

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: **Primary School Places in Hailsham**
 Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval for the Council to work with Hailsham Community College to lower its age range with effect from September 2019 to establish an all-through school thereby creating an additional 420 primary places (two forms of entry) to serve Hailsham.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

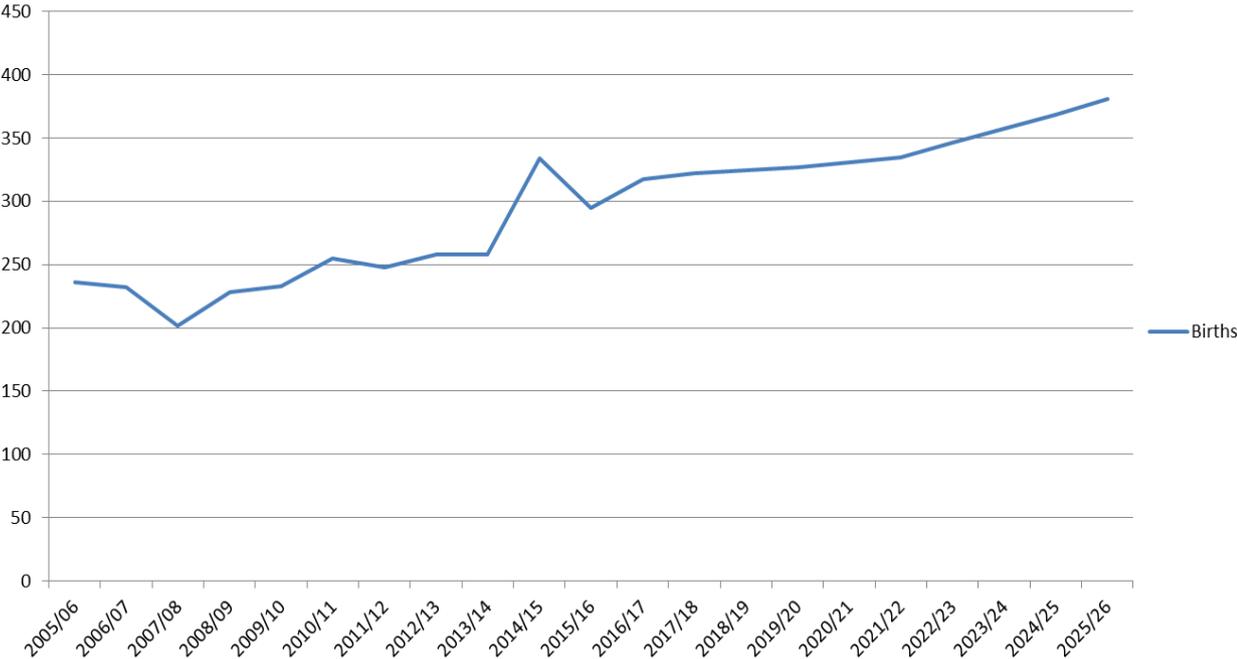
The Lead Member is recommended to approve Option 4, the Council working with Hailsham Community College to lower its age range with effect from September 2019 to establish an all-through school thereby creating an additional 420 primary places (two forms of entry) to serve north Hailsham.

1. Background

1.1 The birth rate in Hailsham has risen in recent years, linked to the significant levels of houses built in the town.

1.2 Taking account of existing housing commitments, the Wealden Local Plan envisages that around 4,000 additional new dwellings will be built in and around Hailsham in the period to 2027/28. Births are therefore expected to continue to grow in the coming years. This is illustrated in the following graph.

Hailsham Primary School Area: Live Births



Note: Live births to 2015/16, demographic projection of births from 2016/17

1.3 The Council’s pupil forecasts show that recent house building in the area will begin to put pressure on primary school places from 2019/20.

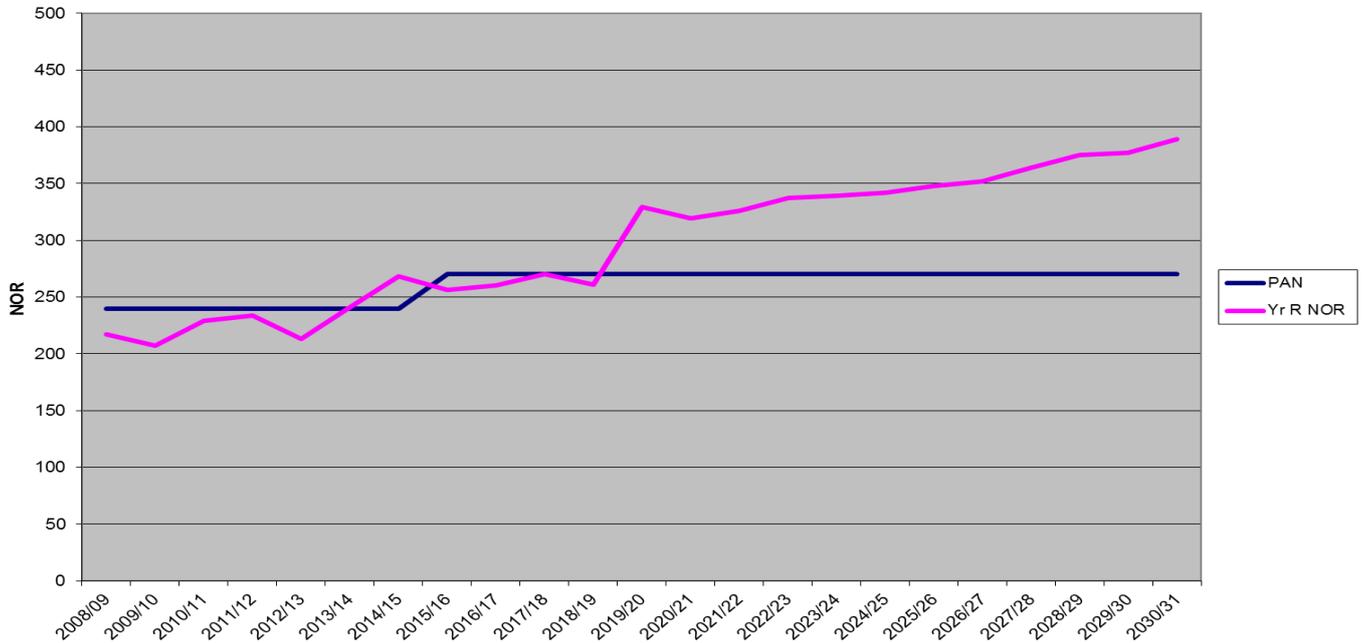
1.4 Given the impending pressure on primary school places in Hailsham, this report focusses on the need to provide an additional 420 primary places (two forms of entry, 2FE) in the town by 2019/20.

1.5 Consideration also needs to be given to the medium to long term requirement for a further 2FE primary capacity from 2022/23 and the need for 4FE additional secondary capacity in the town from 2022/23. Options for delivery of these places will be developed working in partnership with local schools, the two Dioceses and other interested parties.

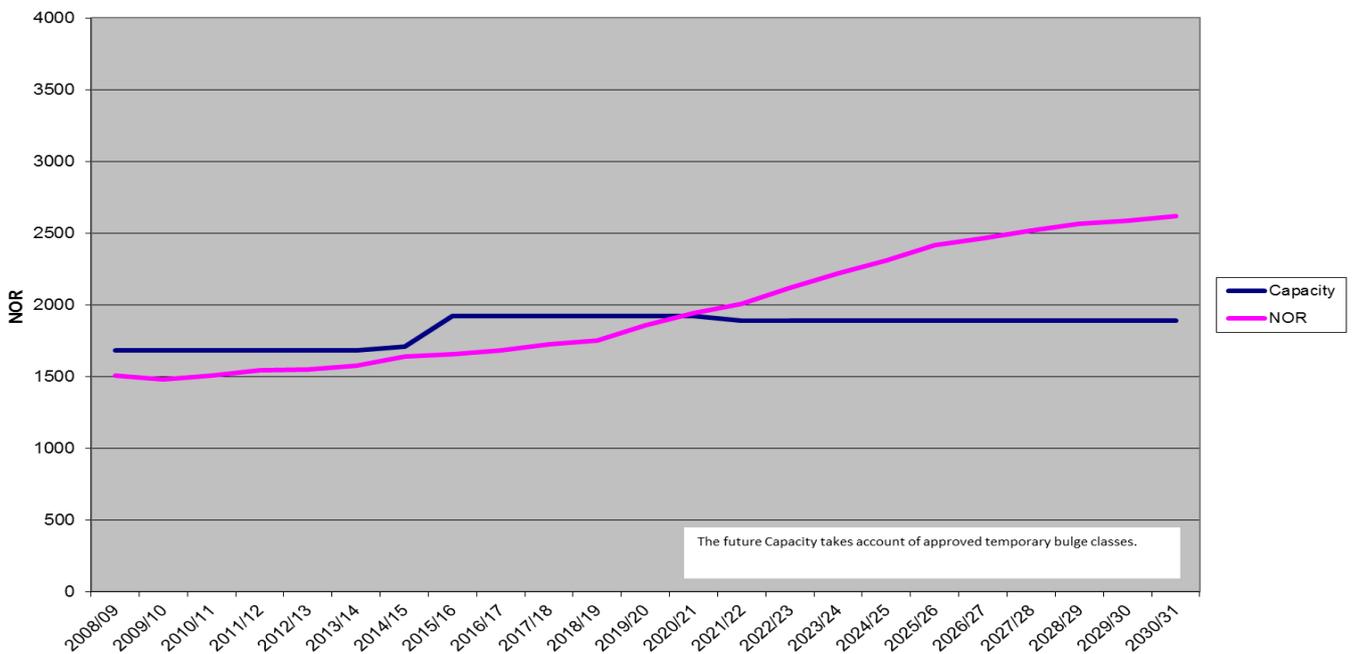
2. Supporting information

2.1 GP registration data indicates the current pupil admission number (PAN) of 270 is likely to be exceeded by around 60 Year Reception places (2FE) in 2019/20. The long term forecast is for Year Reception (Year R) intake shortfalls to eventually rise by 2027/28 to approximately 120 places (4FE). This is demonstrated in the graphs below.

Forecast Yr R Number on Roll - Hailsham Primary Schools



Forecast Number on Roll - Hailsham Primary Schools



2.2 The requirement for additional Year R places can be mapped as follows (the figures are cumulative):

- 60 additional Year R places (2FE) from 2019/20
- 90 additional Year R places (3FE) from 2022/23
- 120 additional Year R places (4FE) from 2027/28

2.3 The Council has an option agreement on land east of Park Road for new primary school provision. The Council recently met with the landowner/ developer of the site; all parties are keen to progress the transfer of the school site to the Council at the earliest opportunity. It is hoped that agreement can be reached early in 2018, as securing the site is a crucial milestone if the new school places are to be delivered on time.

2.4 The cost of building the new school would be met from the Schools Basic Need allocation in the Council's approved capital programme. The cost of purchasing the school site east of Park Road is included within this capital programme.

2.5 The Council's initial strategy for providing places to meet the demand in 2019/20 in the north of the town was to support a free school application to establish a new school. Two free school applications were submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) in 2016 – by The Kemnal Academy Trust (TKAT) and the Tenax Schools Trust – for a new 2FE primary school on the site east of Park Road. Both proposals were rejected by the DfE in 2017 placing the Council in a challenging position in terms of delivering the additional places needed within the required timescale.

2.6 In light of the unsuccessful free school applications and the current uncertainty around future free school waves, the Council urgently needed to consider other routes to creating additional primary school places in the town linked to the school site east of Park Road.

2.7 To this effect, officers met with all the Hailsham schools in Term 1 of the current academic year to share the forecast data set out above and to consider alternative options to create additional school capacity in the town. Officers also met with colleagues from the Diocese of Chichester and the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton in Term 1 to obtain their views.

2.8 The options considered were:

- Option 1: Establish a new free school through the presumption route
- Option 2: Establish a new (voluntary aided) school through a Section 11 approval
- Option 3: Relocate and enlarge an existing school
- Option 4: Create an all-through school
- Option 5: Enlarge existing schools on their current sites

2.9 **Appendices 1 to 5** set out each of the five options in more detail and consider the risks, benefits and costs of each option.

2.10 The schools and dioceses were asked to submit their comments / proposals for creating additional school capacity by the end of Term 1. Responses were received from:

- Hailsham Community College
- Hellingly Primary School
- STEP Academy Trust
- The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton
- The Diocese of Chichester
- Park Mead Primary School

2.11 All the responses have been shared with the Lead Member.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 For the reasons outlined in the Appendices 1-5, Option 4, the creation of an all-through school, is considered to offer the most benefits. This option provides the opportunity to extend existing good provision within the town, to deliver the places required on time and it can be delivered within the capital funding available.

3.2 Hailsham Community College has a demonstrated long term investment and commitment to improve provision and outcomes for children in Hailsham. The creation of an all-through school would provide the opportunity to expand provision to the primary phase, which will offer further diversity of provision, support the transition of learners from KS3 to KS4 and help improve outcomes at KS4.

3.3 Option 1 presents the risk that the new places would not be ready by September 2019. Any failure to successfully appoint a sponsor for the new school could lead to significant further delays in establishing the new school.

3.4 Option 2 would require one of the dioceses to bring forward a proposal to establish a new voluntary aided (VA) school. At this stage neither diocese has indicated they have any capital funding to support the establishment of a new VA school. No evidence has been provided by either diocese in their responses to demonstrate the demand for faith based provision in Hailsham.

3.5 Option 3, the relocation and enlargement of Hellingly Primary School, was carefully considered, but this is a more expensive option as capital funding would be required to re-provide the existing places. The additional funding required to deliver option 3 is also not available within the constraints of the current capital programme funding envelope.

3.6 Option 5 would not necessarily create provision in the right location to serve the demand for places that is expected to come from the north of Hailsham. The Council could be criticised for not exercising its option to secure the school site east of Park Road to serve the demand arising out of these housing developments.

3.7 In conclusion, the Lead Member is asked to note the options considered for creating additional primary school capacity in Hailsham and to approve Option 4, the Council working with Hailsham Community College to lower its age range with effect from September 2019 to establish an all-through school thereby creating an additional 420 primary places (two forms of entry) to serve Hailsham.

STUART GALLIMORE

Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Gary Langford, Place Planning Manager

Tel. No. 01273 481758

Email: gary.langford@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Nick Bennett, Councillor Bob Bowdler, Councillor Gerard Fox

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Option 1: Free school presumption

Appendix 2 – Option 2: Section 11 proposal

Appendix 3 – Option 3: Relocation and expansion of Hellingly Primary School

Appendix 4 – Option 4: Hailsham Community College all-through school proposal

Appendix 5 – Option 5: Expansion of schools on their existing sites

Option 1: Establish a new 2FE primary school on land east of Park Road through the free school presumption route

1 Introduction

1.1 The Education Act 2011 introduced section 6A (the free school presumption) to the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This amendment requires local authorities to seek proposals to establish an Academy (free school) where they have identified the need for a new school in an area.

1.2 In recent years the DfE has announced centrally funded free school waves where proposers could apply directly to the DfE to establish a free school. Under this route, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) generally secures the site for the new school and meets the associated capital costs.

1.3 At this stage there has been no announcement by the DfE about future free school waves and what form these might take.

1.4 In the absence of an announcement, local authorities are advised to consider using the free school presumption route, and that the responsibility for providing the site for the new school and meeting the associated capital and pre-/post-opening costs fall to the Council.

1.5 All new free school presumption proposals require the Regional School Commissioner's (RSC) approval (on behalf of the Secretary of State) as it is the Secretary of State who will enter into a funding agreement with the academy trust/sponsor. The Secretary of State must be notified of any intention to seek proposals for a new free school before applications from interested parties are sought.

1.6 The target date for establishing a new school through the presumption route is September 2020, this could be earlier if agreement on triggering the option for the school site can be reached in early 2018.

1.7 If the free school presumption does not result in a suitable proposal coming forward, a statutory competition can be held under section 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This will not require a separate application for approval, since the Secretary of State would inform the Council that approval to hold a competition is given at the same time as informing the Council that no suitable free school was identified. Running a section 7 competition would extend the timeframe for delivery of the new school.

1.8 The Diocese of Chichester has confirmed it would support a new proposal by the Tenax Schools Trust to establish a free school through the presumption route.

2 Outline costs

2.1 The estimated cost of establishing a new 2FE primary school on land east of Park Road through a free school presumption is approximately £7 million to £8 million excluding land value. The estimated cost of potentially having to provide a temporary solution for the 2019/20 academic year at existing school/s ahead of the new school being built is approximately £0.3 million to £0.5 million.

3 Benefits and risks

Benefits	Risks
Potential to bring diversity of provision to the town through a competitive process.	RSC decision to approve the free school proposer rather than Council decision.
Potential for a faith based proposal to meet identified demand from parents for a particular type of provision.	No suitable free school proposals come forward, or RSC does not approve any of the proposals, resulting in a Section 7 competition being held. Further delays to establishing the new school.
	Existing school/s would be required to admit temporary bulge classes in 2019/20 and beyond in advance of the new school being built.

Option 2: Establish a new 2FE primary school on land east of Park Road through a Section 11 proposal

1 Introduction

1.1 Under section 11 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, any proposer e.g. local authority or diocese may publish a proposal for a new school outside of the free school presumption and competitions process.

1.2 The Secretary of State's consent is not required in the case of proposals for:

- a new community or foundation primary school to replace a maintained infant and a maintained junior school;
- a new voluntary-aided school in order to meet demand for a specific type of place e.g. places to meet demand from those of a particular faith;
- a new foundation or voluntary school resulting from the reorganisation of existing faith schools in an area, including an existing faith school losing or changing its religious designation;
- a new foundation or community school, where there were no suitable free school proposals and a competition has been held but did not identify a suitable provider;
- a former independent school wishing to join the maintained sector; and
- a new LA maintained nursery school.

1.3 The proposer must be able to demonstrate to the decision-maker a clear demand for the places the new school will provide.

1.4 The Schools Adjudicator would decide local authority proposals (and cases where the local authority is involved in the Trust of a proposed foundation school). The local authority would decide proposals from other proposers.

1.5 A statutory process must be followed to establish a school under Section 11.

1.6 Either Diocese could bring forward a proposal to establish a new foundation or voluntary school under this option. The timescale for delivering a new school would not be dissimilar to that for the presumption route i.e. September 2020, assuming the school site east of Park Road can be secured in a timely manner and that any proposal for a new school is put forward in 2018.

1.6 The Diocese of Chichester has indicated an interest in establishing a new Church of England primary voluntary aided school in the north of Hailsham. The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton has not shown an interest in establishing a new primary Catholic voluntary aided school in the north of Hailsham.

2 Outline costs

2.1 The estimated cost of establishing a new 2FE primary school on land east of Park Road through a section 11 proposal is approximately £7 million to £8 million excluding land value. The estimated cost of potentially having to provide a temporary solution for the 2019/20 academic year ahead of the new school being built is approximately £0.3 million to £0.5 million.

2.2 Agreement would need to be reached on the extent to which the estimated capital costs of providing the site and building would be met by the proposers and the Council and how the proposers intend to fund their share of the costs of implementing the proposal (if any). At this stage the Diocese of Chichester has not indicated that it has any capital funding to support the establishment of a new school under this route and has not, to date, provided evidence of demand for new faith provision in the town.

3 Benefits and risks

Benefits	Risks
Potential to bring diversity of provision to the town.	Insufficient demand evidenced by proposer to justify new faith provision.
Potential for a faith based proposal to meet identified demand from parents for a particular type of provision.	The timescale in establishing the new school resulting in existing schools having to admit temporary bulge classes in 2019/20 and beyond.
Council decision rather than RSC decision.	

Option 3: Relocation and enlargement of an existing school

1 Introduction

1.1 The third option is the re-location and enlargement of an existing school. The governing body of Hellingly Primary School has, for some time, been advocating that the school is relocated to the site east of Park Road and enlarged from 210 places (1FE) to 630 places (3FE) to meet the predicted demand for places.

1.2 The school is 'good' as confirmed at its last Ofsted inspection in June 2016 with outstanding leadership and management.

1.3 In recent years the school has been regularly oversubscribed, suggesting expansion would be supported locally and would aid the school's long term sustainability in terms of its financial viability. Relocating the school to the new site would also bring it closer to the community it serves.

1.4 Enlarging the school from 1FE to 3FE is a significant increase in size and careful consideration would need to be given to whether the school has sufficient capacity to grow the school effectively and maintain standards.

1.5 STEP Academy Trust has also indicated an interest in relocating Phoenix Academy and/or White House Academy to a new site and enlarging them to create a 4FE school.

1.6 Neither Phoenix Academy or White House Academy have a current Ofsted grade, having not been inspected under STEP. Both schools' KS2 results for reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths in 2016 and 2017 were significantly below the national average. The two schools do not currently have a high level of parental preferences. Careful consideration would need to be given to whether STEP has sufficient capacity to grow the schools effectively whilst also improving standards. Relocating these schools to the new site would move the schools further away from the communities they currently serve. The current site identified on land east of Park Road could not accommodate a 4FE school so this option is not considered viable at this time.

1.7 The target date for establishing a new school through this route is September 2020, this could be earlier if agreement on triggering the option for the school site can be reached in early 2018.

2 Outline costs

2.1 The estimated cost of establishing a 3FE primary school on land east of Park Road through the relocation and enlargement of an existing school is approximately £10 million to £11 million excluding land value. The estimated cost of potentially having to provide a temporary solution for the 2019/20 academic year ahead of the new school being built is approximately £0.3 million to £0.5 million.

2.2 The cost of relocating Hellingly Primary School to the new site and enlarging it to 3FE would be significantly more expensive than simply building a new 2FE school on the site east of Park Road. The Council could potentially achieve a capital receipt from the existing Hellingly Primary School site if it were sold for residential development, desk top analysis carried out by both the Council and the Hellingly Primary School governors has indicated that any capital receipt would be less than the additional £3 million required to build a 3FE school rather than a 2FE school. There would also be a time delay in securing the capital receipt as the Hellingly Primary School site could not be sold prior to the new school being completed and occupied. Furthermore extra funding is not available within the constraints of the current capital programme funding envelope to bridge this funding gap. The current capital programme already includes funding secured from section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 contributions from developments in the Hailsham area.

3 Benefits and risks

Benefits	Risks
Replacing an existing 1FE school with a 3FE school increasing its long term viability.	Less cost effective than other options. Cost estimated to be £3 million more expansive than 2FE solution.
Expands recognised good provision.	Delays in establishing the new school result in the school having to admit temporary bulge classes in 2019/20 on its existing site. Risk of planners rejecting the need for two more temporary classrooms on the site (currently four of the eight classrooms at the school are in 'temporary' buildings).
Replaces a building originally constructed in the early 1900's and a number of 'temporary' buildings.	Does not create further diversity of provision in the town.
Council decision rather than RSC decision.	Potential destabilisation of current good provision due to the re-location and expansion.
Is likely to be a popular decision locally with existing parents and Hellingly Parish Council.	

Option 4: Creation of an all-through school with primary provision

1 Introduction

1.1 The fourth option is the creation of an all-through school. Hailsham Community College governors are interested in becoming an all-through school with a 2FE primary phase located at land east of Park Road.

1.2 The college continues to be good, as confirmed by Ofsted at its last Ofsted Inspection on 21 March 2017.

1.3 Development of primary provision would be a new undertaking for the school. Careful consideration should be given to whether the school has capacity to develop primary provision as part of its offer. The school is keen to learn from the experience of Cavendish School which became an all-through school two years ago.

1.4 One benefit of this option is that the 2FE requirement for 2019/20 could be met temporarily on the main Hailsham Community College site if needed until the new facility is ready on the site east of Park Road. This would minimise the risks of any potential delays to the build project and avoid the need for other schools to have to admit bulge intakes.

1.5 Hailsham Community College is committed to improving educational outcomes for all children in Hailsham. The RSC has indicated their support for the further development of the Hailsham Academy Trust.

2 Outline costs

2.1 The estimated cost of establishing a new 2FE primary school on land east of Park Road through Hailsham Community College becoming an all-through school is approximately £7 million to £8 million excluding land value. The estimated cost of potentially having to provide a temporary solution for the 2019/20 academic year ahead of the new school being built is approximately £0.3 million to £0.5 million.

3 Benefits and risks

Benefits	Risks
Expands recognised good provision.	RSC decision for the school to lower its age range, rather than Council decision.
Potential to support good transition between KS2 and KS3 and to have a positive impact on KS4 outcomes.	Potential destabilisation of current good provision whilst the school develops their new primary provision.
Potential to bring diversity of provision to the town.	
HCC has a demonstrated long term investment and commitment to improve provision and outcomes for children in Hailsham. Potential to bring diversity of primary provision to the town.	

Option 5: Expansion of schools on their existing sites

1 Introduction

1.1 A recent desk-top study of existing schools sites has concluded that there is scope at the following schools for expansion if required.

- Grovelands Community Primary School – from 630 places (3FE) to 840 places (4FE)
- Hawkes Farm Primary Academy – from 420 places (2FE) to 630 places (3FE)
- Phoenix Academy – from 210 places (1FE) to 420 places (2FE)

1.2 The study concluded that there is either little scope or significant challenges to expand Hellingly Primary School, Burfield Academy or White House Academy on their existing sites.

1.3 Grovelands was rated good at its last Ofsted inspection.

1.4 Neither Hawkes Farm nor Phoenix Academy has a current Ofsted grade, having not been inspected under STEP. Both schools' KS2 results for reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths in 2016 and 2017 were below the national average.

1.5 STEP Academy Trust is interested in a number of expansion options including expansion of Phoenix Academy and White House Academy on their existing sites, and possible re-configurations of the two schools to enable expansion.

1.6 Careful consideration would need to be given to whether STEP has sufficient capacity to grow the schools effectively whilst also improving standards. Neither Phoenix Academy or White House Academy are in the right location to serve the demand from the new housing in the north of the town.

2 Outline costs

2.1 The estimated cost of expanding each school by 1FE is as follows.

- Grovelands £1.8 million
- Hawkes Farm £1.6 million
- Phoenix £1.5 million

2.2 The estimated cost of potentially having to provide a temporary solution for the 2019/20 academic year ahead of the new school being built is approximately £0.3 million to £0.5 million.

3 Benefits and risks

Benefits	Risks
No land cost for school site east of Park Road.	Negative public opinion of the Council not exercising the option to purchase school site east of Park Road and not providing the new places near the new housing developments.
A more cost effective solution than establishing new provision.	Phoenix Academy is in the wrong location to meet demand for places.
Expansion of Grovelands would be a Council decision rather than a RSC decision.	Managing a number of capital projects rather than one.
	Potential destabilisation of current provision during the expansion period.
	Expansion of Hawkes Farm and Phoenix would be a RSC decision rather than Council decision.
	Does not create further diversity of

	provision in the town.
	Would not all be expansion of Ofsted recognised good provision.