 10-13 year cycles. In East Sussex, births peaked in 2010/11 and are now in the downward part of the cycle. This downward trend has been evident in Lewes Town as the following table shows:

Live Births, Lewes primary schools area

Year of Birth	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Primary Reception Year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	201	195	195	178	137	134

Forecast as at 01.07.16

6.10 Based on these figures of actual births, we can be confident that there will be sufficient reception year spaces in the town until the turn of the decade. Beyond that the predictions rely on demographic projections of future births which are derived from the Council's Policy Based Population Projections. These projections take account of factors such as migration, fertility rates and, crucially, levels of planned new housing in the area.

6.11 Higher than normal levels of new housing in an area can be expected to boost the number of births as housebuilding aids inward migration and a move to a new home often coincides with people starting a family. Housing data used in the birth projections for Lewes Town are consistent with that used in the pupil forecasts (i.e. 1000 – 1100).

6.12 Taking account of this level of housing completion, the projections give a birth total averaging 157 per annum over the time period. To err on the side of caution the reception year pupil forecasts are set at a higher average – of just over 180 - and skewed so that the highest reception year intakes mirror (with an approximate 5-7 year delay) the projected years of highest housing completion in the town.

6.13 The table below looks at the historical relationship between births and primary reception year intakes in Lewes over the last seven years.

Births v reception year intakes	2004/05 (2009/10 intake)	2005/06 (2010/11 intake)	2006/07 (2011/12 intake)	2007/08 (2012/13 intake)	2008/09 (2013/14 intake)	2009/10 (2014/15 intake)	2010/11 (2015/16 intake)
Live births (from ONS data)	199	156	178	184	163	199	194
Reception year intakes	192	175	220	189	177	213	198

6.14 As the table illustrates, generally there has been a higher uptake of school places than births in Lewes reflecting either children moving into the town before they reach school age or parents choosing Lewes schools from outside the local area.

6.15 Pupil forecasts for the following academic year (2016/17) are based on admissions allocations on National offer Day and allow the Council to make a firm prediction on numbers.

6.16 Pupil forecasts for the following three academic years (2017/18 to 2019/20) use actual birth data and GP registrations at 31 August 2015. The forecasts take account of the historic relationship between births and GP registrations and the resulting reception year numbers (reception year numbers tend to be higher than births) but also children moving into the area and requiring a reception year place as a result of new housing development.

6.17 The table below provides the birth and GP registration data and the admissions allocations (where applicable) for the next four academic years for the town.

Births and GP registrations	2016/17 (2011/12 births)	2017/18 (2012/13 births)	2018/19 (2013/14 births)	2019/20 (2014/15 births)
Live births (from ONS data)	193	176	136	134
GP registration data at 31 August 2015	212	175	139	124
Admissions allocations April 2016	202	n/a	n/a	n/a

6.18 GP registration data for Lewes, received in August 2016, provides further evidence of the general level of births in the town in 2015/16 which are likely to be in the region of 140 to 150. This gives the first indication as to the primary school reception intake number in academic year 2020/21 based on actual data on children already born rather than a demographic projection. These figures give a strong indication that, even taking into account migration factors and new housing, the 2020/21 reception year intake in Lewes will be under 200.

Pupil yield from new housing development

6.19 In addition to factoring in the impact of new housing on future births, through its pupil yield factors the Council's pupil forecasts also allow for the impact of families with school aged children moving into new housing and creating additional demand across all academic year groups.

6.20 The Council's primary pupil yield factors are as follows:

Pupil yield per new dwelling by property type and size	Houses 2 bed+	Flats 2 bed+	All 1-bed
Primary school yields	0.25	0.0375	0.00

6.21 Pupil yield factors are based on the surveys of residents of new housing development. In 2014 and 2015 the Council commissioned consultants Cognisant Research to undertake a study to review its pupil yield factors. The Cognisant Survey involved a mixture of face to face interviews and self-completion questionnaires with a sample of over 1000 households living in newly built housing across East Sussex.

6.22 This survey found the following 'direct' pupil yields.

Direct pupil yields per new dwelling by property type and size (Cognisant Survey)	Houses 2 bed+	Flats 2 bed+	All 1-bed
Primary school yields	0.32	0.16	0.01

6.23 However, the survey also found that many families who had moved into new housing had not changed their children's school. Cognisant were commissioned to undertake a further analysis of the survey data to take account of this fact. The study also allowed for the possibility that when households move to a new dwelling, the dwelling they vacate could potentially be occupied by a family with children (a phenomenon known as backfill).

6.24 This study resulted in the following 'net yields' per dwelling:

Net yields per new dwelling by property type and size (Cognisant Studies)	Houses 2 bed+	Flats 2 bed+	All 1-bed
Primary school yields	0.23	0.11	0.06

6.25 For houses (the dwelling type where most school aged children are to be found) the net yield analysis not only resulted in a lower primary pupil yield than the direct yield analysis, the net yield was also lower than the existing yield factor for housing.

6.26 While in many respects the net yield analysis represents a more sophisticated calculation of pupil yield, in view of the risk that it may underestimate the true level of pupil yield, Children's Services Senior Management Team decided to continue using the Council's existing pupil yields which give a slightly higher pupil yield for houses. This means our forecasts will over estimate pupil numbers rather than under estimate.

6.27 The agreed pupil yields are factored into the forecasts for Lewes Town shown above. Note that the entire pupil yield from new housing development will not impact on schools all in one year. It will be spread over a number of years and academic year groups. In consequence, some school places used by some children arising from the new housing will be vacated and, therefore, available to later children arising from the new housing.

6.28 In the early 2020's, in any one academic year, the pupil yield calculation typically adds between 70 and 80 children to the total number on roll primary school forecast for Lewes Town. (Note that this is in addition to the allowance for the impact on new housing on future births referred to above).

Case study in Hailsham on the impact of new housing on primary pupil numbers

6.29 The recent experience of Hailsham gives an example of what the impact of large volumes of new housing on pupil numbers might be in practice. In the three years 2011/12 to 2013/14 a total of 736 dwellings were completed in Hailsham and Hellingly. Assuming approximately 75% were houses, based on our existing pupil yields this would give a primary pupil yield of around 145 additional pupils. This assumed yield was checked against actual numbers in Hailsham primary schools between 2011/12 to 2014/15. When the effect on reception year number increases attributable to increases in births five years previously (i.e. before the new housing was built and therefore not arising from it) was discounted, the net increase in pupil numbers in Hailsham primary schools was fewer than 30 pupils. This suggests that the immediate impact on demand for school places from additional children moving into the area to occupy new housing may not be as high as anticipated, and that the major effect of new housing on demand will come via the delayed impact on future births and Reception Intake numbers.

Pupil numbers at Pells CE Primary School

6.30 Pells CE Primary School has suffered from very low parental preferences for many years as illustrated in the table below. Even at times of high demand for places in the town the school has been unpopular and unable to attract sufficient pupils.

	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
Published Admission Number (PAN)	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN
20	7	-65%	6	-70%	9	-55%	11	-45%	9	-55%

6.31 For 2016/17 only nine first preferences were received by the closing date for applications. This number reduced to four after parents were given the opportunity to re-submit their preferences. Subsequently a late application was received for Pells after the National Allocation date.

6.32 The take up of reception year places from those who have attended the early years provider on site (Pippa's Group) is low and declining:

2012/13 - 4 out of 8 children (50%)

2013/14 - 5 out of 8 children (63%)




2014/15 - 8 out of 12 children (67%)


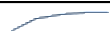

2015/16 - 6 out of 13 children (46%)

6.33 In the period 2001/02 to 2003/04 pupil numbers at the school were close to its capacity of 140. Over the last twelve years numbers have been on a downward trend – in the period 2004/05 to 2009/10 numbers were generally between 110 and 120 each year. Since 2010/11 numbers have been less than 100 and as low as 83 in 2013/14.

6.34 Over the last five academic years the percentage of primary age children living on the Landport Estate attending Pells CE Primary School has fallen from 34% (70 pupils) in January 2012 to only 23% (51 pupils) in January 2016. In contrast the percentage of children living on the Landport Estate attending other schools in Lewes has risen from 62% (127 pupils) in January 2012 to 74% (164 pupils) in January 2016. This is illustrated in the tables below.

Pupils living on the Landport Estate as at January School Census	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Primary	204	204	210	217	222
Total	204	204	210	217	222

Primary School Pupils living on the Landport Estate, by School/ Location	Number					Trend
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Pells	70	57	51	50	51	
Other Lewes School	127	143	152	158	164	
Outside Lewes	7	4	7	9	7	
Total	204	204	210	217	222	

Primary School Pupils living on the Landport Estate, by School/ Location	Percentage					Trend
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Pells	34.3%	27.9%	24.3%	23.0%	23.0%	
Other Lewes School	62.3%	70.1%	72.4%	72.8%	73.9%	
Outside Lewes	3.4%	2.0%	3.3%	4.1%	3.2%	

Lewes schools as described above are those which fall in the three wards covering Lewes town: Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory.

Forecasts for Lewes Town

6.35 The latest update to the forecasts for Lewes Town has just been completed. The forecasts are based on the January 2016 Pupil Census.

Year R forecast – Lewes Town

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
198	202	187	148	159	185	182	177	188	188	190	187	181	174	164	164

Forecast as at 01.07.16

Published Admission Number = 220 (200 excluding Pells)

Total number on roll forecast for Lewes Town

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
1459	1470	1475	1417	1401	1417	1391	1366	1345	1340	1381	1402	1390	1377	1360	1331

Forecast as at 01.07.16

Capacity = 1600 from 2016/17

1570 from 2018/19 (1430 excluding Pells)

1540 from 2023/24 (1400 excluding Pells)

6.36 The forecasts take account of recent and predicted future trends in births. They make an allowance for migration (through the application of a recent historic average cohort survival factor). They also allow for the impact of planned new housing on pupil numbers.

7. How will the proposal impact on the community?

7.1 The number of children living on the Landport Estate attending the School has fallen from 34% (70 pupils) in January 2012 to only 23% (51 pupils) in January 2016. In contrast the percentage of children living on the Landport Estate attending other schools in Lewes has risen from 62% (127 pupils) in January 2012 to 74% (164 pupils) in January 2016. Though much has been made of the local community support for the School, this is not supported by the data which show that the majority of families living on the Landport Estate have not chosen, and do not choose, to send their children to the School, and that the popularity of the School continues to decline.

7.2 As at the January 2016 School Census, **63.3%** of Pells CE Primary School pupils are Ever6FSM* in comparison to **22.7%** of all pupils in East Sussex maintained schools which indicates that there is a significant **over representation** of Ever6FSM pupils at the School. Therefore children from poorer socio economic backgrounds will be disproportionately affected if the School were to close. However, data on pupil outcomes show that this cohort of pupils achieve better at other schools in the town. This suggests that if the proposals for closure were to be approved, there will be a positive impact on the educational outcomes of this cohort. However, those with the protected characteristics may incur additional travel costs or uniform costs as a result of the change of school. Home to school transport would be provided in accordance with East Sussex County Council's published policies, with individual cases being considered on their merits.

7.3 The vast majority of pupils (86.7%) according to the January 2016 school census are of White British Heritage. This is broadly in line with that of the population across the County based on the 2011 census. 10.2% of Lewes district's school population is Black and Minority Ethnic (BME). Of the 84 pupils attending the School when the Census was carried out, 7.1% (1 in 14 pupils) are from ethnic minority backgrounds. BME children are not over represented at the School and as such will not be disproportionately affected by the proposal.

7.4 Data for the School indicates that the percentage of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) is 1.3% (years 1-6). This is lower than the East Sussex overall of 5.5%. EAL children are not over represented at the School and as such will not be disproportionately affected by the proposal.

7.5 The Council and the Diocese acknowledge that where a school closure is proposed it will have an impact on the local community. The Council and the Diocese have no plans for the site and will not consider the future of the site until such time as the School's future is determined in order to remain impartial during the consultation. If the decision was taken to close the School and the School site was sold, the Diocese proceeds would go into an education foundation account to be invested and used for education purposes in the Diocese and it would be for the trustees to decide whether the money would be reinvested in the local area to support children who have been displaced from the School. In disposing of the playing field, the Council would require consent from the Secretary of State under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

* A pupil who is described as 'Ever6FSM' means that within the last 6 years the pupil has at some point been eligible for receiving Free School Meals (FSM).

8. How will the proposal affect displaced pupils?

8.1 The table below sets out the predicted number of spaces available in other schools in the town were Pells CE Primary School to close in August 2017. The information is based on year group numbers provided by the schools in Lewes in September 2016, rolled forward one academic year. Reception year numbers are taken from the pupil forecasts as at 1 July 2016. The information provided indicates there will be pressure in Year 3 and this would be addressed through working with the other schools in the town. The Lewes Co-operative Trust has already indicated a willingness for schools to exceed PAN if necessary to ensure every child has a place.

Space available at alternative schools	Predicted number on roll by year group in 2017/18 (based on pupil number data provided by schools in September 2016, together with reception year forecasts for September 2017)							
	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Pells CE Primary School								
Pupil numbers by year group	6	4	9	15	4	6	5	49
Lewes schools								
Pupil numbers by year group	181	190	189	201	181	198	219	1359
Year Group PANs	200	230	200	200	200	200	230	1460
Spaces available	19	40	11	0	19	2*	11	102
Iford & Kingston CE Primary School								
Pupil numbers by year group	25	30	31	31	29	31	22	199
Year Group PANs	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210
Spaces available	5	0	0	0	1	0	8	14

Source: Data provided by schools in September 2016 and rolled forward by one year to 2017/18 (e.g. the 2016/17 reception intake is shown as Year 1 in 2017/18)

Reception year pupil numbers for 2017/18 are taken from the pupil forecasts as at 01.07.16

Year group PANs have been adjusted to take account of existing and proposed bulge classes

* Although the number of spaces in Year 5 is shown as 2 some schools are already over PAN which masks the actual places still available. In reality there are 9 spaces available based on current numbers

8.2 Asking schools to exceed PAN is a strategy adopted across the county where there is pressure on places but the level of demand does not justify the creation of bulge classes. Our forecasts indicate that this strategy would only need to be in place for a very short period of time until the larger cohorts in Years 3 and 4 leave the primary phase. It should be noted that there is no class size legislation in Key Stage 2 which limits class sizes to 30 pupils.

8.3 Were closure of the school approved, arrangements would be made for parents/carers to apply for a place at an alternative school in the local area. Parents/carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would like their child/ren to attend. Parents/carers would be offered a school place for their child/ren, either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form, or if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child's home where a place is available. It should be noted that parents have a right to express a preference for a school, not to choose which school their child/ren attend.

8.4 The Council will try to meet parents/carers preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places will be made in line with the admissions policy as set out in the school admissions booklet which is available on the East Sussex website.

<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/>

9. Does the school include early years provision and, if so, how will this be re-provided in the event of closure of the school?

9.1 Pells CE Primary School does not have a maintained nursery, however, a third party early years provider does lease part of the school site. The provider is currently looking for alternative accommodation in the town should a decision be taken to close the school with effect from 31 August 2017.

10. Will the proposal have an impact on travel and accessibility?

10.1 The distances from Pells CE Primary School to alternative schools in Lewes are as follows:

St Pancras Catholic Primary School – 1,330 metres

South Malling CE Primary School – 1,814 metres

Southover CE Primary School – 1,382 metres

Wallands Community Primary School – 899 metres

Western Road Community Primary School – 1,382 metres

Each school is within statutory walking distance and many children from the Landport estate already walk to other schools in the town. It is therefore considered unlikely that there will be a significant increase in car use were the school to close.

11. Have any particular issues or objections been raised during the representation period which could directly affect the proposal?

11.1 The representation period elicited only one response, from Councillor O'Keeffe, as attached at **Appendix A** to the main report. The response related to pupil numbers in Lewes and the consideration of alternative options to closure. An analysis of the response can be found in **Appendix B** to the main report. Councillor O'Keeffe's response was in addition to representations she made in an email on 28 July 2016 in which she raised her concerns about school places in Lewes (attached in **Appendix A** to the main report).

11.2 The response does not bring forward any new information or evidence to suggest the recommendation for closure should be reconsidered.

12. Has due regard under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) been given to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

12.1 Due regard has been given as set out in the updated Equality Impact Assessment in **Appendix E** of the Cabinet report.



CONSULTATION REPORT

on the

Proposal to close Pells CE Primary School

June 2016

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 On the 21 March 2016 the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability gave approval to formally consult with key stakeholders on the proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School.
- 1.2 The proposed changes to the organisation of schools have to follow a prescribed process established by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) as updated by the Education Act 2011 and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
- 1.3 This process complied with these requirements.

2. The Consultation

- 2.1 A six week public consultation on the proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School commenced on 15 April and ran until 27 May 2016. Hard copies of the Council's consultation document were distributed to approximately 920 key stakeholders and interested parties. Table 1 below provides a list of consultees. The consultation document was also made available on the Council's website.

Table 1

Organisation	Number of Copies
Pells CE Primary School	151
Hamsey Primary School	15
Iford & Kingston CE Primary School	15
St Pancras Catholic Primary School	15
Southover CE Primary School	15
South Malling CE Primary School	15
Rodmell CE Primary School	15
Wallands Community Primary School	15
Western Road Community Primary School	15
Priory School	15
Sussex Downs College	1
Maria Caulfield MP	1
Lewes District Council	45
Lewes Town Council	20
Diocese of Chichester	1
Diocese of Arundel and Brighton Catholic Schools Service	1
Riverlodge Surgery	20
School Hill Medical Practice	20
St Andrew's Surgery	20
Anchor Field Surgery	20
Mid Downs Medical Practice	20
Sussex Voluntary and Community Learning Consortium	10
Lewes Library	20
Lewes Children's Centre	20
Pippa's Group	20
Lewes New School	20
Lewes Old Grammar School (nursery)	20
Kingston Pre-school Group	20
Lewes Clock Tower Nursery	20
Honey Bees Playgroup	20
Mohair Centre Holiday Playscheme And Nursery	20
Newick Pre-school Playgroup	20
Cottage Pre-school Group	20
Barcombe Playgroup	20

Organisation	Number of Copies
Busy Bees Day Nursery At Lewes	20
South Malling Nursery School	20
South Malling Pre-School	20
Southover Nursery School	20
The Old School House Montessori Nursery	20
Toddlers Inn Ltd	20
Stepping Stones Lewes Community Nursery Ltd	20
Ymca Steps Nursery	20
ESCC Councillors	48
Trade Unions	7
TOTAL	920

- 2.2 The consultation document included a response form to assist and encourage people to give their views. Interested parties could provide a response to the consultation by returning the response form attached to the consultation document, by completing it online, by letter or by email.
- 2.3 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been prepared for the proposal.

3. Consultation Events

- 3.1 A meeting was held with school staff and their union representatives on 21 April 2016 to provide the opportunity for officers to provide more detail about the proposal and for those attending to ask questions and raise concerns. A Question and Answer (Q&A) document was produced after the meeting and emailed to the headteacher to circulate to all staff.
- 3.2 A public meeting was held at Pells CE Primary School on the 4 May 2016 to provide more detail about the proposal and enable parents, carers and all interested parties to ask questions and raise concerns. Notes were taken at this meeting and a Q&A document responding to the key issues raised was produced and posted on the Council's website for people to view. This can be viewed in section 5 of this report.
- 3.3 The children of Pells CE Primary School were encouraged to express their views. These were gathered by the Head of School and submitted by email. The overall view expressed by the children was that they liked their school and it should not close just because it was a small school. The pupils particularly highlighted that they would be sad to be split up from their friends and would miss their teachers; however some commented that it might be exciting to make new friends. The feedback received from pupils can be viewed in Section 6 of this report.

4. Consultation Responses

- 4.1 All written responses received during the consultation will be provided to Cabinet for consideration ahead of the meeting on 19 July. A summary of responses, grouped by key theme is provided at Section 7.

In total:

- 104 consultation responses were received during the consultation period of which 43 were completed on line and 61 forms were returned via freepost
- 1 letter was received
- 4 emails were received.

- 4.2 Where known the following stakeholders responded to the consultation

- 22 parents / carers of a child at Pells CE Primary School
- 3 pupils at Pells CE Primary School
- 4 members of staff at Pells CE Primary School
- 5 members of the governing body at Pells CE Primary School
- 46 members of the local community
- 23 other (Home educating parent, parents of children at local schools, teacher at local school, governor at a local school, retired teachers, local town and district councillor, local MP, local town and district councillor, parent of past pupil, prospective parent, Grandparent, local resident and past resident of Lewes, local business, 'just wanting to save our schools')
- 1 Not answered

5. PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEETING, 4 MAY 2016

QUESTION AND ANSWER DOCUMENT produced following the meeting

Q: In light of the government white paper and the desire for every school to become an academy it would appear that we are too small to be an academy - is this really a consultation process or is it a done deal?

A: This is a genuine consultation and we want to hear the views from parents, pupils, staff, the local community and other stakeholders. The Lead Member attended the public consultation meeting to hear and listen to all the views, comments and discussions. He will take account of all responses received during the consultation period before a final decision is made.

Q: Is this proposal merely about saving money?

A: The Local Authority does not save any money by closing the school – Local Authority funds are separate to school funding. But school funds are public money and we have a responsibility to ensure efficient use of school funding; inefficient use impacts on all schools and children in the county. The government is also making changes to the national funding formula which will mean schools will face additional challenges in the future.

Q: Why is the headteacher post being covered by interim leadership arrangements and not being advertised?

A: Interim leadership arrangements are in place until the end of the academic year. We believe it will be difficult for the school to recruit to a headteacher post; at the start of the last academic year there were many schools across the county without a permanent headteacher. Our normal procedure when going through a process like this would not be to bring in a permanent headteacher until a final decision is taken on the proposal in case that decision should be to close the school.

Q: Could vacant teaching posts be advertised as temporary or fixed term to avoid the use of supply teachers during this time?

A: Yes, they can.

Q: Where do you get your forecast statistics from? The Office for National Statistics (ONS) have predicted great rises for school places up to 2022. The birth rate figures you predict do not match up and you are not taking into account housing developments and you should also be considering people moving into Lewes with families. Should children that attend Lewes schools only be children that are born in Lewes?

A: The Local Authority uses ONS and health authority data, GP registrations, early years nursery take up and information on housing developments to inform their pupil forecasts. The figures set out in the presentation show that the birth rate in Lewes has fallen in recent years from 195 in 2011/12 (reception intake year 2016/17) to 134 in 2014/15 (reception intake year 2019/20) – a fall of 61 births per year over a 3 year period.

In certain parts of the County, for example Hailsham, we will see a significant number of school places required in the future due to the volume of housing developments planned there. We believe that the falling birth rate in Lewes will lead to sufficient places being available in the town even taking into account planned housing development at North Street and Malling Farm.

One of the challenges is that the Admissions Code requires Local Authorities to meet parental preference where possible. Pells is not always the first preference school for local parents,

significant numbers of whom have opted to make use of other schools in the town over the last five years rather than send their children to Pells.

Q: Assuming your figures are correct what would the class sizes be like in four or five years' time in Lewes? Do you acknowledge that class sizes in Lewes will go over 30? Twelve pupils have already left the school and at least 2 of those families have been split up. What will happen when all other pupils need to be moved? If Landport does not have a school all children will have to go to other schools and there is not a safe crossing route.

The children already leaving the school are having an unsettling effect on children and staff remaining at the school. Can we stop children from leaving the school?

A: We believe in general there will be sufficient places available in 2017/18 across the town to accommodate children displaced from Pells were it to close. Year 3 in 2017/18 (the current year 1) is likely to see a shortfall of places but schools within the Lewes Co-operative Trust have indicated a willingness to exceed their published admission number (PAN) if needed to accommodate all pupils from Pells.

Class size legislation prohibits classes of more than 30 in Key Stage 1 unless supported by an additional teacher. Class size legislation does not exist in Key Stage 2 and schools are therefore able to exceed 30 in a class if required. This may be the case in Year 3 in 2017/18.

We appreciate the challenge that is created by children leaving the school. It should be remembered that Pells remains open and there is no need for parents to move their children to other schools at this stage. However, if parents choose to move their children to a school with space that is their right under the admissions code. We will work with the leadership team to support the school through this challenging time. If a decision is taken to close we have a duty to ensure every child has a place at an alternative school and admissions would look at each case on an individual basis. Where eligible we would support with transport costs taking into account distance and routes to school.

Q: Where will you put the SEN children and what transition will be available for them? You won't find other schools in Lewes that will take those children. People have said that they choose this school because it is a small school. It seems to me that in this world there is a bias against small schools when we know that small schools work well for some children. If some children are attending this school with SEN their outcomes in this school won't be good. You won't find other schools in Lewes that will take those SEN children.

A: Pells is a mainstream school like other schools in Lewes. All mainstream schools support and accommodate pupils with SEN. Children attending other mainstream schools in Lewes have access to a range of support to help with their needs and this would be the case for children moving from Pells. Outcomes for children with similar needs are good in other schools.

Q: The LA has set out its responsibilities to provide sufficient places and to promote excellence. Is this solely in relation to academic achievement? This school has a high number of SEN pupils. If achieving excellence is about leaving school with good manners, confidence, high self-esteem, then this school achieves that.

A: Determining achievement and attainment does not only look at raw scores and how many pupils' reach level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2. It also considers progress made and there is a measure called expected progress. What we can unfortunately see is that the children here do not make expected levels of progress by the time they leave year 6. Children who start at a similar level in other schools make better progress and we have a responsibility to ensure that we have the same ambition for children at Pells.

Q: You said the LA had looked at all of the options. There is a high proportion of parents looking for the option of flexi schooling. Would the LA consider Pells as an option to become a flexi-school?

A: The Local Authority and the Diocese have explored other options including partnerships and federation – no schools in the area have expressed a willingness to federate or amalgamate with Pells and no academy solutions have been put forward. If you believe there are alternative options please put forward your proposals including detailed information about the educational and business benefits including its long term sustainability. These will be considered by the Lead Member alongside all other responses from the consultation.

The option of flexi schooling is something that an individual headteacher can look at based on a number of factors. Ultimately the final decision rests with the headteacher.

Q: Are the responses to the consultation going to be available before the Lead Member decision is made? Can consultation responses be made available to view during the course of the consultation? People may gain confidence to respond by viewing what other people say.

A: We have received advice that in order to publish responses before the consultation period ends we would need to ask respondent's for their consent. Although it may encourage people to respond it could also potentially discourage others from participating.

The Lead Member report is published 10 days before the meeting takes place and the report will provide an analysis of all the responses received.

Q: What would happen to the site if the school closes?

A: The Diocese has not considered what would happen to the land at this stage other than to begin looking at Trust documents to check on any restrictions on future use. This is a very complicated process. The Diocese refrains from any consideration of possible use at this stage so as not to pre-empt in any way the outcomes of the consultation.

If the school site was sold, the proceeds would go into an education foundation account to be invested and used for Education purposes in the Diocese and it would be for the trustees to decide whether the money would be reinvested in the local area to support children who have been displaced from Pells. Any reinvestment would have to be in church school provision.

Comments made by parents about their specific situations and experience

- I sent my kids to another local school, biggest mistake of my life. Let them become excellent in other forms than just academic, in art, writing, music.
- My son is starting here in September and my other children are here. Teachers saw me when pregnant, they see him now, he has his routine here.
- My son has been failed in a bigger school; he won't make progress in a bigger class. This school remembers my family and this is what this school does and what you have here is excellence. We are going possibly to bring other schools down. Please try and keep our family community going. At this school your child is not categorised as naughty because the teachers know you.

6. Response of Pell's Children

1. What do you like about your school?

- That there are not many children
- That we are pushed to our limits
- School dinners
- We get reward time
- There is lots of sport
- It is local to everyone
- It is small – we get lots of attention
- It is easy to make friends

2. What do you think about the school maybe closing?

- Sad because we will have to organise another school which will cause our parents hassle
- Annoying as we really like this school
- Sad because we will be split up from our friends
- Sad, angry and emotional because it is emotional to leave all your friends and you won't be able to play with them anymore
- Ridiculous – you might be split from your friends and siblings
- Annoying – we might start a new class in September then we might have to move schools

3. What would you miss about your school if it had to close next summer?

- The teachers and everybody
- Friends who you won't be able to see
- Work that you like
- Teachers and the education – people here know where you are
- Everything to do with the school
- Reward time

4. How would you feel about going to another school?

- Sad leaving friends
- Worried because you don't know what the people in the new school are going to be like
- Sad, nervous and excited – you could make new friends
- Sad leaving friends who might not go to the same school as you
- Not happy - we might get sent to a school we don't want
- Unhappy – you will have to get up earlier to go to a school further away
- If sibling go to different schools it will be really difficult
- We will leave all our happy memories behind
- Annoyed – we might get judged on how we look and act. People might not want to be our friend

5. Is there anything else you want to ask/ tell us about?

- There is nothing wrong with our school why might you close it down?
- Our friends are really important
- Just because its small, doesn't mean it has to close
- It's not good for children with special needs to have to change schools and teacher
- I like this school – I don't understand why it might shut down

7. KEY ISSUES RAISED BY RESPONDENTS

School Places

Consultee Comment	County Council Response																																	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">At a time when the population of Lewes is growing there is need for more school places, not fewer. The large number of primary age children from the North Street development has been seriously underestimated by the council.This would be the nearest primary school to serve more than 400 new homes proposed in North Street alone.Encourage more people to attend, don't run the school into the ground.	<p>A full response including the detail on the impact of closing the school on school places, and details of our pupil forecasting methodology and pupil yield for housing development is provided in Appendix B of the report to Cabinet.</p> <p>Parents are entitled to express a preference for a school for their child. It is the responsibility of the school, and the governing body, to ensure that the provision they make is attractive to parents.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges that statutory consultation around school organisation will cause a level of uncertainty which can be a contributory factor on pupil numbers at the school.</p> <p>Births in Lewes between 2003/04 (reception year intake 2008/09) and 2012/13 (reception year intake 2017/18) have fluctuated from a low of 156 in 2005/06 to a high of 201 in 2009/10. Since then, there has been a marked fall in the birth rate with numbers in 2013/14 (reception year intake 2018/19) at 137 and 2014/15 (reception year intake 2019/20) at 134.</p> <p>Pells CE Primary School has suffered from very low parental preferences for many years as illustrated in the table below. Even at times of high demand for places in the town the school has been unpopular and unable to attract sufficient pupils.</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="2">2012/13</th><th colspan="2">2013/14</th><th colspan="2">2014/15</th><th colspan="2">2015/16</th><th colspan="2">2016/17</th></tr><tr><th>Published Admission Number (PAN)</th><th>1st Prefs</th><th>% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN</th><th>1st Prefs</th><th>% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN</th><th>1st Prefs</th><th>% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN</th><th>1st Prefs</th><th>% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN</th><th>1st Prefs</th><th>% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN</th></tr><tr><td>20</td><td>7</td><td>-65%</td><td>6</td><td>-70%</td><td>9</td><td>-55%</td><td>11</td><td>-45%</td><td>9</td><td>-55%</td></tr></table> <p>For 2016/17 only nine first preferences were received by the closing date for applications. This number reduced to four after parents were given the opportunity to re-submit their preferences. A late application was received for Pells so the school is likely to start September with five children in its reception year.</p> <p>In the period 2001/02 to 2003/04 pupil numbers at the school were close to its capacity of 140. Over the last twelve years numbers have been on a downward trend – in the period 2004/05 to 2009/10 numbers were generally between 110 and 120 each year. Since 2010/11 numbers have been less than 100 and as low as 83 in 2013/14.</p> <p>Over the last five academic years the percentage of primary age children living on the Landport Estate attending Pells CE Primary School has fallen from 34% (70 pupils) in January 2012 to only 23% (51 pupils) in January 2016. In contrast the percentage of children living on the Landport Estate attending other schools in Lewes has risen from 62% (127 pupils) in January 2012 to 74% (164 pupils) in January 2016.</p> <p>The take up of reception year places from those who have attended the early years provider on site (Pippa's Group) is low and declining:</p> <p>2012/13 - 4 out of 8 children (50%) 2013/14 - 5 out of 8 children (63%) 2014/15 - 8 out of 12 children (67%) 2015/16 - 6 out of 13 children (46%)</p> <p>The latest set of pupil forecasts for Lewes, which take account of the proposed large developments at North Street and Old Malling Farm indicate that primary reception year intakes will fall in the period to</p>		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		Published Admission Number (PAN)	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	20	7	-65%	6	-70%	9	-55%	11	-45%	9	-55%
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	<p>2018/19 before rising again in the period to 2025/26. However even at its peak reception year intake numbers are expected to be below 200 in the town. Beyond 2025/26 the Council's demographic based forecasts indicate that reception year intakes will decline. This means that 200 reception year places in Lewes (assuming Pells CE Primary School closes in August 2017) will be sufficient to meet future demand for places. Appendix B sets out the Council's forecasting methodology and predictions for the Lewes area.</p> <p>The Council's pupil forecasts are highly accurate with an accuracy of +0.5 to +0.1% over the last four years. The pupil forecasts take account of both the impact of new housing on future births, and the impact of school aged children moving into new housing. The Council has recently reviewed its pupil yield factors to check accuracy. The review indicated that the Council's pupil yield produced marginally higher pupil yields than other models. The Council has therefore continued to use this model to ensure there is sufficient capacity without overprovision. The most recent example of the use of this forecasting model shows that the housing development in Hailsham produced less pupils than the Council's model estimated. Further detail on this is provided in Appendix B. There is no evidence to suggest that the pupil forecasts for Lewes are inaccurate, on experience to date the forecasts will identify more pupils than will actually result from the new housing.</p> <p>There will be sufficient places available in other schools in Lewes in 2017/18 for children from Pells CE Primary School were it to close. There will be a very small pressure in Years 3 and 4 and this would be addressed through working with the other schools in the town. The Lewes Co-operative Trust has already indicated willingness for schools to exceed PAN if necessary to ensure every child has a place.</p> <p>Asking schools to exceed PAN is a strategy adopted across the county where there is pressure on places but the level of demand does not justify the creation of bulge classes. Our forecasts indicate that this strategy would only need to be in place for a very short period of time until the larger cohorts in Years 3 and 4 leave the primary phase. It should be noted that there is no class size legislation in Key Stage 2 which limits class sizes to 30 pupils.</p>
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Ofsted Judgement

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Ofsted grade of 'requires improvement' is equivalent to the former grade of satisfactory: this means that there are many good aspects to the schools learning and teaching. How do you know it won't get good at its next inspection? The school could improve more with good support from the county council Please consider making changes/upgrading to better the future 	<p>In September 2009 the school was judged to require 'Special Measures'. In January 2012 the school was removed from special measures due to improved leadership but with an inadequate judgement on outcomes and given a notice to improve. In February 2013 and February 2015 Ofsted judged the school to 'Requires Improvement'. The 2 year period for the school's journey to good ends in February 2017 and the in-year data suggests that outcomes will remain low this year with insufficient improvement in both progress and outcomes to lift the school successfully beyond a requires improvement judgement. The recently received provisional outcomes data for key stage 2 for this year shows that only 33% (4 out of 12 pupils) achieved the expected standard in reading, writing, maths combined, significantly below the East Sussex average of 51.1%. All of this means that it is very unlikely that the school will be judged good at the next inspection. As the school has been judged 'Requires Improvement' twice in a row, it is very likely that Ofsted will place the school in a category of concern as the pace of improvement has not been swift enough over a number of years to address significant pupil underachievement.</p> <p>The school has received significant support from the Council and the Diocese but despite this the school continues to face challenges in achieving an Ofsted judgement as a good school. This has been</p>

<p>education of the children at Pells.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been nothing done to help shake off the unjust stigma the school has suffered. • Other local schools are in SM or RI – are you proposing to close them? 	<p>confirmed by the interim leadership who have identified significant areas of underperformance. Council monitoring arrangements confirm this view noting that many targets remain unmet or only partially met, and the recent key stage 2 results for this year provide further evidence that the school is underperforming. Despite the considerable efforts of the school, the Council and the Diocese it has not been possible to break the long term cycle of underperformance.</p> <p>The Council has a duty to ensure all pupils receive a good standard of education. It is a matter of serious concern that the provision for the pupils at Pells CE Primary School does not enable them to make expected levels of progress by the time they leave Year 6. Children who start at a similar level in other schools make better progress. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 has been significantly below the national average in three of the last four years, and is significantly below again this year. Pells CE Primary School is not delivering the level of ambition that we have for the children of this county.</p>
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Headteacher Recruitment

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is the headteacher post being covered by interim leadership arrangements and not being advertised? • Try advertising for senior management don't just assume. 	<p>Since January 2016 interim leadership arrangements have been in place and will continue until the end of the academic year. Recruiting headteachers in all schools, but particularly small schools is very challenging, both locally and nationally. The school will face an additional challenge in this respect as it is an underperforming school and it will have another Ofsted inspection within the next year. Recruitment activity across the county indicates that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for Pells CE Primary to recruit to a headteacher vacancy.</p> <p>There is no permanent leadership solution for the school. The interim leadership being provided by the Council and the Lewes Co-operative Learning Trust is in place until the end of this academic year. The interim leadership arrangements are not financially sustainable from the school's budget; the Council is currently funding these arrangements. The Lewes Co-operative Learning Trust has confirmed that they do not have the capacity to sustain longer term leadership for the school. If the decision is reached that the school will close the Trust would be prepared to provide further interim leadership, in the interests of the children at the school, during the period of closure. However these arrangements will not be available should the decision be made to keep the school open as this would require a different plan and increased leadership capacity to take the school through very challenging circumstances.</p> <p>Our normal procedure when going through a process like this would not be to attempt to recruit to a permanent headteacher role until a final decision is taken on the proposal in case that decision should be to close the school. It is unlikely that a prospective Headteacher seeking a permanent position would commit themselves to a school in such circumstances.</p>

Strengths of Pells CE Primary School

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the pupils prefer the security and comfort of a smaller school with a caring environment. • Parents value sending their children to the school as it offers smaller class sizes and they feel 	<p>The Council recognises that reviewing the future of any school is controversial and emotive. The Council is challenged with balancing the sensitivities of community feeling on the one hand, with consistently providing a high quality education offer which can be sustained and afforded. Pupils, parents, carers and teachers, both current and past have strong ties to the schools they attend or have attended as part of their own life-stories.</p> <p>Pells CE Primary School is a mainstream school and all mainstream schools are required to meet the individual needs of all their pupils</p>

<p>they would not thrive in a larger school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school's demographic is different from all others in the town. It is part of the community and provides a non-judgemental, specialist scheme to children and families with diverse needs. • It is a community led by the dedicated teachers, who have carried the school with no visible input from the county. 	<p>including those with SEN. All schools in the area want all children to thrive and have access to a range of support to help with their needs. The Council expects that all children who move from the Pells CE Primary School to other schools would be provided with the same level of care at their new school. Outcomes for children with similar needs are good in other schools.</p> <p>The school has received significant support from the Council and the Diocese but despite this the school continues to face challenges in achieving an Ofsted judgement as a good school.</p> <p>The Council has recognised the contribution staff make to Pells CE Primary School. However, the Council cannot avoid making decisions for the future which are in the best interests of children and young people.</p>
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Impact on pupils

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving my children will have an adverse effect on their education as they are settled at school and doing well • Friendship groups may be split up. • The closure could result in siblings being at different schools (increasing time/finance burden of transport and emotional impact of split) • Current Pells pupils living near the school will have to travel a long way to other schools in some cases and there aren't good enough local public transport links in the town. • This process has created an atmosphere of uncertainty for parents of pupils at the school and are already moving their children to other schools. This is unsettling for pupils who remain at the school. 	<p>The Council recognises that proposing changes to school organisation means there will be changes for pupils. Were closure approved, arrangements would be made for parents/carers to apply for a place at an alternative school in the local area. Parents/carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would like their child/ren to attend. Parents/carers would be offered a school place for their child/ren, either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form, or if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child's home where a place is available. It should be noted that parents have a right to express a preference for a school, not to choose which school their child/ren attend.</p> <p>The Council will try to meet parents/carers' preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places will be made in line with the admissions policy as set out in the school admissions booklet which is available on the East Sussex website. https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/</p> <p>The Council and affected schools have a duty to support appropriate transition arrangements and the Council would take all practical steps to ease the transition for pupils, most especially for vulnerable learners and those with SEND.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented the Council would work with pupils, their parents and the relevant schools to make appropriate transition arrangements for pupils to familiarise themselves with their new environment.</p> <p>Were the school to close the Council is confident that teaching staff at other schools would manage the transition that any pupils from Pells CE Primary School who are moved into the school will benefit from the new arrangement.</p> <p>In the event of closure we recognise that there could be an impact upon the length of journeys between home to school for some pupils on roll. Home to school transport will be provided in accordance with East Sussex County Council's published policies, with individual cases being considered on their merits.</p>

Alternative Suggestions

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough has been done to investigate alternative options for the school • Explore sufficiently all options for amalgamation and federation and take into account the unique data of the school with its percentages of SEND and PPD. • Consider the school offering the option of flexi schooling • Consider making the school a farm or forest school to attract a wider social mix of children and enable less academically inclined children to excel in and enjoy other skills • Consider formally changing the school into one for children with more difficulties • Twin a good school in Lewes with Pells and share senior staff • The best option, given the key location of the school and its superb site, would be close to it and then re-open it under a new name (Trinity School?) and new leadership. 	<p>The Council has been actively promoting federation with schools since November 2014 and has, along with the Diocese, spent a considerable amount of time exploring options for Pells CE Primary School. No Academy Trust has expressed an interest in taking the school into their Trust; the long term underperformance, low parental preferences and low pupil numbers means that it is very unlikely to be attractive to an Academy Trust.</p> <p>Whilst the Lewes Co-operative Learning Trust have a commitment to improve the outcomes of all pupils in the town and is providing interim leadership, the Trust and other schools are not willing to federate or amalgamate with Pells CE Primary School. It is unlikely that federation would improve the popularity of the school anyway. No other school has room to accommodate all the pupils from Pells CE Primary School on their own site – a split site school has been considered but would create difficult challenges for the school and parents to manage, and in any event, no school has shown an appetite for that model.</p> <p>The Council has a role in supporting schools to explore federation but it is not responsible for securing those partnerships. Federation is a decision made by the governing bodies of schools and the local authority can only direct governing bodies to federate in exceptional circumstances i.e. when it has been identified as causing concern and is eligible for formal action.</p> <p>The Council did not receive any proposals for the future of the school during the consultation process and no firm proposals were shared with the school leadership or governing body. On 23 May 2016 the Chair of Governors confirmed in a telephone conversation with the Assistant Director: Education and ISEND that the governing body were not bringing forward a solution and that no groups had discussed any potential solutions with her regarding the future of the school.</p> <p>Following a meeting between the Director of Children's Services, the Assistant Director: Education and ISEND and Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe on Friday 24 June 2016, a proposal was submitted on 29 June 2016 by Councillor O'Keeffe for a 'Farm School Approach' for Pells CE Primary School. This proposal was not shared with the school during the consultation period but has since been sent to the Chair of Governors. As requested by the Lead Member this proposal has been fully evaluated by officers who have assessed that the proposal does not address the key challenges that the school faces, it has not been fully costed by the proposer and will not lead to the rapid improvement required at the school. The proposal and evaluation are provided in Appendix C of the Cabinet report. The Chair of Governors has reviewed the plan and her view remains unchanged that there is no sustainable way forward for the school in light of the significant challenges the school is facing.</p> <p>The proposal has been costed by officers and is found to be unaffordable. The Farm school would cost at least £100K to set up, and cost £50K each year to cover running costs. In addition setting up a Farm School would require planning permission for change of use and constructing any necessary buildings. This process would take at least 6 months and would cost in the region of £20K. Any loss of playing field space would also require Secretary of State permission. The proposal does not offer a financially viable solution for the school.</p> <p>Though much has been made of the local community support for the school, this is not supported by the data in 2.1.5 of the Cabinet report which show that the majority of families living on the Landport Estate, have not chosen, and do not choose to send their children to the school, and that the popularity of the school continues to decline. There is no</p>

	<p>evidence that the Farm School proposal would increase the popularity of the school.</p> <p>The imminent Ofsted inspection, which in light of the key stage 2 results this year we would now expect early next academic year, is likely to judge the school to be inadequate and this does not allow time for any further exploration of options for this school.</p>
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Impact of the proposals on Teaching Staff

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
What will happen to the teaching and support staff?	Should the current proposals be implemented, the Council would work with the current members of staff, including teaching and support staff in line with the Council's 'Managing Change Policy'. The Council would seek to minimise any compulsory redundancies as a result of the closure. If there are any school-based vacancies in East Sussex that are of interest to those staff at risk of redundancy, colleagues in Personnel and Training would liaise with the school(s) regarding the availability of staff to fill the vacancy, by seeking the agreement of the school to participate in the redeployment process, or at least offer an interview to a member of staff at risk of redundancy who meets the essential criteria of the person specification. For vacancies within the Council, other than in schools there is a mechanism for staff at risk of redundancy to join the redeployment register.

Impact on Community

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pells has a long standing history in Lewes. To close it would be a travesty. The school is the heart of the community and closing it will have a devastating effect on the community and local businesses. 	The Council and the Diocese acknowledge that where a school closure is proposed it will have an impact on the local community. The Council and the Diocese have no plans for the site and will not consider the future of the site until such time as the school's future is determined in order to remain impartial during the consultation. If the decision was taken to close the school and the school site was sold, the Diocese proceeds would go into an education foundation account to be invested and used for education purposes in the Diocese and it would be for the trustees to decide whether the money would be reinvested in the local area to support children who have been displaced from the school. In disposing of the playing field, the Council would require consent from the Secretary of State under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Impact of the proposals on other schools

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The closure would result in increases in numbers in classes at other schools and being scheduled to the limit. My children's school has a considerable number of new pupils from this area and has seen a considerable increase in behavioural issues from an influx of anxious and unsupported children which is impacting on my children. 	<p>A full response including the detail on the impact of closing the school on school places, and details of our pupil forecasting methodology and pupil yield for housing development is provided in Appendix B of the report to Cabinet.</p> <p>Pells CE Primary School is a mainstream school and all mainstream schools are required to meet the individual needs of all their pupils including those with SEN. All schools in the area want all children to thrive and have access to a range of support to help with their needs. The Council expects that all children who move from the Pells CE Primary School to other schools would be provided with the same level of care at their new school. Outcomes for children with similar needs are good in other schools.</p> <p>There are a number of other church schools (listed below) in the town that parents will be able to express a preference for when applying for a school place:</p> <p>Iford & Kingston CE Primary School</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bigger classes could lead to disruption and affect the quality of learning children will receive. • The council should consider the imbalance of Christian Faith Schools in Lewes if there is a closure. 	Southover CE Primary School, Lewes South Malling CE Primary School, Lewes St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes
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Other Comments

Consultee Comment	County Council Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think the council is being rather selfish and just thinking of how much extra money they can put in their pockets and not the children whose education and confidence and well-being will suffer. • This is about the Council profiting from the sale of the land • You should fully consult parents with children who attend the school, all staff and the local community • If you have to close the school mothball it because birth rates are cyclical and it will avoid wasting money on building new schools. 	<p>The Council does not save any money by closing the school – Council funds are separate to school funding. But school funds are public money and we have a responsibility to ensure efficient use of school funding; inefficient use impacts on all schools and children in the county. The government is also making changes to the national funding formula which will mean schools will face additional challenges in the future.</p> <p>The Diocese owns the majority of the school site, the Council owns the playing field. The Council and the Diocese have no plans for the site and will not consider the future of the site until such time as the school's future is determined in order to remain impartial during the consultation. If the decision was taken to close the school and the school site was sold, the Diocese proceeds would go into an education foundation account to be invested and used for education purposes in the Diocese and it would be for the trustees to decide whether the money would be reinvested in the local area to support children who have been displaced from the school. In disposing of the playing field, the Council would require consent from the Secretary of State under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.</p> <p>The consultation process has included consultation with parents, all staff and the local community.</p>

Responses generally accepting of the Proposal

- The children may thrive if they have the opportunity to have an education alongside other Lewes children in bigger schools
- Parents should vote with their feet, ie move their children to Pells. If enough parents sent their children to the school I assume the Council would have to keep it open. Without this sort of support, I feel that the Council has no option but to close the school.
- The best thing we can do for these children is to give them the opportunity of an education alongside other Lewes children in bigger schools where they will have the chance to thrive
- Although I understand the Council's reasons for proposing to close Pells CE Primary and am sorry that there is no immediate solution could the Council please consider
 - How best to support the particular needs of the pupils, particularly vulnerable children many with SEND and some from deprived backgrounds, who will suffer greatly from the closure of the school. those with SEND, who currently attend Pells?
 - The large number of primary age children from the North Street development, the number of which has been seriously underestimated by the council, according to Maria

Caulfield MP. The best option, given the key location of the school and its superb site, would be close to it and then re-open it under a new name (Trinity School?) and new leadership.

- Pells has always had a poor reputation and has been the 'sink' school in the town. It has failed the children of Landport and should be integrated into their town.

8. Petition

- 8.1 During the consultation period a 5,000+ signature petition in relation to the proposed closures of both Rodmell CE Primary School and Pells CE Primary was submitted to the Local Authority. The petition is available for members to view.

- 8.2 The petition was presented at Full Council on 10 May 2016 where the following motion was moved.

In view of the increasing need for Primary School places in and around Lewes in the next five years, the strength of public feeling shown by a petition of over 5,000 signatories and the emerging plans for the future at both Rodmell School and Pells School, the Council recommends to Cabinet that the process towards the closure of these two schools is halted at the end of the consultation to enable these plans to be put into place.

- 8.3 A recorded vote on the motion was requested and taken. The motion was carried, the votes being cast as follows - 28 for the motion and 20 against the motion. In accordance with the Lead Member decision and the resolution of the Council we have sought to look at possible alternative options and to engage with stakeholders to consider any emerging plans that are put forward.

EVALUATION OF FARM SCHOOL PROPOSAL

Pells Church of England Primary

School Proposed Strategy

Key Priority from OFSTED Feb 2015	Proposal	Impact Evaluation Measurement tool	Timescale	Finance
Improve the quality of teaching to consistently good across the school.	Use a farm school curriculum that provides 'real' situations as a link to learning - e.g The 3 little Pigs for younger children. Curriculum plans to be developed alongside Sussex university. Enriched curriculum and outdoor learning to raise attendance and participation. Practical based curricular items to do with farm skills and traditional crafts (see other material) to be developed with the support of experts in these fields Regular coaching and lesson study for staff.	Teaching observations within the classroom Both peer evaluation and evaluation by senior staff to be used. Debriefing of experts in various fields to include gathering information about the ways in which new content for practical sessions has been absorbed and is being used by staff.	Full curriculum maps of the new practical farming based schemes of work to be drawn up by the start of the Autumn term 2016 and experts to support across these areas all in place. Inset sessions to bring staff together in preparation for the new curriculum to take place before the start of each term throughout the first academic year 2016-17 that these are being used. Aim for consistently good teaching across the school with all of the additional support being provided by Christmas 2016.	Farm set up using underspend of £38,000 from previous year's budget. Part of pupil premium funding to be used to bring in experts where there is a charge, small group sessions previously financed by this part of the funding now replaced by teacher training resource (see below). Coaching training - internal from staff training budget. Support from Sussex University PGCE programme not charged for as they are receiving the facility of a hub for their teacher training students.

Set tasks that are demanding enough to help pupils to make good progress. Check pupils' learning frequently enough in lessons.	Small group focussed teaching provided as a base for Sussex University's PGCE teacher training programme. Small groups tracked closely to individual plans linked to small steps curriculum approach.	Assessment Information monitoring.	Programme to be developed over the school year 2016-17 and to be fully in place by the end of the school year	<p>Farm set up using underspend of £38,000 from previous year's budget.</p> <p>Part of pupil premium funding to be used to bring in experts where there is a charge, small group sessions previously financed by this part of the funding now replaced by teacher training resource (see below).</p> <p>Coaching training - internal from staff training budget.</p> <p>Support from Sussex University PGCE</p> <p>programme not charged for as they are receiving the facility of a hub for their teacher training students.</p>
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Raise standards in KS1 so that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics are in line with National averages	Farm curriculum raises interest, participation and attendance. Community links improved and parents support learning. University focus input supports teaching and tracking so that targeted support is relevant and sustained.	Attendance and behaviour information. Assessment information	Pupils in the present year R in 2015-16 to show progress in line with National Averages by the end of KS1, pupils in the present Year 1 to show good progress towards this goal if not meeting it completely.	<p>Farm set up using underspend of £38,000 from previous year's budget.</p> <p>Part of pupil premium funding to be used to bring in experts where there is a charge, small group sessions previously financed by this part of the funding now replaced by teacher training resource (see below).</p> <p>Coaching training - internal from staff training budget.</p> <p>Support from Sussex University PGCE programme not charged for as they are receiving the facility of a hub for their teacher training students.</p>
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Strengthen progress in mathematics so that pupils are encouraged to explain how they are carrying out calculations and solving problems.	Real life farming based challenges eg food measures, costing necessitate depth of learning and reasoning. University input supports quality first teaching.	Assessment information	Programme to be developed over the school year 2016-17 and to be fully in place by the end of the school year	<p>Farm set up using underspend of £38,000 from previous year's budget.</p> <p>Part of pupil premium funding to be used to bring in experts where there is a charge, small group sessions previously financed by this part of the funding now replaced by teacher training resource (see below).</p> <p>Coaching training - internal from staff training budget.</p> <p>Support from Sussex University PGCE programme not charged for as they are receiving the facility of a hub for their teacher training students.</p>
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Ensure consistent good progress of groups of pupils, including the most able and those who are disadvantaged.	Enrichment activity linked to young farmers, small farm training groups, Plumpton agricultural college and smallholder magazine provide opportunity for both extension and support. Frequent opportunity for outside visits to places of interest which exemplify aspects of the practical based curriculum e.g. Mohair Centre (animal husbandry and spinning and weaving), Batemans (flour milling), High Weald Dairy (cheese making) etc	Assessment information	<p>Programme to be developed over the school year 2016-17 and to be fully in place by the end of the school year</p> <p>Careful monitoring against measurable and specific targets to be set up</p>	<p>Farm set up using underspend of £38,000 from previous year's budget.</p> <p>Part of pupil premium funding to be used to bring in experts where there is a charge, small group sessions previously financed by this part of the funding now replaced by teacher training resource (see below).</p> <p>Coaching training - internal from staff training budget.</p> <p>Support from Sussex University PGCE programme not charged for as they are receiving the facility of a hub for their teacher training students.</p>
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Ensure older pupils in mixed age classes are given work that is challenging enough	<p>Enrichment activity linked to young farmers, small farm training groups, Plumpton agricultural college and smallholder magazine provide opportunity for both extension and support. Frequent opportunity for outside visits to places of interest which exemplify aspects of the practical based curriculum e.g. Mohair Centre (animal husbandry and spinning and weaving), Batemans (flour milling), High Weald Dairy (cheese making) etc</p>	Assessment information	<p>Programme to be developed over the school year 2016-17 and to be fully in place by the end of the school year</p> <p>Careful monitoring against measurable and specific targets to be set up</p>	<p>Farm set up using underspend of £38,000 from previous year's budget.</p> <p>Part of pupil premium funding to be used to bring in experts where there is a charge, small group sessions previously financed by this part of the funding now replaced by teacher training resource (see below).</p> <p>Coaching training - internal from staff training budget.</p> <p>Support from Sussex University PGCE programme not charged for as they are receiving the facility of a hub for their teacher training students.</p>
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Ensure all pupils are able to use correct spelling, their writing.	Small group work using university allows focus on acquiring, developing and embedding a culture of high expectation. Mentor work support Growth Mindset development to raise expectation and develop resilience.	Work scrutiny.	Programme to be developed over the school year 2016-17 and to be fully in place by the end of the school year Careful monitoring against measurable and specific targets to be set up	Part of pupil premium funding to be used to bring in experts where there is a charge, small group sessions previously financed by this part of the funding now replaced by teacher training resource (see below). Coaching training - internal from staff training budget. Support from Sussex University PGCE programme not charged for as they are receiving the facility of a hub for their teacher training students.
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Fundamental Changes

- Creation of farm school (possible funding from Harvey's).
- Involvement of Sussex University as a learning hub for the PGCE course - confirmed via Jo Tregenza (Director of ITE) - no cost
- Leadership involvement of experienced successful Headteacher - confirmed - no new cost
- Nurture provision focus - school budget
- Introduction of Growth Mindset philosophy - no cost
- Coaching provision for staff -some release costs - school budget.

Summary of some of the main curriculum themes related to farming For each month the main activities on a farm are listed and then school activities related to these with examples for pupils across the year groups. Each month a theme is taken in addition to the day to day practical work, and some festivals are listed that will be worked in to give an appreciation of British Values, the farming year and other cultures. Probable contacts for theme activities are listed with each month.

The school will have;
Horticulture/agriculture:
Orchard fruits
Soft Fruits
Cereals
Vegetables
Flowers
Animal husbandry:
Chickens
Ducks
Goats
Lambs

Looking after the plants and animals will be woven into the school day and used as the inspiration for all subject areas; here are a few brief examples from some subject areas:

English; descriptive, creative and for purpose writing

Mathematics; recording and analysing, practical business applications

Science; experimentation with horticulture and agriculture, recording, presenting information

PSHE and related areas; caring for and looking after animals and crops and the opportunities this gives to learn about development health, being part of a community

History; the way people lived in our area and beyond, different ways in which growing crops and looking after animals have changed over time

Geography: the sorts of agriculture and farming that are usual locally, across the UK and across the world

September

What a farm does:

- Harvesting of top fruit (apples, pears and plums) reaches its peak
- Harvesting of late varieties of soft fruit (raspberries and blackberries)
- Maize harvested to make into silage for winter feeding to cattle
- Topping starts - Ewes are mated with rams for spring lambing
- Autumn calving of dairy cows
- Spreading of farmyard manure onto farmland before autumn cultivations
- Autumn cultivations (ploughing, seedbed preparations, liming etc) and the sowing of arable crops (winter barley, oats and wheat) in full swing
- Local and county ploughing matches take place

Practical activity; Juice from fruit; contact Wobblegate Farm Bolney

Festival ; Autumn Equinox;

Some school activities:

Work to do with harvesting, both of the school crops and looking at what large farms do locally.

Practical work around juice. Juicing by hand, using a juicer. What can be created? Why extract juice from fruit. Visit a juice producer. Health and nutrition.

Ploughing; look at older and new methods; horse power and tractors. Visit and watch ploughing. Possible visit from Harveys Shire Horses to plough a small section of the school field.

Need for winter feed; why? Growing seasons. Fertiliser. Growth of seeds. Plant small scale items like cress to see seeds grow indoors.

October

What a farm does:

- Grape picking and wine making commences. There are several vineyards producing quality award-winning wine in the Chilterns region
- Autumn cultivations (ploughing, seedbed preparations, liming etc) and the sowing of arable crops (winter barley, oats and wheat) continue
- Summer grazed dairy and beef cows are housed for the winter and fed preserved crops (grass and maize silage) and supplementary concentrated feed
- Ewes are mated with rams for spring lambing
- Autumn calving of dairy cows

Practical activity; Flour milling; contact Batemans working mill Baking contact Flint owl Bakery

Festival; Harvest festival, Folk dancing festival in Lewes

Some school activities

Work to do with harvesting, both of the school crops and looking at what large farms do locally.

Work on milling; why is it needed? Historical aspects. Relation to need for power, how is power generated. Wind and water power. Grinding by hand. Visit to a mill. Calculations about the amount of flour produced from grain, and bread from flour. Value added; business aspects. Industrial and artisan baking. Cook bread using yeast. The story of a grain of wheat from planting to harvesting to milling to baking to eating.

Harvest festival; reasons for this in the farm calendar. The modern harvest festival with tins and packets and its relationship to the original one. A time for giving; helping others in the community.

November

What a farm does:

- Autumn cultivations to prepare the ground for planting crops near completion
- Harvesting of winter vegetables (cauliflowers, beetroot, swede, parsnips and leeks)
- Summer grazed dairy and beef cows are housed for the winter and fed preserved crops (grass and maize silage) and supplementary concentrated feed
- Christmas trees are harvested

Vegetable harvesting; contact Ashurst Organics

Festivals; Remembrance; St Andrew's Day; Divali

Some school activities:

Looking at vegetables; different growing patterns above and below ground; harvesting; bringing in the crops at school and using for school dinners. Visit a farm locally that grows vegetables, compare this with the small scale production at school.

Christmas tree harvesting; look at a local producer. History of growing trees for Christmas; economics.

Other forestry in the area.

What are trees used for? Fires/power/furniture/building materials etc. Charcoal making.

Remembrance; why is this done, what is being done, history leading up to it.

December

What a farm does:

- Harvesting of winter vegetables (cauliflowers, beetroot, swede, parsnips and leeks)
- Turkeys and geese plucked in preparation for Christmas market.
- Conservation works take place such as planting, coppicing and laying of hedges; also work in farm woods, before the birds start nesting
- Farm maintenance of buildings, tracks, fences and machinery
- Holly and ivy gathering for Christmas decorations
- Fatstock shows are staged at major livestock markets

Conservation works; contact South Downs National Park

Festivals; Winter Solstice; Christmas

Some school activities:

Christmas preparations; turkeys, geese, vegetarian alternatives. History of celebration of Christmas, from biblical teachings to Father Christmas in Coca Cola coloured robes.

Fatstock shows; why are these held. Animals as food. Philosophical considerations about meat and vegetarians.

Different ways of looking at the world expressed by what people eat.

Learning about maintenance; farm structures to keep animals safe or prevent crops from being trampled.

Storage of crops and food, food safety.

January

What a farm does:

- Fruit trees are pruned to ensure a good crop later in the year
- Some flocks start lambing indoors to produce lamb ready for the traditional Easter market
- Conservation works take place such as planting, coppicing and laying of hedges; also work in farm woods, before the birds start nesting
- Farm maintenance of buildings, tracks, fences and machinery

Practical activity; Sussex Willow Weaving ; contact Dominic Porette

Festivals; New Year and Burns Night (Haggis with Neeps and Tatties)

Some school activities:

Learning about conservation works in Winter time. Why are woods coppiced; making things from coppiced willow. How to lay a hedge. Why is this done; why have a living boundary?

Plant and animal conservation within hedgerows. Birds and nests, how and why do they make them? Trying to make nests from natural materials in school; solving construction problems.

Burns Night meal with neeps and tatties from the school crops. Planning, preparing and enjoying together. Vegetarian alternative to Haggis for anyone who wants this!

February

What a farm does:

- Early lambing continues
- Orchard pruning continues
- Fungicide sprays are applied to crops showing signs of disease or organic methods used
- First top dressings of fertiliser are applied to winter sown arable crops

- Winter stubbles are ploughed and a seed bed is prepared for spring crops if the ground is dry enough

Practical Activity: Animal rescue; contact Sussex Wildlife

Festivals: Chinese New Year and Shrove Tuesday

Some school activities

Looking at why crops are treated for pests and how. Organic and chemical means. Life cycles, ecosystems, people using plants and animals for food. History of development of methods of agriculture designed to overcome pests.

Animal rescue locally; work of Sussex Wildlife and Trevor Weeks. What to do if you find an animal in need of help; why help?

How animals survive the winter and what they need, on farms and in the wild. Hibernation and sleep. Rhythms of nature.

Pancake making; why, how, history and culture. Science work with different kinds of batter to see which work and why. Make pancakes for the whole school for one meal.

March

What a farm does:

- Farmers continue planting spring cereal crops, barley, wheat and oats
- Main lambing season starts and housed ewes go out to grass
- Spring calving of dairy and beef cows
- Spring beef cattle sales held at livestock markets

Practical Activity: Lambing ; contact Mohair Centre

Festivals; Holi (end of winter in Hindu culture), St David's Day, St Patrick's Day, Easter (or April some years), Spring Equinox, Mother's Day.

Some school activities:

Lambing, birth, breeding animals; why and how at appropriate levels for the different age groups in school. Record births in a local flock over the spring. Twin births, orphan animals, keeping animals safe from predators

Welsh and Irish national days and their Saints.

April

What a farm does:

- Fruit orchards begin to blossom
- Crop planting continues Ð maize, linseed, vining peas and game cover crops
- Turnout of winter housed dairy herds and beef cattle
- Grass and arable crops are fertilized

Practical Activity; Cheese making; contact High Weald Dairy

Festivals; St George's Day, Shakespeare's Birthday, Easter (some years)

Some school activities:

Signs of spring. Passage of the seasons. Scientific reasons for them and aesthetic appreciation.

Cheese making. Science and practical application. Research on the different kinds of cheese; soft, hard, blue etc, cheese made from different milks; cows/sheep/goats/buffalo. Try different cheeses. Include non-dairy cheese. Watch cheese being made, try the processes out, make cheese at school.

English national day and their Saint.

Shakespeare's birthday, whole school work on one of the plays at many different levels. Text, scenery, everything needed for a performance.

May

What a farm does:

- Fruit orchards in full blossom
- Oil seed rape in flower
- Arable crops are checked regularly for pests and disease and sprayed if required or organic methods used
- First silage of the year made from surplus grass to be fed to cattle over winter
- Sheep/goat shearing begins
- Early strawberries harvested
- Arable crops checked regularly for pests and disease and are sprayed if required or organic methods used
- Lambing season finishes

Practical activity: Sheep/goat shearing, weaving and spinning contact Mohair Centre

Festivals: Mayday and Whitsun Morris Dancing : contacts Knots of May and Blackpowder Morris

Some school activities:

Flower to fruit; how this works. Bees as pollinators. Structure of flowers/fruit.

Oil seed rape; what is it, why is it grown? Food/fodder/fuel crops and how and why they are chosen. Modern and traditional crops. Looking at profit/conservation considerations.

Sheep/goat shearing; how, why, history. What is the fleece used for? Making things with fleece; felting, spinning, weaving, knitting.

Watch May day festivities and try to take part in Whitsun Morris dancing.

June

What a farm does:

- Salad vegetables and soft fruit harvested (cherries, gooseberries and strawberries)
- Hay making in full swing
- Second grass silage cut of the year taken
- Sheep shearing continues
- Dairy and beef cows mated now for calving in the spring

Jam Making; contact Ouse Valley Foods

Festivals; Queen's official birthday, Father's Day, Summer Solstice

Some school activities:

Why make jam? Food preservation. Sugar/heat/chemicals/ irradiation. Simple and complicated ingredients. "E" numbers. reading food labels. Allergens.

Make jam from school fruit for all children to take home. If any leftover consider selling this for charity/to invest in more fruit plants/? Children to think about this and decide.

Harvest salad vegetables from school garden for meals.

Visit a farm to watch hay making. Why is it done? Traditional and newer methods. What is good and bad about them?

July

What a farm does:

- Harvesting of winter sown arable crops (oil seed rape, barley and wheat) commences using combine harvesters
- Grain is taken from the fields to the farm by trailer
- Baling of crop residues (mainly straw) starts
- Harvesting of soft fruit continues (raspberries, cherries, blueberries and black/redcurrants)

Practical activity: Harvesting; contact Spring Barn Farm

Festivals: Eid al-Fitr; Welsh Eisteddfod

Some school activities

Harvesting school crops.

Find out about combine harvesters.

History of farm machinery. Possible session driving a tractor for older pupils.

August

- Harvesting of arable crops reaches its peak
- Straw is transported to livestock farms to be used for winter bedding and feeding
- Early cultivations (ploughing, seedbed cultivations, liming etc) and sowing of arable crops begins
- Third cuts of grass silage taken (depending on how well grass has grown))

Criteria for the Evaluation of Proposals for Partnership

Proposal Name	Farm School Approach
Submitted by	Cllr Ruth O'Keefe
Date submitted	29 June 2016
Governing Body Approval?	The proposal does not have Governing Body approval. The Governing Body were not involved in drawing up the plan. The Chair of Governors has indicated that she believes that this proposal does not present a sustainable way forward for the school in light of the significant challenges the school is facing.
Evaluation Date	29 – 30th June 2016
Overall assessment	<p>The proposal sets out an approach to address the Ofsted priorities from the most recent inspection (March 2015) by developing a farm curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not a credible proposal because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It does not address the challenges the school faces of low pupil numbers, financial stability, and pupil performance. ○ No business plan has been submitted that provides evidence that the proposal will lead to financial viability. ○ The proposal does not deliver any transformational approaches to teaching and learning. The approaches to teaching and learning suggested are already used at the school. • No explicit vision is stated. The proposal does not provide clear objectives, targets or milestones for implementation and the measuring of impact. • The milestones do not drive and monitor the progress of the school from its current weak position to an Ofsted 'Good'. • There is no indication as to how the proposed farm curriculum will meet all National Curriculum requirements and enable accelerated progress for the pupils at Pells. Therefore, there is no clarity about how the quality of

	<p>education, outcomes and progress, will improve for all pupils who are vulnerable to underachievement at Pells.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue of the required leadership of the school from September 2016 has not been addressed; this is a significant weakness of the proposal. The proposal does not refer to the leadership capacity required to improve and sustain improvement; there is no capacity resulting from partnership with another school which we would expect to see for this school. • The proposal references a consultancy headteacher role (an ex Lewes headteacher). However, there is no indication of the time commitment of this role, or whether this is a substantive post. There is no evidence of the impact of this leadership approach on pupils' outcomes. The Pells school budget cannot support the cost of a consultant headteacher and the plan does not indicate how the day to day leadership role would be funded or undertaken. • Staff development includes the use of Initial Teaching Trainers (ITT). There is no evidence regarding the capacity and quality of these personnel, how they will deliver teaching commitments across the year and whether their teaching will cover school or university weeks. • This proposal does not demonstrate that it would lead to increased pupil numbers to ensure a sustainable budget in the future. • The costings for set up and annual running costs of a Farm School are at least £100K and £50K each year thereafter. These costs could not be supported by the school budget and there is no evidence that this significant resource would address the challenges of the school's underperformance. • Setting up a farm at Pells CE Primary School would require Planning Permission for change of use and for constructing any necessary buildings; this would take a minimum of 6 months and would incur costs of approximately £20K (this cost is in addition to the £100K estimated above for the set-up of the Farm School). Any loss of playing field as a result of the proposal would also require Secretary of State approval. No work on setting up the farm could begin until planning permission was secured. • There is no locally or nationally available evidence that a plan of this type will improve performance of pupils at the school, or increase its popularity in the community.
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Criteria for Evaluation:

All proposals will be assessed against the key areas set out below.

1. **Vision**
2. **Education Plan**
3. **Capacity and Capability**
4. **Evidence of strong track record**
5. **Financial Sustainability**

	Criteria	Comments
1	Vision	
	Is there a clear vision set out for the partnership?	No explicit vision is stated. The proposal broadly sets out how a farm approach could be implemented at Pells but not how this will improve outcomes for pupils. No partnership solution is proposed.
	Is there evidence that leaders of both schools are committed to the vision?	No. No specific school partners are named.
	Is the vision appropriate for the particular context of the schools?	The objectives are aligned to the Ofsted key priorities but are not sufficiently robust to address the detail of the actions that need to be undertaken in the timeline to the imminent Ofsted inspection.

	Criteria	Comments
2	Education Plan	
	Is there a curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake?	<p>The references to the curriculum draw on the context of farming as the context for learning. Many schools already use context based learning to engage pupils and provide a purpose for learning and indeed Pells School already offers a varied range of activities which are integrated with the curriculum. These activities progressively build on creativity and are carefully planned throughout the school year. Examples include:</p> <p>Topic: Into the Woods. This is linked to the Forest School which is on offer within the school and in partnership with Priory School. These offer real life challenges which necessitate depth of learning.</p> <p>Trips and Learning within the Local Community. Sussex Wildlife and Railway Land Live. This project allows students to collect evidence (e.g. mini beasts), research environmental issues and create podcasts.</p> <p>Topic: Battle of Lewes. This is linked to Priory Ruins and is a whole school project delivered in the summer with a comprehensive cross curricular approach. Every child visits the site and experiences a range of practical and academic activities e.g. cooking, gardening and research. This is followed up in school with workshops which develop writing with a purpose.</p> <p>Trips out: these include Lewes Foundry (art Based), Brighton Museum (History), Blacklands Farm (PSHE and PE). In addition there is participation in District Sports and</p>

	Criteria	Comments
		<p>local; sports festivals and PATINA Moving on parade (a strong local community project which involves working with artists).</p> <p>It is not clear how the proposed approach would specifically bring about the rapid improvements required to improve outcomes for all pupils. The proposal does not deliver any transformational approaches to teaching and learning. The approaches to teaching and learning suggested are already used at the school.</p> <p>The proposal does not demonstrate sufficient attention to the make-up of the pupil cohort at Pells including the high numbers of FSM and SEN pupils and the impact that this approach will have on these pupils.</p> <p>A key challenge at the school is the development of the required skills in reading, writing and maths in cohorts of pupils who arrive with low prior attainment and low aspiration and lacking basic skills (e.g. speaking and listening). The school has already provided extensive coaching and support for staff, including being part of the 'maths triad' with other local schools.</p> <p>The proposal lacks detail about behaviour management, especially those with complex needs and presenting extremely high levels of challenge and need.</p> <p>Safeguarding is high profile and demands robust and rigorous systems, monitoring, intervention and support.</p>

	Criteria	Comments
	Are the key issues/priorities for improvement clear?	No. Ofsted key issues are referenced but these are not all the key issues and priorities for improvement that the school has identified. There is no reference to how the issues of financial sustainability, substantive leadership, and the longer term viability of the school will be addressed.
	Does the proposal make reference to key issues from the most recent Ofsted inspection and/or external review?	The proposal only references the Ofsted key issues but does not link these to actions that will address these priorities.
	Does the proposal identify activity that will address the issues identified in the school's self-evaluation and, in particular, issues raised by the most recent data analysis?	No, there is no reference to the school's self-evaluation or data analysis. There is no reference to recent adviser visits where concerns have been raised regarding the time taken for recent initiatives to demonstrate impact.
	Are targets set for attainment, progress, attendance and quality of teaching, including for vulnerable groups?	No. There are no measurable criteria in the proposal.
	Are there short-term targets of interim milestones?	No
	Is it clear how actual performance will be measured against targets?	No
	Are clear success criteria/practice indicators identified for improving the quality of provision in the school?	No
3	Capacity and Capability	
	Is the leadership structure detailed, is there sufficient capacity?	The only leadership referenced is the 'leadership involvement of an experienced headteacher – no new

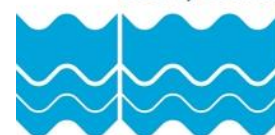
	Criteria	Comments
		<p>cost'. These costs are not included in the proposal.</p> <p>The 'experienced Headteacher' referred to does not have experience of leading partnerships that have been successful in securing improvements. This Headteacher has had limited engagement in the Lewes Area Review and the final report. This would suggest that there is limited understanding of the issues that the school faces and of the capacity needed to bring about improvements.</p> <p>The issue of the required leadership of the school from September 2016 has not been addressed; this is a significant weakness of the proposal. The proposal presents insufficient capacity for leadership, there is no capacity resulting from partnership with another school which would be expected for this school given its size and context and which has been used to good effect whilst the school was in Special Measures.</p> <p>The intended use of pupil premium to fund elements of the proposal is likely to impact on current levels of staffing in the school. The school currently delivers small group teaching utilising the intervention teacher funded by the pupil premium grant.</p>
	Is there a clear staffing structure proposed?	No staffing is detailed other than the provision of Initial Teacher Trainers (ITT) students, who are referenced as providing teaching support via a learning hub and for whom there is no cost. The proposal details the staff

	Criteria	Comments
		<p>development budget to develop existing staff however it does not present the budget plan for this.</p> <p>National research shows that it is not good practice for untrained teachers to support those pupils who are most vulnerable to under achievement and that there would be a lack of understanding of the requirements needed to improve performance through high quality teaching.</p>
	Is there a detailed plan for the implementation of the proposal?	No. There is no timeline for implementation. This plan would need to be in place by September 2016 but this would not be achievable.
	Are there timescales for actions?	The timescales provided are not broken down and are too broad.
	Is it clear who is leading on each aspect of the proposal?	No. No personnel are referenced other than an ex-headteacher in a consultancy capacity. No time/financial commitment is specified.
	Is it clear how the proposal will be monitored, and by whom?	No. There is no monitoring built into the proposal.
	Is it clear how the impact of the proposal will be evaluated, and by whom?	No. There is no evaluation built into the proposal. Although there is a column entitled 'Impact Evaluation Measurement Tool', the contents do not provide a robust evaluation method.
	Is the role of governors in evaluating progress clear?	No. There is no reference to governance built into the proposal.

	Criteria	Comments
	Is the proposal manageable and achievable?	No. The proposal is not sufficiently robust to be either manageable or achievable.
	Will the proposal enable the school to move up to the next inspection category within the agreed timescale?	No this cannot be achieved; please see comments below about the planning permissions required to set up the Farm School which indicate that this would take at least 6 months. There is no evidence that this would secure improvements in pupil achievement.
	Is there a clear partnership agreement in place or a timetable to ensure an agreement is in place?	There is no school named for an agreement, nor any timescale for identifying a school, implementing a partnership agreement or working in partnership.
4	Evidence of Strong Track Record	
	Do those submitting the proposal have a strong track record in successful partnership working?	No evidence of a good track record of partnership working from those submitting the proposal.
	Do those submitting the proposal have a strong track record of improving pupil outcomes, including for vulnerable groups?	No evidence of a good track record of improving pupil outcomes from those submitting the proposal.
	Do those submitting the proposal have a strong track record of financial management?	No evidence of a good track record of financial management from those submitting the proposal.
5	Financial Sustainability	
	Is it clear how the proposal will be financially affordable for the next three years?	The plan references a £38,000 carry forward and an unspecified amount of pupil premium funding to be used to deliver the proposal. There is no 3 year budget plan. The £38,000 carry forward arose from additional resource

	Criteria	Comments
		<p>provided by the Council for interim leadership and additional staff capacity in the academic year (£28k) and £10k from the health improvement grant. These resources have been allocated within the current school budget against current expenditure. Pupil Premium Funding is already committed to staffing costs and is not additional monies.</p> <p>Costs for setting up and running a farm school have been provided by a school that already have this model. They have advised that the costs for the set-up would be in the region of £50,000 and that running costs per year are £55K per year which includes animal feed and associated costs and staffing for a farm manager and farm assistant that provide cover 365 days a year. The school budget cannot support either the set-up costs or the on-going funding costs of a farm school.</p> <p>Setting up a farm at Pells CE Primary School would require Planning Permission for change of use and for constructing any necessary buildings. As the school is adjacent to a conservation area and within the South Downs National Park, it would also need a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and possibly an Environmental Impact Assessment, in addition to the usual considerations of impact on neighbouring properties. Planning Officers at the County Council have estimated that we would need a minimum of 3 months to draw up the application and then a minimum of 8 weeks to</p>

	Criteria	Comments
		<p>determine the application. In total it is advised that this would require 6 months for the application and determination process and around £20k for the costs, which would have to include employing the experts needed to undertake the specialist assessments. This timescale and costings assumes that there are no appeals. No work on setting up the farm could begin until planning permission was given.</p> <p>Any loss of playing field space would also require Secretary of State permission.</p>
	Is it clear how the proposal will have a positive impact on the schools' financial income/increase pupil numbers?	<p>There is no detail in the proposal on how it will increase pupil numbers to allow greater financial income. A similar approach is already in place at a farm school in East Grinstead with pupils attending from across East Sussex, therefore there may not be further demand for this type of provision in East Sussex.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the majority of the local community that choose to send their children to other Lewes schools would support a Farm School by sending their children there instead.</p>



Equality Impact Assessment

Project or Service Template

Name of the proposal, project or service
Proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School

File ref:	Pells	Issue No:	2
Date of Issue:	September 2016	Review date:	

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Part 1 – The Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)

1.1 The Council must have due regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty when making all decisions at member and officer level. An EIA is the best method by which the Council can determine the impact of a proposal on equalities, particularly for major decisions. However, the level of analysis should be proportionate to the relevance of the duty to the service or decision.

1.2 This is one of two forms that the County Council uses for Equality Impact Assessments, both of which are available on the intranet. This form is designed for any proposal, project or service. The other form looks at services or projects.

1.3 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The public sector duty is set out at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have “due regard” to the need to

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. (see below for “protected characteristics”

These are sometimes called equality aims.

1.4 A “protected characteristic” is defined in the Act as:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

Marriage and civil partnership are also a protected characteristic for the purposes of the duty to eliminate discrimination.

The previous public sector equalities duties only covered race, disability and gender.

1.5 East Sussex County Council also considers the following additional groups/factors when carry out analysis:

- Carers – A carer spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or potentially friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. [Carers at the Heart of 21st Century Families and Communities, 2008]
- Literacy/Numeracy Skills

- Part time workers
- Rurality

1.6 Advancing equality (the second of the equality aims) involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristic
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people including steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

NB Please note that, for disabled persons, the Council must have regard to the possible need for steps that amount to positive discrimination, to "level the playing field" with non-disabled persons, e.g. in accessing services through dedicated car parking spaces.

1.6 Guidance on Compliance with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) for officers and decision makers:

1.6.1 To comply with the duty, the Council must have "due regard" to the three equality aims set out above. This means the PSED must be considered as a factor to consider alongside other relevant factors such as budgetary, economic and practical factors.

1.6.2 What regard is "due" in any given case will depend on the circumstances. A proposal which, if implemented, would have particularly negative or widespread effects on (say) women, or the elderly, or people of a particular ethnic group would require officers and members to give considerable regard to the equalities aims. A proposal which had limited differential or discriminatory effect will probably require less regard.

1.6.3 Some key points to note :

- The duty is regarded by the Courts as being very important.
- Officers and members must be aware of the duty and give it conscious consideration: e.g. by considering open-mindedly the EIA and its findings when making a decision. When members are taking a decision, this duty can't be delegated by the members, e.g. to an officer.
- EIAs must be evidence based.
- There must be an assessment of the practical impact of decisions on equalities, measures to avoid or mitigate negative impact and their effectiveness.
- There must be compliance with the duty when proposals are being formulated by officers and by members in taking decisions: the Council can't rely on an EIA produced after the decision is made.
- The duty is ongoing: EIA's should be developed over time and there should be evidence of monitoring impact after the decision.
- The duty is not, however, to achieve the three equality aims but to consider them – the duty does not stop tough decisions sometimes being made.

- The decision maker may take into account other countervailing (i.e. opposing) factors that may objectively justify taking a decision which has negative impact on equalities (for instance, cost factors)

1.6.4 In addition to the Act, the Council is required to comply with any statutory Code of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. New Codes of Practice under the new Act have yet to be published. However, Codes of Practice issued under the previous legislation remain relevant and the Equality and Human Rights Commission has also published guidance on the new public sector equality duty.

Part 2 – Aims and implementation of the proposal, project or service

2.1 What is being assessed?

a) Proposal or name of the project or service.

Proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School with effect from 31 August 2017

b) What is the main purpose or aims of proposal, project or service?

The Proposal is to close Pells CE Primary School with effect from 31 August 2017.

In October 2014 the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability agreed that a review of primary schools should be undertaken in the Lewes area. This was in the context of the Council's principles for planning the provision of education places in East Sussex as set out in the *Education Commissioning Plan 2014 – 2018* and the Council's strategy for school improvement *Excellence for All*. The Council has a duty to ensure there is sufficient provision to meet the predicted demand for places and to also look more widely at the organisation of schools to make sure they are well placed to deliver a high quality education to their local communities

The Area Review raised significant concerns about the long term sustainability of Pells CE Primary School in terms of the risks to its financial stability, securing good outcomes for pupils and its ability to attract pupils from within its community area. For these reasons and having considered alternative options including federation, amalgamation and academisation, approval was sought from the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability on 21 March 2016 to consult on a proposal to close Pells CE Primary School. The Lead Member agreed that the Children's Services Department (CSD) should consult on the closure of the school but instructed CSD to fully consider any proposals coming from the schools or from other consultees around federation or amalgamation which would lead to a sustainable solution.

The Diocese of Chichester shares the Council's concerns and agrees with the proposal to close the school.

On 19 July 2016 Cabinet considered the outcome of the consultation and approved the publication of statutory notices in relation to the proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School on 31 August 2017. A copy of the report can be found at <http://esmodern.gov01v/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2604&Ver=4> and in the Members and Cabinet Rooms. The proposal for closure is being made because of concerns about the long term sustainability of the school on the grounds of its capacity to secure and maintain improvements in standards and in the context of declining popularity and financial viability.

d) Manager(s) and section or service responsible for completing the assessment

Gary Langford, Place Planning Manager, Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service

The Equality Impact Assessment was contributed to by the relevant Council officers.

2.2 Who is affected by the proposal, project or service? Who is it intended to benefit and how?

Children and their families, staff and the local community.

Pupils at Pells CE Primary School do not make expected levels of progress consistently enough by the time they leave Year 6. Children who start at a similar level in other schools make better progress. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 has been significantly below the national average in three of the last four years, and was significantly below again in 2016. The Council believes that children will achieve better outcomes if they attend other schools.

Data released since July 2016 shows that progress is below the national average for every indicator and below the floor standard for the combined outcomes of reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, this indicates that at Key Stage 2 outcomes will be below the floor standard when the final data is released in December 2016. For 2014 and 2015 outcomes at the school were below the coasting schools' criteria and although the government is yet to confirm any changes to the criteria for 2016, it is likely that the school will be classed as coasting once the final data is released in December 2016.

As the school has been judged 'Requires Improvement' twice in a row, it is very likely that Ofsted will place the school in a category of concern as the pace of improvement has not been swift enough over a number of years to address significant pupil underachievement.

The Council's pupil forecasts for Lewes indicate that the number of places available in the town if Pells CE Primary School were to close will be sufficient to meet future demand for places. The latest set of pupil forecasts for Lewes, which take account of the proposed large developments at North Street and Old Malling Farm indicate that primary reception year intakes will fall in the period to 2018/19 before rising again in the period to 2025/26. However even at its peak intake numbers are expected to be below 200. Beyond 2025/26 the Council's demographic based forecasts indicate that reception year intakes will begin to fall away again.

Year R forecast – Lewes Town

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
198	202	187	148	159	185	182	177	188	188	190	187	181	174	164	164

Forecast as at 01.07.16

Published Admission Number = 220 (200 excluding Pells)

Total number on roll forecast for Lewes Town

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
1459	1470	1475	1417	1401	1417	1391	1366	1345	1340	1381	1402	1390	1377	1360	1331

Forecast as at 01.07.16

Capacity = 1600 from 2016/17

1570 from 2018/19 (1430 excluding Pells)

1540 from 2023/24 (1400 excluding Pells)

The table below shows there will be sufficient places available in other schools in the Lewes area in 2017/18 for children displaced from Pells CE Primary School if it were to close. There will be a small pressure in Year 3 and this would be addressed through working with the other schools in the town. The Lewes Co-

operative Trust has already indicated willingness for schools to exceed PAN if necessary to ensure every child has a place.

Space available at alternative schools	Predicted number on roll by year group 2017/18 (based on pupil numbers in September 2016 and the reception year forecast for September 2017)							
	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Pells CE Primary School								
Pupil numbers by year group	6	4	9	15	4	6	5	49
Lewes schools								
Pupil numbers by year group	181	190	189	201	181	198	219	1359
Year Group PANs	200	230	200	200	200	200	230	1460
Spaces available	19	40	11	0	19	2*	11	102
Iford & Kingston CE Primary School								
Pupil numbers by year group	25	30	31	31	29	31	22	199
Year Group PANs	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210
Spaces available	5	0	0	0	1	0	8	14

Source: Data provided by schools in September 2016 and rolled forward by one year to 2017/18 (e.g. the 2016/17 reception intake is shown as Year 1 in 2017/18)

Reception year pupil numbers for 2017/18 are taken from the pupil forecasts as at 01.07.16

Year group PANs have been adjusted to take account of existing and proposed bulge classes

* Although the number of spaces in Year 5 is shown as 2 some schools are already over PAN which masks the actual places still available. In reality there are 9 spaces available

Asking schools to exceed PAN is a strategy adopted across the county where there is pressure on places but the level of demand does not justify the creation of bulge classes. Our forecasts indicate that this strategy would only need to be in place for a very short period of time until the larger cohorts in Years 3 and 4 leave the primary phase. It should be noted that there is no class size legislation in Key Stage 2 which limits class sizes to 30 pupils.

Were closure of the School approved, arrangements would be made for parents/carers to apply for a place at an alternative school in the local area. Parents/carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would like their child/ren to attend. Parents/carers would be offered a school place for their child/ren, either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form, or if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child's home where a place is available. It should be noted that parents have a right to express a preference for a school, not to choose which school their child/ren attend.

The Council will try to meet parents/carers preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places will be made in line with the admissions policy as set out in the school admissions booklet which is available on the East Sussex website.

<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/>

Should the current proposals be implemented, the Council would work with the current members of staff, including teaching and support staff in line with the Council's 'Managing Change Policy'. The Council would seek to minimise any

compulsory redundancies as a result of the closure. If there are any school-based vacancies in East Sussex that are of interest to those staff at risk of redundancy, colleagues in Personnel and Training would liaise with the school(s) regarding the availability of staff to fill the vacancy, by seeking the agreement of the school to participate in the redeployment process, or at least offer an interview to a member of staff at risk of redundancy who meets the essential criteria of the person specification. For vacancies within the Council, other than in schools there is a mechanism for staff at risk of redundancy to join the redeployment register.

2.3 How is, or will, the proposal, project or service be put into practice and who is, or will be, responsible for it?

The East Sussex County Council Cabinet is responsible for making the final decision on the proposal. If approved, the school would close with effect from 31 August 2017.

The Council will be responsible for overseeing the process of the closure of the school. The Council will work closely with the school in implementing the closure, including supporting pupils in 2016/17 and their transition to a new school. The Council's admission's team will work closely with other schools in the town to ensure that every pupil is offered a school place.

2.4 Are there any partners involved? E.g. NHS Trust, voluntary/community organisations, the private sector? If yes, how are partners involved?

Pells CE Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled school. The Diocese of Chichester shares our concerns about the long term sustainability of Pells CE Primary School in terms of the risks to its financial stability, securing good outcomes for pupils, its ability to attract pupils from within its community area and that it is highly likely the school will not be judged good or better at the next Ofsted inspection. The Diocese agreed that the Council should consult with key stakeholders about the proposed closure of the school.

2.5 Is this proposal, project or service affected by legislation, legislative change, service review or strategic planning activity?

Closure proposals must be made in accordance with section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013. This process complied with these requirements.

2.6 How do people access or how are people referred to your proposal, project or service? Please explain fully.

Were closure of the School approved, arrangements would be made for parents/carers to apply for a place at an alternative school in the local area. Parents/carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would like their child/ren to attend. Parents/carers would be offered a school place for their child/ren, either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form, or if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child's home where a place is available. It should be noted that parents have a right to express a preference for a school, not to choose which school their child/ren attend.

The Council will try to meet parents/carers preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places will be made in line with the admissions policy as set out in the school admissions booklet which is available on the East Sussex website.

<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/>

2.7 If there is a referral method how are people assessed to use the proposal, project or service? Please explain fully.

N/A

2.8 How, when and where is your proposal, project or service provided? Please explain fully.

As referred to in 2.5 above, the Council must follow a prescribed process in proposing closure of a school. It cannot shorten the process. The proposed date for closure of Pells CE Primary School is 31 August 2017. The Council has a legal obligation to educate any child that wishes to remain at the school until the date of closure.

Part 3 – Methodology, consultation, data and research used to determine impact on protected characteristics.

3.1 List all examples of quantitative and qualitative data or any consultation information available that will enable the impact assessment to be undertaken.

Types of evidence identified as relevant have X marked against them			
	Employee Monitoring Data		Staff Surveys
X	Service User Data		Contract/Supplier Monitoring Data
X	Recent Local Consultations	X	Data from other agencies, e.g. Police, Health, Fire and Rescue Services, third sector
	Complaints		Risk Assessments
	Service User Surveys	X	Research Findings
X	Census Data	X	East Sussex Demographics
X	Previous Equality Impact Assessments		National Reports
	Other organisations Equality Impact Assessments		Any other evidence?

3.2 Evidence of complaints against the proposal, project or service on grounds of discrimination.

The consultation responses demonstrated that the majority of parents, pupils, staff, and the local community are against the proposed closure. A number of respondents cited the impact on the proposals on individual pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and other vulnerabilities. Some respondents also cited that the closure of the school would lead to less choice for parents who wish to send their pupils to a faith school.

At the recommendation of CMT, Scrutiny Committee considered the report on Pells CE Primary School at an additional meeting on Monday 4 July 2016. A summary of the Committee's discussion and responses to the proposal was included in the 19 July Cabinet Report.

The subsequent representation period following publication of statutory notices elicited only one response to the proposal. The response did not bring forward any new information or evidence to suggest the recommendation for closure should be reconsidered.

3.3 If you carried out any consultation or research on the proposal, project or service explain what consultation has been carried out.

In October 2014 the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability agreed that a review of primary schools should be undertaken in the Lewes area. The area review process involved the preparation of data packs between autumn and spring 2015 and the holding of internal meetings with officers and diocesan colleagues in the spring and of stakeholder meetings in June 2015. Information and evidence from this review informed the decision to seek approval to consult on proposed closure of Pells CE

Primary School. The Lewes Area Review Report was included as an Appendix to the Report to the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability on 21 March 2016:

<http://esmoderngov01v/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=456&MId=2867&Ver=4>

A six week public consultation on the proposed closure of Pells CE Primary School commenced on 15 April 2016 and ran until 27 May 2016. Hard copies of the Council's consultation document were distributed to 920 key stakeholders and interested parties which included pupils, parents and carers, staff other local schools, trade unions, the District Council and Parish Councils, the local MP, the Church of England and Catholic Dioceses and the wider local community.

The consultation document was also available on the ESCC website at:

https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/consultation_finder

A meeting was held with school staff and their union representatives on 21 April 2016 to provide the opportunity for officers to provide more detail about the proposal and for those attending to ask questions and raise concerns. Notes were taken at this meeting and a Question and Answer (Q&A) document was prepared and sent to the headteacher to distribute to staff.

A public meeting was held at Pells CE Primary School on the 4 May 2016 to provide more detail about the proposal and enable parents, carers and all interested parties to ask questions and raise concerns. Notes were taken at this meeting and a Q&A document responding to the key issues raised was produced and posted on the Council's website for people to view. This was included within the 19 July 2016 Cabinet report.

The children of Pells CE Primary School were encouraged to express their views. These were gathered by the Head of School and submitted by email. This was included within the 19 July 2016 Cabinet report.

Consultation Responses 104 consultation responses were received during the consultation period of which 43 were completed on line and 61 forms were returned via freepost. In addition

- 1 letter was received
- 4 emails were received.

Where known the following stakeholders responded to the consultation

- 22 parents / carers of a child at Pells CE Primary School
- 3 pupils at Pells CE Primary School
- 4 members of staff at Pells CE Primary School
- 5 members of the governing body at Pells CE Primary School
- 46 members of the local community
- 23 other (Home educating parent, parents of children at local schools, teacher at local school, governor at a local school, retired teachers, local town and district councillor, local MP, local town and district councillor, parent of past pupil, prospective parent, Grandparent, local resident and past resident of Lewes, local business, 'just wanting to save our schools')
- 1 Not answered

During the consultation period a 5,000+ signature petition in relation to the proposed closures of both Pells CE Primary and Rodmell CE Primary School was submitted to the Council. Petitions must be considered in the light of DfE guidance and the greatest weight should be given to representations from those stakeholders most likely to be directly affected by the proposals rather than simply taking account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. The petition does not identify each signatory's relationship to the school and therefore it is difficult to assess whether the opinions are those of stakeholders that should be given the greatest consideration. The petition was available for members to view.

The petition was presented at Full Council on 10 May 2016 where the following motion was moved.

In view of the increasing need for Primary School places in and around Lewes in the next five years, the strength of public feeling shown by a petition of over 5,000 signatories and the emerging plans for the future at both Rodmell School and Pells School, the Council recommends to Cabinet that the process towards the closure of these two schools is halted at the end of the consultation to enable these plans to be put into place

A recorded vote on the motion was requested and taken. The motion was carried, the votes being cast as follows - 28 for the motion and 20 against the motion.

At the recommendation of CMT, Scrutiny Committee considered the report on Pells CE Primary School at an additional meeting on Monday 4 July 2016. A summary of the Committee's discussion and responses to the proposal was included in the 19 July Cabinet Report.

The subsequent representation period following publication of statutory notices elicited only one response to the proposal. The response did not bring forward any new information or evidence to suggest the recommendation for closure should be reconsidered.

3.4 What does the consultation, research and/or data indicate about the positive or negative impact of the proposal, project or service?

A number of the consultation responses raised concerns about the impact of the proposed closure on specific pupils at the school, including those that are more vulnerable because they have Special Educational Needs. Respondents stated that they like the fact that Pells CE Primary School is a small school with good links to the local community.

The Council recognises that the closure of the school will impact on specific children who will be required to move schools, those families that have chosen the school because of its size and families who have opted for a faith education (Church of England).

Looking at the school data we can see that children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) are significantly over represented at the school and as such will be disproportionately affected by the proposal. However, data showing the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) show that outcomes for these pupils are lower than the average for other schools in the town.

Data on outcomes shows that in 2014 and 2015 no SEN pupils achieved Level 4+ for reading/writing/maths combined at Pells CE Primary School. In 2016, no SEN Support¹ Pupils achieved the expected standard² in reading/writing/maths combined.

In addition, in 2016, Pells CE Primary School is below the average of all other Lewes Schools for the progress of SEN pupils:

- Reading: -6.7 (Pells) compared to -2.2 (all Lewes Schools),
- Writing: -15.9 (Pells) compared to +0.22 (all Lewes Schools),
- Maths: -3.7 (Pells) compared to -2.7 (all Lewes Schools).

Data on outcomes for the Ever 6 FSM cohort in 2014 showed the school had the 3rd highest gap between Ever 6 FSM and non Ever 6 FSM pupils for the % achieving reading/writing/maths combined of all the schools in Lewes. In 2015 Pells still had the lowest % of pupils from this cohort achieving Level 4+ for, and the largest gap between Ever 6 FSM and non Ever 6 FSM pupils of all schools in Lewes.

Data on outcomes for the disadvantaged cohort in 2016 shows that only 30% of disadvantaged pupils at Pells CE Primary School achieved the expected standard in reading/writing/maths combined, compared to 34.6% for East Sussex as a whole. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils was 20% compared to 23.6% for East Sussex as a whole. However, this can be attributed to a low percentage of non-disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in reading/writing/maths combined: 50%, 8.2% lower than the East Sussex average and 8.7% lower than the Lewes average.

In 2016, in reading, writing and maths, Pells CE Primary School is below the East Sussex average for the progress of disadvantaged pupils:

- Reading: -2.7 (Pells) compared to -0.7 (East Sussex),
- Writing: -8.4 (Pells) compared to -1.4 (East Sussex)
- Maths: -4.2 (Pells) compared to -1.6 (East Sussex).

It is therefore considered that there will be a positive impact as a result of this proposal on the educational outcomes of these groups.

¹ DfE now report outcomes for SEN Support Pupils (previously School Action and School Action Plus) separately from outcomes for SEN pupils with Statements or EHC Plans. Pells CE Primary School did not have any pupils with Statements/EHCP Plans being assessed at the end of Key Stage 2.

² The assessment methodology for KS2 changed in 2016. Pupils are now assessed against an expected standard for the end of the key stage. The pupil Progress measure is defined as the difference between the KS2 score and the average KS2 score for all pupils nationally that achieved the same average point score at KS1. The national average is 0 and pupils are assessed as being above (a positive figure) or below (a negative figure) the national average. The school's progress measure is the average of all the progress scores of all the pupils in the school and the East Sussex progress measure is the average of all the progress scores of all the schools in the county.

Part 4 – Assessment of impact

4.1 Age: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

a) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the County/District/Borough?

At the May 2016 school census in East Sussex there were 37,394 primary age children attending 152 primary schools. In the Lewes District there were 6,881 primary age children attending 28 primary schools. Pells CE Primary School had 71 pupils on roll, this equated to 1.03% of the total primary age population in Lewes District and 0.19% of the county total.

Pupil numbers at Pells CE Primary School have subsequently fallen further – at the start of the 2016/17 academic year there were 53 children on roll at the school. Pells CE Primary School has suffered from very low parental preferences for many years as illustrated in the table below. Even at times of high demand for places in the town the school has been unpopular and unable to attract sufficient pupils.

	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
Published Admission Number (PAN)	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN	1st Prefs	% 1st Prefs Above/ Below PAN
20	7	-65%	6	-70%	9	-55%	11	-45%	9	-55%

For 2016/17 only nine first preferences were received by the closing date for applications. This number reduced to four after parents were given the opportunity to re-submit their preferences. Subsequently a late application was received for Pells after the National Allocation date.

The take up of reception year places from those who have attended the early years provider on site (Pippa's Group) is low and declining:

2012/13 - 4 out of 8 children (50%)

2013/14 - 5 out of 8 children (63%)

2014/15 - 8 out of 12 children (67%)




2015/16 - 6 out of 13 children (46%)


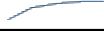
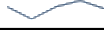
In the period 2001/02 to 2003/04 pupil numbers at the school were close to its capacity of 140. Over the last twelve years numbers have been on a downward trend – in the period 2004/05 to 2009/10 numbers were generally between 110 and 120 each year. Since 2010/11 numbers have been less than 100 and as low as 83 in 2013/14.

Over the last five academic years the percentage of primary age children living on the Landport Estate attending Pells CE Primary School has fallen from 34% (70 pupils) in January 2012 to only 23% (51 pupils) in January 2016. In contrast the percentage of children living on the Landport Estate attending other schools in

Lewes has risen from 62% (127 pupils) in January 2012 to 74% (164 pupils) in January 2016. This is illustrated in the tables below.

Pupils living on the Landport Estate as at January School Census	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Primary	204	204	210	217	222
Total	204	204	210	217	222

Primary School Pupils living on the Landport Estate, by School/ Location	Number					Trend
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Pells	70	57	51	50	51	
Other Lewes School	127	143	152	158	164	
Outside Lewes	7	4	7	9	7	
Total	204	204	210	217	222	

Primary School Pupils living on the Landport Estate, by School/ Location	Percentage					Trend
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Pells	34.3%	27.9%	24.3%	23.0%	23.0%	
Other Lewes School	62.3%	70.1%	72.4%	72.8%	73.9%	
Outside Lewes	3.4%	2.0%	3.3%	4.1%	3.2%	

Lewes schools as described above are those which fall in the three wards covering Lewes town: Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory.

b) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?

The proposal will predominantly affect children of primary school age whose families chose to send their children to the school.

Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?

The proposal will disproportionately affect children of primary school age in the local community whose families chose to send their children to the school.

c) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on different ages/age groups?

The proposal is only likely to impact on the current reception year and years 1 to 5. It does not affect year 6 who will leave the school at the end of the current academic year to move onto secondary education.

d) What actions are to/or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?

All local authorities have a statutory duty to offer all children aged 5 to 16 full-time education. Pupils at the school will be offered a place at another school in the town.

As set out in 2.2 above the Council anticipates that the number of reception year places available in Lewes (assuming Pells CE Primary School closes in August 2017) will be sufficient to meet future demand for places. A short term shortfall of places is expected in year 3 and this would be addressed through working with the other schools in the town to ensure every pupil is offered a place. This may mean that some class sizes in other schools exceed 30.

Pupils at Pells CE Primary School do not make expected levels of progress consistently enough by the time they leave Year 6. Children who start at a similar level in other schools make better progress. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 has been significantly below the national average in three of the last four years, and was significantly below again in 2016. The Council believes that children will achieve better outcomes if they attend other schools.

e) Provide details of the mitigation.

Mitigation is in place to ensure that all pupils will be offered a place at another school. Asking schools to exceed PAN is a strategy adopted in other parts of the county where there is pressure on places but the level of demand does not justify the creation of bulge classes. Forecasts indicate that this strategy would only need to be in place for a relatively short period of time until the larger cohorts leave the primary phase. It should be noted that there is no class size legislation in Key Stage 2 which limits class sizes to 30 pupils.

Free transport would be provided to eligible children if appropriate.

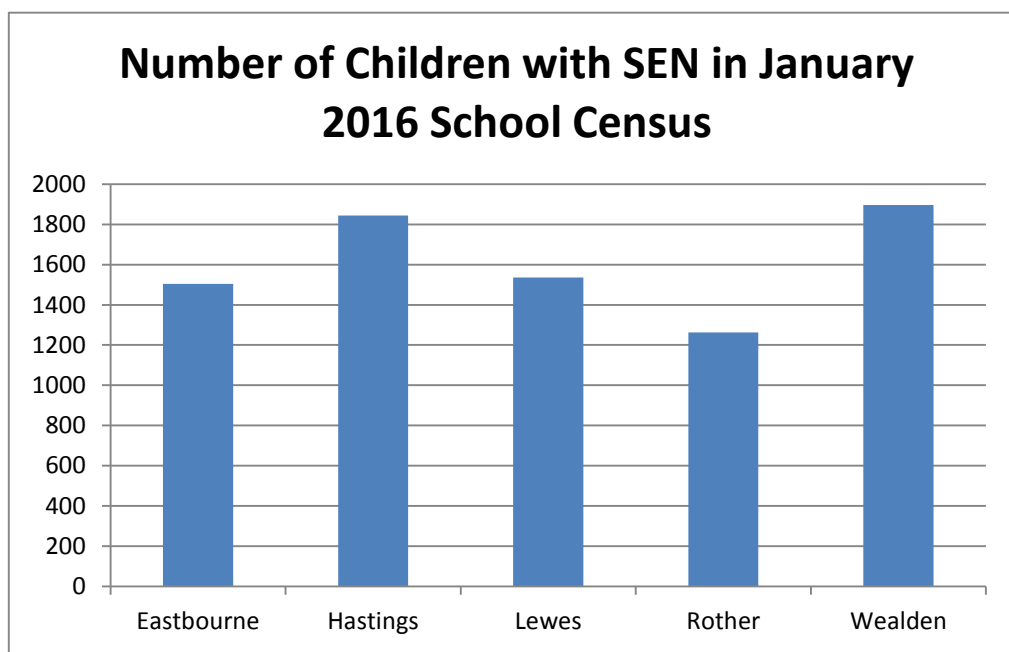
f) How will any mitigation measures be monitored?

The Council regularly reviews its pupil forecasts to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet demand and if necessary takes action to address any shortfalls in places in line with its statutory responsibilities.

4.2 Disability: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

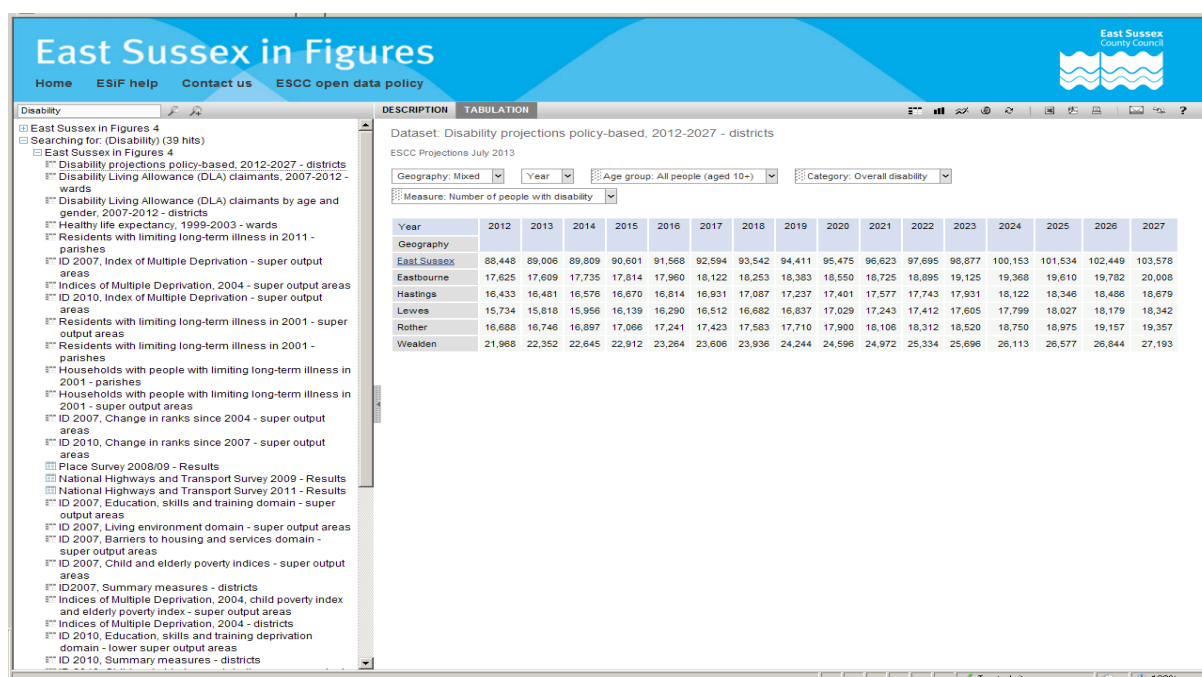
a) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the County /District/Borough?

The following chart shows the number of children recorded as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the January 2016 school census (children attending East Sussex maintained primary schools and academies). District/ Borough information relates to the pupil's home address as reported in the January 2016 school census.



In East Sussex there were 8,042 children recorded as having Special Educational Needs in the January 2016 school census. The figure for Lewes District was 1,536.

Disability projections published on East Sussex in Figures (ESiF) in July 2013 put the total number of people with a disability in East Sussex at 89,006 for 2013. The figure for Lewes District is 15,818.



b) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?

The current SEN data for Pells CE Primary School shows that the percentage of SEN pupils at the school is **30.0% (27 out of 90)**. This is significantly higher in comparison to the % average in East Sussex schools of **12.5%**

- c) Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?**

The data indicates that Pells CE Primary School is significantly over-represented by pupils with this characteristic.

- d) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on people who have a disability?**

Considering the data children with SEN could potentially be disproportionately affected by the proposal. However, data on pupil outcomes show that this cohort of pupils achieve better at other schools in the town. This leads us to believe that there will be a positive impact on this proposal on the educational outcomes of this cohort.

- e) What actions are to/ or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?**

Pells CE Primary School is a mainstream school. There is no specific provision on the site that is recognised by the Council as reserved for pupils with SEN. All mainstream schools are required to meet the individual needs of all their pupils including those with SEN and disability. All schools in the area want all children to thrive and have access to a range of support to help with their needs. This would be the case for children moving from Pells CE Primary School and all schools would be expected to provide the same level of care as that provided at Pells CE Primary School. Outcomes for children with similar needs are better in other schools.

- f) Provide details of any mitigation.**

Should the proposal to close Pells CE Primary School be approved the Council would work closely with receiving schools to ensure appropriate transition arrangements would be made so that any potential adverse impacts on pupils affected would be mitigated.

The Council and affected schools have a duty to support appropriate transition arrangements and the Council would take all practical steps to ease the transition for pupils, most especially for vulnerable learners and those with SEN. Were Pells CE Primary School to close the Council is confident that teaching staff at other schools would manage the transition of any pupils to their new school. These circumstances are not unusual in that schools regularly manage in-year admissions, though it is recognised that there will be a significant number of pupils making the transition at any one time, including a number of pupils with SEN. Therefore additional support will be in place for the transition arrangements as detailed below.

Should the proposal be implemented the Council would work with pupils, their parents and the relevant schools to make appropriate transition arrangements for pupils. Relevant families would be consulted about any specific potential impacts on individuals; for instance, because of loss of support networks or the need to replicate reasonable adjustments made to accommodate disabled children, and we would ensure that appropriate individual arrangements are made where this is necessary to avoid potential adverse impacts. Transfer to a larger school could potentially provide more flexibility of resource to support pupil's needs.

g) How will any mitigation measures be monitored?

The Council will closely monitor the transition of the pupils to their new schools through regular monitoring arrangements already in place.
All schools have to report on the outcomes of all pupils, including those with SEN.
The Council will continue to monitor regularly the outcomes at all schools for these pupils.

4.3 Ethnicity: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

Race categories are: Colour. E.g. being black or white, Nationality e.g. being a British, Australian or Swiss citizen, Ethnic or national origins e.g. being from a Roma background or of Chinese Heritage

a) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the County /District/Borough?

The vast majority of pupils (86.7%) according to the January 2016 school census are of White British Heritage. This is broadly in line with that of the population across the County based on the 2011 census. 10.2% of Lewes District's school population is Black and Minority Ethnic (BME). Of the 84 pupils attending Pells CE Primary School in January 2016 where ethnicity is known, 7.1% (1 in 14 pupils) are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Data for Pells CE Primary School indicates that the percentage of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) is 1.3% (years 1-6). This is lower than the East Sussex overall of 5.5% (Source January 2016 school census).

b) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?

BME children are not over-represented at Pells CE Primary School and as such will not be disproportionately affected by the proposal

c) Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?

We do not believe that people with the protected characteristic will be more affected by the proposal than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic.

d) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on those who are from different ethnic backgrounds?

N/A

e) What actions are to/ or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?

N/A

f) Provide details of any mitigation.

N/A

g) How will any mitigation measures be monitored?

N/A

4.4 Gender/Transgender: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact

a) How is this protected characteristic target group reflected in the County/District/Borough?

The percentage of pupils attending the school who are male is **46.7%** and female **53.3%**. This compares to the East Sussex figures of male **51.5%** and female **48.5%** (Source: January 2016 school census).

Should the current proposals be implemented, the Council would work with the current members of staff, including teaching and support staff in line with the Council's 'Managing Change Policy'. The Council would seek to minimise any compulsory redundancies as a result of the closure. If there are any school-based vacancies in East Sussex that are of interest to those staff at risk of redundancy, colleagues in Personnel and Training would liaise with the school(s) regarding the availability of staff to fill the vacancy, by seeking the agreement of the school to participate in the redeployment process, or at least offer an interview to a member of staff at risk of redundancy who meets the essential criteria of the person specification. For vacancies within the Council, other than in schools there is a mechanism for staff at risk of redundancy to join the redeployment register.

How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?

The following chart shows the gender breakdown of Pells CE Primary School by class (Source: January 2016 school census).

Class	Year Groups	Numbers		%	
		F	M	F	M
Robins	R	6	8	42.9	57.1
Kingfisher	1 & 2	15	7	68.2	31.8
Woodpecker	3 & 4	11	15	42.3	57.7
Puffins	5 & 6	16	12	57.1	42.9

b) Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?

We do not believe that people with the protected characteristic will be more affected by the proposal than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic.

c) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on different genders?

N/A

- d) **What actions are to/ or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?**

N/A

- e) **Provide details of any mitigation.**

N/A

- f) **How will any mitigation measures be monitored?**

N/A

4.5 Marital Status/Civil Partnership: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

- a) **How is this protected characteristic target group reflected in the County/District/Borough?**

We do not consider marital status/civil partnership characteristics to be relevant to the proposal.

- b) **How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?**

N/A

- c) **Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?**

N/A

- d) **What is the proposal, project or service's impact on people who are married or same sex couples who have celebrated a civil partnership?**

N/A

- e) **What actions are to/ or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?**

N/A

- f) **Provide details of any mitigation.**

N/A

- g) **How will any mitigation measures be monitored?**

N/A

4.6 Pregnancy and maternity: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

- a) **How is this protected characteristic target group reflected in the County/District/Borough?**

We do not consider pregnancy and maternity characteristics to be relevant to the proposal.

- b) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?**

N/A

- c) Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?**

N/A

- d) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on pregnant women and women within the first 26 weeks of maternity leave?**

N/A

- e) What actions are to/ or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?**

N/A

- f) Provide details of the mitigation**

N/A

- g) How will any mitigation measures be monitored?**

N/A

4.7 Religion, Belief: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

- a) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the County/District/Borough?**

Pells CE Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled school. The following denominational schools are situated within the Lewes area.

Iford & Kingston CE Primary School
Southover CE Primary School, Lewes
South Malling CE Primary School, Lewes
St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes

- b) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?**

Pells CE Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled School. Voluntary Controlled schools are managed in the same way as community schools but have historically been linked to a church. The Council is responsible for school admissions and decides how pupils are admitted in the same way as community schools.

- c) Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?**

The proposal will predominantly affect children whose families chose to send their children to a denominational school.

d) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on the people with different religions and beliefs?

The Council does not believe the proposal will have a negative impact on the diversity of provision and the balance of denominational provision in the area where Pells CE Primary School to close on 31 August 2017. In the 2017/18 academic year there would be 1040 places at Church schools in the local area and it is estimated that there would be approximately 932 children on roll at those schools. This would leave 108 spare places to accommodate the 53 children currently on roll at the school should every parental preference be for a faith place.

The church schools in the local area are:

Iford & Kingston CE Primary School
Southover CE Primary School, Lewes
South Malling CE Primary School, Lewes
St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes

e) What actions are to/ or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?

Should the proposed closure of the school be approved the school would remain open until 31 August 2017.

Were closure approved, arrangements would be made for parents/carers to apply for a place at an alternative school in the local area, including other denominational schools. Parents/carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would like their child/ren to attend. Parents/carers would be offered a school place for their child/ren, either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form, or if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child's home where a place is available. It should be noted that parents have a right to express a preference for a school, not to choose which school their child/ren attend.

The Council will try to meet parents/carers' preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places will be made in line with the admissions policy as set out in the school admissions booklet which is available on the East Sussex website

<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/>

f) Provide details of any mitigation.

Free transport would be provided to eligible children if appropriate.

g) How will any mitigation measures be monitored?

The Council regularly reviews its pupil forecasts to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet demand and if necessary takes action to address any shortfalls in places in line with its statutory responsibilities.

4.8 Sexual Orientation - Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Heterosexual: Testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

a) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the County/District/Borough?

We do not consider sexual orientation characteristics to be relevant to the proposal.

b) How is this protected characteristic reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?

N/A

c) Will people with the protected characteristic be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic?

N/A

d) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on people with differing sexual orientation?

N/A

e) What actions are to/ or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?

N/A

f) Provide details of the mitigation

N/A

g) How will any mitigation measures be monitored?

N/A

4.9 Other: Additional groups/factors that may experience impacts - testing of disproportionate, negative, neutral or positive impact.

a) How are these groups/factors reflected in the County/District/Borough?

As at the January 2016 School Census, **63.3%** of Pells CE Primary School pupils are Ever6FSM in comparison to **22.7%** of all pupils in East Sussex maintained schools. A pupil who is described as 'Ever6FSM' means that within the last 6 years the pupil has at some point been eligible for receiving Free School Meals (FSM).

b) How is this group/factor reflected in the population of those impacted by the proposal, project or service?

The data indicates that there is a significant **over representation** of Ever6FSM pupils at Pells CE Primary School.

- c) Will people within these groups or affected by these factors be more affected by the proposal, project or service than those in the general population who are not in those groups or affected by these factors?**

Children from poorer socio economic backgrounds will be disproportionately affected.

- d) What is the proposal, project or service's impact on the factor or identified group?**

Data on pupil outcomes show that this cohort of pupils achieve better at other schools in the town. This leads us to believe that there will be a positive impact on this proposal on the educational outcomes of this cohort.

Those with the protected characteristics may incur additional travel costs or uniform costs as a result of having to change school.

- e) What actions are to / or will be taken to avoid any negative impact or to better advance equality?**

Free transport would be provided to eligible children.

There is no uniform grant from the Council however many schools make special arrangements for pupils entitled to Free School Meals. The availability of a uniform grant at other schools will be investigated should the decision be taken to close the school.

- f) Provide details of the mitigation.**

As in e) above.

The Council and affected schools have a duty to support appropriate transition arrangements and the Council would take all practical steps to ease the transition for pupils, most especially for vulnerable learners, including those who are EverFSM. Were Pells CE Primary School to close the Council is confident that teaching staff at other schools would manage the transition of any pupils to their new school. These circumstances are not unusual in that schools regularly manage in-year admissions, though it is recognised that there will be a significant number of pupils making the transition at any one time, including a number of pupils from the EverFSM cohort. Therefore additional support will be in place for the transition arrangements as detailed below.

Should the proposal be implemented the Council would work with pupils, their parents and the relevant schools to make appropriate transition arrangements for pupils. Relevant families would be consulted about any specific potential impacts on individuals; for instance, because of loss of support networks, and we would ensure that appropriate individual arrangements are made where this is necessary to avoid potential adverse impacts

All schools have a duty to ensure appropriate provision for pupils who are EverFSM and schools receive specific funding (the pupil premium) to support these pupils. Transfer to a larger school could potentially provide more flexibility of resource to support pupil's needs. Outcomes for EverFSM pupils are good at other schools.

g) How will any mitigation measures be monitored?

The Council will closely monitor the transition of the pupils to their new schools through regular monitoring arrangements already in place.

All schools have to report on the outcomes of all pupils, including those who are EverFSM. The Council will continue to monitor the outcomes at all schools for these pupils.

4.10 Human rights - Human rights place all public authorities – under an obligation to treat you with fairness, equality, dignity, respect and autonomy. **Please look at the table below to consider if your proposal, project or service may potentially interfere with a human right.**

Articles	
A2	Right to life (e.g. pain relief, suicide prevention)
A3	Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment (service users unable to consent, dignity of living circumstances)
A4	Prohibition of slavery and forced labour (e.g. safeguarding vulnerable adults)
A5	Right to liberty and security (financial abuse)
A6 &7	Rights to a fair trial; and no punishment without law (e.g. staff tribunals)
A8	Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence (e.g. confidentiality, access to family)
A9	Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (e.g. sacred space, culturally appropriate approaches)
A10	Freedom of expression (whistle-blowing policies)
A11	Freedom of assembly and association (e.g. recognition of trade unions)
A12	Right to marry and found a family (e.g. fertility, pregnancy)
Protocols	
P1.A1	Protection of property (service users property/belongings)
P1.A2	Right to education (e.g. access to learning, accessible information)
P1.A3	Right to free elections (Elected Members)

Part 5 – Conclusions and recommendations for decision makers

5.1 Summarise how this proposal/policy/strategy will show due regard for the three aims of the general duty across all the protected characteristics and ESCC additional groups.

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- Foster good relations between people from different groups

5.2 Impact assessment outcome Based on the analysis of the impact in part four mark below ('X') with a summary of your recommendation.

X	Outcome of impact assessment	Please explain your answer fully
	A No major change – Your analysis demonstrates that the policy/strategy is robust and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.	<p>The proposed closure of the school is appropriate on the basis of concerns over the long term sustainability of the school, in terms of its capacity to secure and maintain improvements in standards and in the context of declining popularity and financial viability. The proposed closure would have a positive impact on the educational outcomes of all children including those pupils with SEN and in the Ever6FSM cohort.</p> <p>All children displaced by the closure of Pells CE Primary School would be accommodated at other schools without the immediate need to provide additional places.</p> <p>Any potential negative impact on children, including those with SEN and those who are Ever6FSM, who are significantly over-represented in the cohort, as a result of having to transfer to another school would be mitigated by putting in place effective transition support for pupils.</p> <p>Children who start at a similar level in other schools make better progress. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that we have the same level of ambition for children currently at Pells CE Primary School.</p>
X	B Adjust the policy/strategy – This involves taking steps to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential effect.	
	C Continue the policy/strategy - This means adopting your proposals, despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate	
	D Stop and remove the policy/strategy – If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you will want to consider stopping the policy/strategy altogether. If a policy/strategy shows unlawful discrimination it <i>must</i> be removed or changed.	

5.3 What equality monitoring, evaluation, review systems have been set up to carry out regular checks on the effects of the proposal, project or service?

The Council has a clear schedule for regular monitoring of schools, and the outcomes achieved by all pupils, including outcomes for those with SEN and EverFSM.

5.4 When will the amended proposal, proposal, project or service be reviewed?

The proposal has been reviewed in light of feedback from each consultation period. No further review is anticipated following a final decision on the proposal by Cabinet.

Date completed:	September 2016	Signed by (person completing)	Gary Langford
		Role of person completing	Place Planning Manager
Date:	September 2016	Signed by (Manager)	Jessica Stubbings

Part 6 – Equality impact assessment action plan

If this will be filled in at a later date when proposals have been decided please tick here and fill in the summary report.

☐

The table below should be completed using the information from the equality impact assessment to produce an action plan for the implementation of the proposals to:

1. Lower the negative impact, and/or
2. Ensure that the negative impact is legal under anti-discriminatory law, and/or
3. Provide an opportunity to promote equality, equal opportunity and improve relations within equality target groups, i.e. increase the positive impact
4. **If no actions fill in separate summary sheet.**

Please ensure that you update your service/business plan within the equality objectives/targets and actions identified below:

Area for improvement	Changes proposed	Lead Manager	Timescale	Resource implications	Where incorporated/flagged? (e.g. business plan/strategic plan/steering group/DMT)

6.1 Accepted Risk

From your analysis please identify any risks not addressed giving reasons and how this has been highlighted within your Directorate:

Area of Risk	Type of Risk? (Legal, Moral, Financial)	Can this be addressed at a later date? (e.g. next financial year/through a business case)	Where flagged? (e.g. business plan/strategic plan/steering group/DMT)	Lead Manager	Date resolved (if applicable)

SCRUTINY REVIEW BOARD COMMENTS TO CABINET

Rodmell Church of England Primary School and Pells Church of England Primary School
Review Board – 4 July 2016.

Membership of the Review Board:

Councillors Kathryn Field (Chair), Stephen Shing, Peter Charlton, Kim Forward, Roy Galley, Alan Shuttleworth and Francis Whetstone and representing the Church of England Diocese, Dr Ann Holt.

Review Board Comments for inclusion in report to Cabinet.

No.	Comment	Response
1	Rodmell Church of England Primary School.	The majority of the Review Board members agreed that it would be appropriate to defer the proposed closure of Rodmell Church of England Primary School for a year whilst the Governing Body and School Leadership team rigorously explore the option for partnership working.
2	Pells Church of England Primary School.	<p>Having listened to the evidence put before them, the Review Board were evenly split in their views on the emerging plan for Pells CE Primary School. Four of the eight Members of the Board accepted the Council's position that there is sufficient evidence to support the view that the school should be closed.</p> <p>However, four Members were concerned as to whether there would be a sufficient number of school places available in Lewes should the Pells CE Primary School close. In reaching this view, these Board Members were concerned whether the Council's forecast for future demand for school places might not be accurate, especially taking into account the impact of proposed developments in the area.</p> <p>Some Members of the Board expressed the view that there was merit in exploring the 'Farm School' option. The Board also agreed that if the school were to stay open, further significant work would need to be done on changing the perception amongst local people of the school, so that it could attract more preferences from local families.</p>
3	General comment relating to both proposals.	The Review Board agreed that these proposals needed sensitive handling by the Council and that clear reasoning should be provided to the public explaining the reasons for any decisions taken regarding the futures of both schools. This would be especially important if Cabinet made different decisions about the futures of these two schools.