

Report to: **Lead Member for Resources**

Date: **17 October 2017**

By: **Chief Operating Officer**

Title of report: **Ninfield CE Primary School New Lease**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to grant a new Lease of land adjacent to Ninfield CE Primary School**

RECOMMENDATION

The Lead Member for Resources is recommended to delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to grant a new Lease of land adjacent to Ninfield CE Primary School

1 Background

1.1 Ninfield CE Primary School was completed in 1853 under auspices of the National Society for Promoting Religious Education. The school was subsequently extended in 1881 to accommodate infants. Through the Education Act 1944, the school provision became the responsibility of the Local Education Authority in conjunction with the Diocese of Chichester.

1.2 The school was extended again in 1963 following the closure of the nearby Hooe Primary School. A timber classroom was constructed in 1987 to provide additional teaching accommodation, which was replaced in 1995 by a mobile classroom.

1.3 To accommodate the mobile classroom, a lease of the adjoining land was granted by Ninfield Parish Council. The lease was renewed in 2005 for ten years, but having now expired, the term rolls on an annual basis, until negotiations for a new agreement conclude.

1.4 In seeking planning permission to retain the mobile classroom, ESCC Planning Committee indicated that consent would likely be withheld unless progress was made towards replacing the mobile classroom with a masonry building. Furthermore the useful life of the mobile classroom has also expired, and the Parish Council are unwilling to extend the existing lease.

1.5 Children's Services have therefore instructed the Capital Projects team to construct modern classroom accommodation, for which a new lease will be required of the adjoining recreation ground to accommodate the extended playground.

2 Supporting information

2.1 Extension of the school site is constrained by a lack of available land in the vicinity. Furthermore the Parish Council has deemed it inappropriate to transfer any adjoining land by way of a freehold sale to the County Council.

2.2 The Parish Council are willing to extend the area currently let by the County Council for a period of 50 years at £3,275 per annum. The annual rent would increase to £3,925 per annum after five years, with rent reviews every five years thereon to fall in-line with inflation. ESCC would need to meet the Parish Council's

legal fees in preparation of the Lease. There will be flexibility for ESCC to break the agreement upon closure of the school, or assign the lease upon conversion to an academy.

2.3 The site to be leased is shown edged black on the attached plan at Appendix 1, comprising 0.47 acres (0.19 ha) and will contain the classroom extension and a Multi-Use Games Area. The area demised in the existing lease is hatched black.

2.4 Construction of the classroom extension and a Multi-Use Games Area for the school will cost approximately £1.2 million and is funded from an allocation in the current (2018 – 2023) Capital Programme.

2.5 A formal consultation was held with the Parish Council and the village of Ninfield. The Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Education Needs and Disability have been informed and have raised no objections.

2.6 The Local Member has been informed and has raised no objections.

3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Council requires this land in order to extend the School.

3.2 It is recommended that this property is acquired by the County Council by way of a long Lease and negotiation for the Lease delegated to the Chief Operating Officer.

KEVIN FOSTER Chief Operating Officer

Contact Officer: Nathan Whittington
Telephone: 01273 336842
Email: nathan.whittington@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Bill Bentley