

Report to: **Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability**
Date: **22 January 2018**
By: **Director of Children's Services**
Title of report: **Proposed expansion of Willingdon Community School**
Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to expand Willingdon Community School from 1000 places to 1200 places with effect from 1 September 2020**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Lead Member is recommended to approve the expansion of Willingdon Community School from 1000 places to 1200 places effective from 1 September 2020.

This recommendation is contingent upon:

- 1) the Council consulting on, and the Lead Member determining, an increase to the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) from 200 to 240 effective from 1 September 2020, and**
 - 2) planning permission for the enlargement of the premises being granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990(a).**
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1. Background

1.1 In Eastbourne pupil forecasts indicate that Year 7 intakes to secondary schools will begin to exceed the overall Published Admission Number (PAN) across the six schools from the early 2020s. Additional secondary school capacity will be required to meet the increased demand for places in Eastbourne. The Council is in regular communication with the secondary schools in Eastbourne to ensure sufficient capacity will be available to meet demand for places early in the next decade.

1.2 Demand for school places at Willingdon Community School is predicted to grow as a result of recent and planned housing developments. In excess of 2,000 new dwellings are planned in the area the school serves during the period to 2027/28. In addition, there is an outline planning application for a further 1,100 dwellings at Mornings Mill Farm, Willingdon. At the moment this proposed development is not included within our pupil forecasts as it is a non-allocated site in the emerging Wealden Local Plan. If permitted, the development will put further pressure on places at Willingdon Community School which is already predicted to be over-subscribed.

1.3 In recent years the number of children and young people living in the Willingdon Community School place planning area has generally exceeded the number of places available at the school in its year of intake (Year 7). Some children/young people living in the area attend schools in Eastbourne and a small number (seven in the previous academic year) travel to St Richard's Catholic College in Bexhill. As a result, Willingdon Community School has been able to keep to its PAN of 200 up until now. However, future forecasts indicate that intake numbers will significantly exceed the school's PAN in the future as a result of higher numbers coming through the local primary schools and as further housing developments are completed and occupied.

1.4 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient places to meet demand and is therefore proposing to expand Willingdon Community School to create additional permanent capacity. **Appendix 1** sets out the factors the Lead Member should take into consideration before reaching a final decision on whether to approve the proposal.

2. Supporting information

2.1 In accordance with the prescribed process established by the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 the Council consulted over a 4 week period between 8 September and 6 October 2017 on a proposal to expand Willingdon Community School from 1000 places to 1200 places, increasing the published admission number (PAN) from 200 to 240 with effect from 1 September 2020.

2.2 On 30 October 2017 the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability considered feedback from the consultation and approved the publication of statutory notices. The Lead Member report can be viewed by following the link under 'background documents' below.

2.3 The statutory notice was published in the Eastbourne Herald on Friday 24 November 2017. The notice was also posted at the entrances to the school. The notice and full proposal were posted on the Council's website. A copy of the notice and full proposal is available using the link under 'background documents' below.

2.4 Publication of the statutory notice was followed by a 4-week representation period, when comments or objections could be made to the Local Authority. By the end of the representation period three responses had been received. One respondent is against the proposal in its current form, and believes that due process has not been followed and that the expansion of a secondary faith school in Bexhill should be part of the solution. Another respondent raised the option of re-building Willingdon Community School on a new site. The Council's response to each of the representations is detailed in **Appendices 2, 3 and 4**. The Council does not consider that either option offers a viable alternative solution that meets the identified need in the Willingdon Community School place planning area.

3. Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 The Lead Member 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) was undertaken as part of the consultation process to identify the equality implications of this proposal and any appropriate mitigation. The EqIA was attached to the Lead Member report on 30 October 2017. No new information became available during the representation period therefore no changes are required to the EqIA.

4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

4.1 The majority of respondents to the initial consultation support the proposal to expand Willingdon Community School. Those in favour recognise the need for additional capacity at Willingdon Community School linked to recent and planned housing developments in the local area. Those who raised concerns about the proposal did so generally for the following reasons: traffic and parking, loss of playing field space and the impact on the existing building, in particular corridors and circulation. These issues would be addressed through the detailed design stage undertaken as part of the planning permission process.

4.2 The Council does not believe the representations made in the period following the publication of the statutory notice raise any issues which would change the recommended proposal.

4.3 In conclusion, the Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet demand for school places and is proposing to expand Willingdon Community School to create additional capacity to serve the new housing developments in the area. The Lead Member is therefore recommended to approve the expansion of Willingdon Community School from 1000 places to 1200 places effective from 1 September 2020.

This recommendation is contingent upon:

- a) the Council consulting on, and the Lead Member determining, an increase to the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) from 200 to 240 effective from 1 September 2020, and
- b) planning permission for the enlargement of the premises being granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990(a).

STUART GALLIMORE

Director of Children's Services

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Stephen Shing

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report and minute from 30 October 2017 Lead Member meeting:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=456&MId=3097&Ver=4>

Notice and full proposal for the proposed expansion of Willingdon Community School:

<https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrens-services/proposed-expansion-of-willingdon-community-school/>

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Factors to be considered before reaching a final decision on the proposal

Appendix 2 – Representation from the Diocese of Chichester

Appendix 3 – Representation from Willingdon and Jevington Parish Council

Appendix 4 – Representation from the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

Factors which the Lead Member should consider before reaching a decision on the proposal to expand Willingdon Community School

1.1	Are the proposals related to other published proposals?	The proposal to expand Willingdon Community School is not related to other published proposals.
1.2	Is conditional approval being sought for the proposal?	Approval should be contingent upon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Council consulting on, and the Lead Member determining, an increase to the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) from 200 to 240 effective from 1 September 2020, and planning permission for the enlargement of the premises being granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990(a).
1.3	Was a statutory consultation carried out prior to the publication of notices?	A 4-week period of consultation was carried out between 8 September and 6 October 2017. A summary analysis of the consultation is included in the background documents to this report.
1.4	Did the published notice comply with statutory requirements?	The notice complied with statutory requirements as set out in 2.1 above.
1.5	How will the proposal affect education standards and diversity of provision?	Willingdon Community School was rated 'good' at its last Ofsted inspection in June 2017. The school is popular and is regularly over-subscribed.
1.6	How will the proposal affect the proposed admission arrangements for the school?	Please refer to 1.2 above. It is proposed to increase the school's Published Admission Number from 200 to 240 effective from 1 September 2020.
1.7	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?	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was undertaken as part of the consultation process to identify the equality implications of this proposal and any appropriate mitigation. The EqIA was appended to the Lead Member report on 30 October 2017 (see background documents).</p> <p>The EqIA did not raise any particular equality issues that would affect the recommended proposal. The proposal is about providing additional secondary school places to serve the local community in response to a higher demand for places as a result of recent and planned housing developments.</p> <p>Willingdon Community School is a popular school and is regularly over-subscribed. The provision of additional places will help more local children and young people of secondary school age to attend this popular school. The Local Authority proposes to address any accessibility issues through the proposed design and construction project.</p> <p>No new information became available during the representation period therefore no changes are required to the EqIA.</p>
1.8	Will the proposal have an impact on community cohesion?	The vast majority of pupils attending Willingdon Community School (92.06%) are of White British Heritage, as recorded in the January 2017 School Census. This is slightly higher in comparison to the proportion of pupils of White British Heritage across all East Sussex state funded schools (85.98%).

		<p>7.64% of the pupils at the school were from a Black and Ethnic (BME) minority background. Across all state funded schools in the Wealden district 8.55% of the pupils is BME. Across all state funded schools in East Sussex, 11.82% of pupils are BME.</p> <p>Data for Willingdon Community School indicates that the percentage of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) is 2.31%. This is lower than the proportion of EAL pupils in all East Sussex state funded schools 4.84%.</p> <p>We believe the proposal will have a positive impact for the local community and therefore local children, as there will be more places available to meet the needs of the children in the local area, including those from different ethnic backgrounds. In future more families will be able to access this popular school.</p>
1.9	Will the proposal have an impact on travel and accessibility?	Any impact on parking and traffic congestion would be addressed through the detailed design stage undertaken as part of the planning permission process. As part of this process the Council is working closely with the Highways Authority to ensure any identified risks are mitigated.
1.10	Has capital funding been identified and secured to enable the proposals to be implemented?	Funding has been identified and secured from the Schools Basic Need allocation in the Council's approved capital programme.
1.11	Have any particular issues or objections been raised during the representation period which could directly affect the proposal?	By the end of the representation period three responses had been received. These are set out in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 below, together with the Council's response to each representation.

Representation from the Diocese of Chichester

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Please see the Diocesan response to the above consultation:

“The Diocese would like to see a discussion with other local secondary schools, to ensure that there is not over provision in one area of Eastbourne. Whilst there are identified increasing numbers by ESCC in the West of Eastbourne Polgate area, numbers have increased on the East side of Eastbourne as well.

St Catherine’s Academy is willing to expand to accommodate the increased numbers of their local feeder schools following expansion to 2FE Haven, Tollgate and Langley. There is also increasing housebuilding in this area of the town. Therefore they should be considered as they continue to be popular and oversubscribed.”

Regards

[REDACTED]

Diocese of Chichester

[REDACTED]

Council response

As referred to in 1.1 of the main report, the Council is in regular communication with secondary schools in Eastbourne, including St Catherine’s College, through the Eastbourne Area Secondary Heads meeting, to ensure there will be sufficient capacity to meet demand for places in the early part of the next decade.

A number of secondary schools in Eastbourne have resolved to increase their Published Admission Numbers (PAN) which is creating additional capacity. One of these schools is St Catherine’s College which has increased its PAN from 208 to 216 with effect from 2018/19.

The expansions of Tollgate Community Junior School and Langney School were temporary to address bulge intakes in particular years. The expansion of The Haven CE/Methodist Primary School was permanent.

Representation from Willingdon and Jevington Parish Council

Mr Stuart Gallimore
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(FAO Gary Langford, Place Planning Manager)
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EASTOURNE
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11 December 2017

Dear Sir

Statutory Notice for the proposed expansion of Willingdon Community School

I am writing on behalf of Willingdon and Jevington Parish Council in response to the Statutory Notice and with reference to our concerns in our response to the earlier public consultation stage. Members of the Council attended the recent exhibition on the proposals at the school.

You will be aware that the Council believes that it would have been better for a new purpose built facility to have been built on Mornings Mill Farm and Hindsland Playing Fields partly on land already owned by the County Council. That remains our position.

We welcome proposals for a new sports facility at our excellent Community School and improvements to the inside of the school to improve facilities and internal movement of staff and students. Whilst we will look more closely at the detail as a consultee, when the Council considers the planning application, we should point out that the new structure will clearly be seen in the foreground when looking at Willingdon from the National Park and we would expect the National Park Authority to be consulted and their views fully taken into account. The Council is likely to take the view that the new structure would benefit from some screening by trees being planted between the new build and the playing field.

The Council welcomes increased use of school facilities by the community and would like further discussion with the Education Authority and the school how best that might be facilitated. As you know the Council holds virtually all its meetings at the school and there is clearly a benefit for all by having a major school at the heart of the community rather than just in it.

As you know the Council is concerned about the amount of parking on adjacent roads by teachers and staff at the school. The Council welcomes the proposals which we understand will provide an extra 13 car park spaces beside the new sports hall and a further 15 at the rear of the school making an extra 28 parking places in all. However, it is felt that since the applicant is the County Council, as Highways Authority they have a responsibility to take this opportunity to provide for all staff to be able to park on site. We are not aware of the details of the Travel Plan to be provided with the planning application but believe that should include a strong encouragement to staff to use car sharing, public transport, cycling and walking particularly using enhanced safe routes to and from school to reduce the need to park at school. Parents and students need also to be strongly encouraged to cycle or walk to and from school.

The removal of staff from parking in Broad Road would free up that part of the road currently used by them for use by parents dropping off students and waiting to pick them up in the evening and also, for the school buses. Providing a long lay-by, taking away the verge, would facilitate this and ease traffic movements in Broad Road.

Currently, parents are clearly causing problems to residents in Church Close and Broadview Close particularly when picking up and they need to be strongly encouraged not to do so. Easier parking in Broad Road should help in that regard. The parking near to the junction with Broad Road in Coppice Avenue and Farmlands Avenue has increased and although that may not all be connected with the school, that does need to be controlled and because of those difficulties your Highways Department is currently considering extending the current waiting restrictions. Adequate parking being available on site would ease all these problems.

I should add, also, that the potential increased numbers of parents driving to the school each day has an additional affect on the Broad Road/A2270 junction which is separately affected by the proposals for changes to the A2270 and through the proposals for the possible development of Mornings Mill Farm/Hindsland Playing Fields which includes access close to this junction for a proposed 1100 houses, a primary school, business park, community facilities and a Medical Centre serving the whole of Willingdon and Polegate.

Whilst the Council wants to support the school's expansion, we feel that measures need to be taken by your Council to ease the parking difficulties and traffic movements in adjacent roads and would welcome a joint meeting with Children Services, Highways Department and school with a view to reaching an agreement how our concerns may be resolved and how the Council could best work with the school to facilitate further community use. I look forward to hearing from you further.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Keogh
Parish Clerk
Willingdon and Jevington Parish Council

Council response

As referenced in 4.1 of the main report and in 1.9 of Appendix 1, any impact on parking and traffic congestion would be addressed through the detailed design stage undertaken as part of the planning permission process. As part of this process the Council is working closely with the Highways Authority to ensure any identified risks are mitigated.

We would encourage the Parish Council to contact Willingdon Community School directly to discuss opportunities for further community use of the school site and buildings.

The Council considered the option of relocating and expanding Willingdon Community School on a new site. This option was not considered financially viable given the significant cost that would be incurred in identifying and purchasing a new site and the capital build cost.

Representation from Diocese of Arundel and Brighton



Dear Mr Gallimore

It is our understanding that the pre-statutory consultation is an opportunity to share information on the proposed expansion and to hear the views of all interested parties and that the information gathered from this consultation informs a report that will determine whether or not the proposal proceeds to the statutory stage of the school expansion process.

Further to our response to the pre-statutory consultation, we have the following comments in response to the Statutory Consultation:

We have concerns with regard to due process:

- Although the Diocese's submission to the pre-consultation was received and on time (acknowledgement of such was made on 10 October), the report setting out the responses received on the proposal to expand Willingdon Community School did not make any reference to the diocesan response, either in how respondents identified themselves or in the key issues raised by respondents. Neither was there a response provided to the diocesan comments within the report. This is despite an assurance that had been given by officers at a meeting with the Catholic and Anglican dioceses on 12 October that our comments would be taken into consideration.
- As an appendix to the report referred to above, consultation responses were listed. The list included the diocesan response. However some elements were blacked out. Why was this?
- Based on the above two points, if the report that goes to the Lead Member to determine whether or not the proposal proceeds to the statutory stage of the school expansion process does not include or ignores what an interested party has said, on what basis can the Lead Member (or others who read the report) weigh up the case to proceed or not to the next stage?
- We have seen other evidence that appears to show that a decision has already been made i.e. before the end of the statutory consultation period.

In addition, we do not believe the consultation has provided sufficient detail to back up the proposal. The Diocese has asked for this detail since the meeting with officers on 12 October. Two months later, the detail to support the proposal that we are looking for has not been provided. In the intervening two months the Diocesan Education Service has provided the Local Authority with the data the Local Authority has requested.

The Diocese raised comments during the appropriate agenda item on place planning at the East Sussex Children's Services Scrutiny Committee on 27 November 2017. Following those comments, we are grateful that the Lead Member at that Scrutiny Committee meeting suggested a meeting with the Diocese. This will take place on 9 January 2018.

In addition to the comments made above and for reference, we are re-stating below the comments made in the pre-statutory consultation so that these can be properly taken into consideration and duly addressed in the Statutory Consultation:

We are against the proposal in its current form for the following reasons:

1. Expansion at St Richard's should be part of the solution because:
 - a) The same pressures apply to St Richard's as Willingdon Community School.
As East Sussex County Council officers and members are aware, St Richard's Catholic College recruits from a wider area than most community schools. The pressures outlined for Willingdon School in the consultation document apply equally to St Richard's which recruits over of a quarter of its intake from the Eastbourne area (i.e. over 50 students a year from Eastbourne). We have attached two maps for 2016 showing where

Year 7 students at St Richard's are resident. The proportion of those living in the Eastbourne area should be noted.

- b) St Richard's Catholic College is at capacity
Last year 188 Catholics applied to St Richard's Catholic College. The current number of places is not sufficient to provide for the number of Catholics, let alone for any other children whose parents would like them to attend St Richard's. With the further housing mentioned in the consultation document that are planned in the area, the pressures on St Richard's will become even more acute.
 - c) Relative popularity of St Richard's and Willingdon
The consultation document says that Willingdon 'is a popular school and regularly oversubscribed'. However St Richard's has a considerably higher number of first preferences (last year 289 for 190 places) than Willingdon (218 first preferences against a PAN of 200).
 - d) The Council's stance on ensuring parental preference
At a meeting in summer 2106 with the then Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Cllr Bennett, the Diocese raised the point that surplus places elsewhere rather than parental preferences for St Richard's had been used as a reason not to expand St Richard's in recent years. Defending the case of taking additional pupils at South Malling when there were surplus places elsewhere in Lewes, Cllr Bennett made clear the Council's stance on ensuring parental preferences and looked forward to a submission for basic need expansion at St Richard's.
 - e) St Richard's is an outstanding school and one of the highest performing schools in East Sussex. Why is East Sussex at present not wanting to support and expand one of its best and most popular schools when that school takes a significant number of children from Eastbourne?
 - f) Despite the important principles of proportionality and diversity, East Sussex has not, despite many basic need expansions, expanded any Catholic primary or secondary schools. East Sussex should be following a balanced approach to expansion of places.
 - g) Catholic schools have helped East Sussex with bulge classes at Eastbourne and Hastings in recent years.
2. There has not been adequate consultation
- a) The consultation document does not provide any significant detail to back up the proposal.
 - b) The expansion of secondary places in Eastbourne has not been raised at recent Joint Diocese Planning Place Planning Meetings. The last reference to secondary places in Eastbourne was in the minutes of the 7 Feb 2017 meeting which said: '*Potentially PAN for the area higher than originally thought however there is capacity in the whole area. Noted that a number of schools were increasing their PAN [Gildredge House 120->144), St Catherine's College (180->224) formally 216 from 218/19), Cavendish (175->180)'*.
 - c) The Education Commissioning Plan at paragraphs 7.4.1 and 7.4.2 does make some reference to Eastbourne secondary places and exploring potential options with schools. St Richard's and the Diocese have not been included in any discussions on this prior to the consultation document being published.

Thank you for the opportunity to give our comments.

We would appreciate confirmation by return that this email has been received.

Kind regards


Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Education Service


Council response

Concerns relating to due process

The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton's response to the initial consultation was available along with all responses received to the consultation as an Appendix to the 30 October 2017 Lead Member report. All responses were taken into account in preparing the Lead Member report which led to the publication of the statutory notice.

The Lead Member report and appendices are available publically on the Council's website once published. In accordance with the data sharing and confidentiality policies of The Council, information that relates to data that is personally identifiable and/or not already in the public domain cannot be shared. Therefore the part of the Diocese's response that referred to information about other schools that was not in the public domain and information relating to pupil's areas of residence was redacted.

The Council has not yet made a final decision on the proposal. Officers have compiled a report with a recommendation for the Lead Member to make a final decision.

The Council and the Diocese have shared data and information about the proposal. The Diocese has shared information on the number of Catholic applicants to St Richards Catholic College and their home area. The Council has shared information on the number of pupils currently, and forecast in the Willingdon area.

Responses made against the proposal with regard to St Richard's Catholic College

The data provided by the Diocese does not evidence an unmet demand for Catholic places that would justify the expansion of St Richard's Catholic College rather than Willingdon Community School. In summary:

For the past five years all Catholic applicants have been admitted to St Richard's Catholic College in Year 7, with the remaining places offered to non-Catholic children. The school has not exceeded its PAN with Catholic children. In the 2017/18 admissions round, 188 catholic children applied (94% of its PAN of 200) and 182 catholic children (91% of PAN) were admitted to the school. For the 2018/19 admissions round 185 Catholic children have applied for a place at St Richard's Catholic College (92.5% of its PAN of 200). In the Council's view the data provided by the Diocese suggests there are sufficient places available at St Richard's Catholic College to meet demand for Catholic places.

St Richard's Catholic College has increased its PAN from 180 to 200 in recent years, effectively providing an additional 100 places from Year 7 to Year 11 to meet demand.

In each of the last four years only a small number of children have been admitted to St Richard's from the Willingdon Community School Place Planning area (six in 2013/14, seven in 2014/15, two in 2015/16 and seven in 2016/17).

Of the 92 families with a first preference for St Richard's Catholic College who were unsuccessful in 2017/18, 77 were from Bexhill and Hastings. Less than ten were from Eastbourne and none were from the Willingdon Community School place planning area.

The Council recognises St Richard's Catholic College as an outstanding and popular school which is regularly over-subscribed. However the information and data available to us does not show that St Richards Catholic College takes a significant number of children from the Willingdon Community School place planning area.

Allowing for the fact that St Richard's Catholic College uses distance as a tie-breaker in its admissions criteria, it is likely that non-Catholic families from Bexhill and Hastings would be offered places at the school ahead of families living in the Willingdon Community School place planning area.

Expansion of St Richard's Catholic College would most likely have an effect on children living in Bexhill and Hastings and potentially destabilise local schools, some of which are already struggling with low student numbers. By expanding St Richard's Catholic College it would create surplus places in those areas and would not address the need for places in the Willingdon Community School place planning area.

From the information detailed above the Council believes it is unlikely that the proposed expansion of Willingdon Community School will have a significant detrimental impact on numbers at St Richard's Catholic College.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure the sufficient supply of school places in areas where there is basic need. There is clear evidence of basic need in the Willingdon Community School place planning area. In three of the last four intake years there has been significantly more children living in the Willingdon Community School place planning area than there are Year 7 places at the school (200). Given the 2000+ new homes to be built in the area, there is a clear demand for additional places to be provided

at Willingdon Community School.

The Council would welcome further dialogue and sharing of data with the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton to understand its wider concerns about Catholic provision in the county.