

Subject:	Hertford Infant School Consultation Extract from the proceedings of the Council meeting held on the 2nd November 2017		
Date of Meeting:	13 November 2017		
Report of:	Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law		
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee

To receive the item referred from the Council for consideration.

Recommendations:

- (1) That the petition be given consideration; and
- (2) That the Children, Young People & Skills Committee be requested to:
 - (a) receive a report outlining the options for maintaining the current entry intake for Hertford Infants, including consideration of the outcomes and feasibility of adjusting the numbers of other four-form schools; and
 - (b) That as part of the above report, an Equalities Impact Assessment be carried out on the reduction of Hertford Infant School intake for consideration.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**COUNCIL****4.30PM 6 APRIL 2017****COUNCIL CHAMBER, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL****DRAFT MINUTES**

Present: Councillors Marsh (Chair), Simson (Deputy Chair), Atkinson, Barford, Barnett, Bell, Bennett, Bewick, Brown, Cattell, Chapman, Cobb, Daniel, Deane, Druitt, Gibson, Gilbey, Greenbaum, Hamilton, Hill, Horan, Hyde, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Meadows, Mears, Miller, Mitchell, Moonan, Morgan, Morris, Nemeth, A Norman, K Norman, O'Quinn, Page, Peltzer Dunn, Penn, Phillips, Robins, Russell-Moyle, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wares, Wealls, West and Yates.

33 PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE**(b) HERTFORD INFANT SCHOOL CONSULTATION**

- 32.1 The Mayor stated that where a petition secured 1,250 or more signatures it could be debated at the council meeting. She had been made aware of two such petitions and would therefore take each in turn.
- 32.2 The Mayor then invited Jo Wilding as the lead petitioners to present the petition calling on the Council to abandon the proposal to halve the admission numbers for Hertford Infant School.
- 32.3 Ms. Wilding thanked that Mayor and confirmed that the petition had 1,570 signatures and stated that she and other parents had responded to the consultation but wanted the council to hear their concerns. If the proposal to reduce the class intake at Hertford Infant School was accepted it would effectively force children out of their preferred school. The school was successful and had high achievement levels when compared to others, with disadvantaged pupils achieving 12% higher than the city as a whole. If the intake was reduced it would lead to the school having to make cuts and face redundancy costs and yet the school was successfully reducing the gap between levels of achievement for pupils which was the local authority's aim. She hoped that the council would take the petition into account and reconsider the proposal to reduce the proposed admission numbers.
- 32.4 The Mayor thanked Ms. Wilding and called on Councillor Chapman as Chair of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee to respond to the petition.

- 32.5 Councillor Chapman thanked Ms. Wilding for presenting the petition and welcomed the level of interest in the consultation process and assured the council that all views expressed would be taken into consideration by the cross-party Working Group. He stated that no decisions had been made and noted that thirteen public meetings had been scheduled to take place across the city as part of the consultation process. The Working Group would consider all the feedback before submitting a report to the committee in January with recommendations for a way forward. He hoped that those parents who had not yet responded to the consultation would do so, in order to ensure all views could be taken into account.
- 32.6 The Mayor noted that there was an amendment to the recommendation to refer the petition to the Children, Young People & Skills Committee and called on Councillor Phillips to move the amendment on behalf of the Green Group.
- 32.7 Councillor Phillips moved the amendment on behalf of the Green Group and stated that the proposal to reduce the school's intake by 50% was unviable and that there was a need to give full consideration to the equalities impact assessment for the planned changes. She believed that options should be sought to prevent the closure of the school and to maintain the diversity that it had. There was a real concern that children would be forced into larger schools where they would suffer and yet the school was successfully closing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and high achievers.
- 32.8 Councillor Knight formally seconded the amendment.
- 32.9 Councillor Hill stated that she was a Governor of Hertford Infant School and had been granted dispensation to speak and vote on the issue. She was aware that the Working Group were looking at what was a complex matter and that there was a need to manage the situation that there would be too many places for too few children, which would put small schools at risk. She had attended the consultation meeting and had noted the huge level of support for Hertford Infants School in the local community.
- 32.10 Councillor Brown noted that five schools had been recommended to reduce their intake by 1 form entry as part of the pan reduction and of these Hertford Infants and Benfield Infants had expressed concern over the impact of a reduction. She had attended the consultation meeting at Benfield and it was clear how important it was to the community and how parents wished to support it and she acknowledged it was the same for Hertford Infants. She also noted that no decision had been made and that the committee would consider the recommendations of the Working Group in January.
- 32.11 Councillor Chapman noted the comments and stated that he understood the concerns of parents and pupils and noted that any changes to pupil numbers had to be considered in relation to all schools. He was happy to support the amendment but noted that the actions requested would be undertaken as part of the consultation process anyway. He also noted that the consultation concluded later in the month and again urged everybody to respond.
- 32.12 The Mayor noted that an amendment had been moved and put it to the vote which was carried.
- 32.13 The Mayor then put the recommendations as amended to the vote which were carried.

32.14 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the petition be noted and referred to the Children, Young People & Skills Committee for consideration at its meeting on the 13th November, 2017; and
- (2) That the Children, Young People & Skills Committee be requested to:
 - (a) receive a report outlining the options for maintaining the current entry intake for Hertford Infants, including consideration of the outcomes and feasibility of adjusting the numbers of other four-form schools; and
 - (b) That as part of the above report, an Equalities Impact Assessment be carried out on the reduction of Hertford Infant School intake for consideration.