

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

Date: **24 June 2016**

Title of the report: **Proposed expansion of Cradle Hill Community Primary School**

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

Purpose of Report: **To seek the Lead Member's conditional approval to expand Cradle Hill Community Primary School from 420 places to 630 places effective from 1 September 2017**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Lead Member is recommended to approve the expansion of Cradle Hill Community Primary School from 420 places to 630 places effective from 1 September 2017, conditional upon planning permission for the enlargement of the premises is granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 1992 by 31 December 2016.**

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**1. Background:**

1.1 On 21 March 2016 the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability approved the publication of statutory notices in relation to a proposal to permanently enlarge Cradle Hill Community Primary School from September 2017. The school would grow from 420 places to 630 places. This would provide an additional 210 primary places (ages 4-11) in the Seaford area.

1.2 The proposal is in response to an increase in demand for reception places as a result of a rising birth rate in Seaford. In recent years, births in Seaford have risen from 167 in academic year 2006/07 to 214 in 2010/11 and 216 in 2012/13. The emerging Lewes District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy provides for approximately 600 new homes in the town in the period 2010 to 2030. As a result, an ongoing shortfall of school places is forecast in Seaford. Cradle Hill Community School is a popular school which has regularly been oversubscribed in recent years. Approximately 94% of children attending the school live in Seaford with only 6% attending from outside the community area (the majority coming from Newhaven).

1.3 The Statutory Notice was published in the Sussex Express on Friday 22 April 2016. In addition, the Notice was posted at the entrance to the school and in the local library. The full proposal was also posted on the East Sussex County Council website. A copy of the Statutory Notice as it appeared in the Sussex Express can be found in **Appendix 1**.

1.4 Publication of the Statutory Notice was followed by a 4-week representation period, when comments or objections could be made to the Local Authority.

**2. Supporting information:**

2.1 Proposed changes to the organisation of maintained schools have to follow a prescribed process established by the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. This process complied with these requirements.

2.2 Before reaching a decision on whether to approve the proposal, the Lead Member should consider a number of factors. These are set out in **Appendix 2** of this report, together with the types of decision that can be taken.

2.3 On 22 March 2016, Councillor Lambert presented a petition containing 84 signatures to the Chairman of the Council. The text of the petition was:

*We the undersigned object to the current proposal to expand Cradle Hill School. We ask the County Council to:*

- 1. Hold an open consultation with local residents*
- 2. Enable residents to see and comment on the plans*
- 3. Ensure that no expansion is undertaken until a robust and sustainable traffic management and parking plan is in place.*

2.4 A written response was sent to the lead petitioner on 4 April 2016 (**see Appendix 3**). As provided for in the Council's Constitution, a spokesperson for the petitioners has been invited to attend the meeting and address the Lead Member for up to 5 minutes in support of the petition.

2.5 A Public Information Event was held at the school on Tuesday 19 April primarily to communicate information to school stakeholders around the build element of the expansion prior to the submission of a planning application in mid-May. The event was advertised via school bookbags. 200 flyers were also distributed to local households and copies were made available to the Children's Centre and Nursery. The local member was also invited. The event generated a high turn-out from parents, staff, governors and neighbours with over 120 attending during the event. The architects, developers, the transport consultant and ESCC representatives were all available to discuss the plans and listen to comments and feedback.

2.6 The school continues to engage with its local community about the proposal including with the local MP and the Mayor. The Local Authority has also met with the local member on a number of occasions to explain the proposal and listen to concerns that have been raised.

2.7 Should planning permission be secured and works start on site the main contractor will initiate a series of regular letter drops to local neighbours informing them ahead of time of anticipated works. In the meantime communication will be via the school using the normal channels.

### **3. Conclusion and reason for recommendation:**

3.1 In responding to a growing demand for primary school places in Seaford, the Local Authority believes the expansion of Cradle Hill Community Primary School from 420 places to 630 places is essential if it is to fulfil its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

3.2 For this reason, the Lead Member is recommended to:

Approve the expansion of Cradle Hill Community Primary School from 420 places to 630 places effective from 1 September 2017, conditional upon:

- By 31 December 2016 planning permission is granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 1992 by 31 December 2016.

### **STUART GALLIMORE**

Director of Children's Services

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Local Members: Councillor Carolyn Lambert

### **Background documents:**

Report (item 12) and minutes from 21 March 2016 Lead Member meeting:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=456&MId=2867&Ver=4>

Prescribed Information supporting the published statutory notice:

<https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrens-services/expansion-of-cradle-hill-community-primary-school>

Education Commissioning Plan 2015-2019 (pages 42-43):

<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/management/download.htm>

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Statutory notice as published in the Sussex Express on 22 April 2016

Appendix 2 – Factors to be considered before reaching a final decision on the proposal

Appendix 3 – Local Authority response to lead petitioner

Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 5 – Written responses in the representation period on the proposed expansion of Cradle Hill Community Primary School