

Report to: **Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability**

Date: **22 January 2020**

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

Title of report: **Proposed SEN facility at Priory School**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to establish a Special Educational Needs (SEN) specialist facility at Priory School.**

RECOMMENDATION:

The Lead Member is recommended to:

Authorise the establishment of a SEN specialist facility for up to 12 pupils at Priory School with effect from 1 September 2020, conditional upon planning permission for the enlargement of the premises being granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

1. Background and consultation

1.1 On 4 November 2019 the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability (the Lead Member) considered a report on the proposed establishment of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) specialist facility at Priory School. As described in the report, a recent review of SEN provision in the county identified a gap in specialist provision in mainstream schools for pupils with a principal need of specific learning difficulties, with associated special educational needs (e.g. anxiety and high functioning autism) in the west of the county.

1.2 There are already a number of specialist facilities for primary age pupils in the west of the county. Developing new secondary facilities in the area would allow progression for pupils and continuity of support to aid the transition of pupils from primary specialist facilities for whom a secondary facility is the most appropriate next stage. This will assist in reducing the increasing trend of transition from mainstream primary school to special secondary schools. Providing early intervention at the start of their secondary phase through a facility place will address needs and enable pupil's integration into the mainstream school.

1.3 For these reasons, the Lead Member approved the publication of a statutory proposal for the establishment of a SEN specialist facility at Priory School on 1 September 2020. The Lead Member report and minutes from 4 November 2019 can be viewed on the County Council website by following the link under 'background documents' below.

2. Statutory proposal

2.1 In accordance with the prescribed process established by the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 a statutory proposal was published on the local authority's website on 22 November 2019. A notice was published in the Sussex Express newspaper and posted at the entrances to the school to direct interested parties to the proposal on the website. The proposal was also sent to the governing board of the school.

2.2 Publication of the statutory proposal was followed by a 4-week representation period, when comments or objections could be made to the local authority. The representation period closed at midnight on 19 December 2019. By the close of the representation period no comments or objections had been received.

3. Accommodation

3.1 The local authority, working with Priory School, has identified an area of the school site on which the new facility could be built and funding is secure in the local authority's approved capital programme to implement the proposal. Planning permission would be required under under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to enlarge the premises.

4. Equality Impact Assessment

4.1 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) in determining these proposals. An Equality

Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken to identify any risks and appropriate mitigations. The findings of the EqIA can be viewed in **Appendix 1**.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 In conclusion the local authority has identified a gap in specialist provision in mainstream primary schools for pupils with a principal need of specific learning difficulties, with associated special educational needs (e.g. anxiety and high functioning autism) in the west of the county. The local authority would like to establish a specialist facility for up to 12 pupils at Priory School from 1 September 2020 to address this need, conditional upon planning permission for the enlargement of the premises being granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

5.2 The majority of respondents to the consultation supported the proposal to establish a SEN specialist facility at the school.

5.3 Before reaching a decision on whether to approve the proposal, the Lead Member should consider a number of key factors. These are set out in **Appendix 2**.

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LOCAL MEMBERS Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS <https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=456&MId=4032&Ver=4>

APPENDICES Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment Appendix 2 – Factors to be considered by the decision maker

