

### **Appendix 3: Response with conditions from the Governing Body of St Andrew's CE Primary School to the proposal to expand the school to three forms of entry from September 2015 (received 16 September 2014)**

The Governing Body of St Andrew's met on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014 to finalise its views on the proposed expansion of St Andrew's to a 3 form entry, in light of the consultation process. The Governing Body specifically considered whether it supported the progression of the consultation process to the next stage of issuing a formal statutory notice.

This decision was deferred from 1<sup>st</sup> July to give the Council the opportunity to address some of the key concerns raised in the consultation period, particularly from the school community. The initial strength of opposition was acknowledged by the Governing Body. The key areas of concern focussed on

- Insufficient statistical evidence for the need for additional places and specifically for St Andrew's to provide these. Also the impact of expansion on other schools
- The need to provide revised expansion plans which incorporated Haddington St car park to minimise the impact of the expansion on the playground space
- Concerns regarding traffic congestion and how this would be addressed by the Council
- Impact on the ethos/culture of the school

The Governing Body asked the Council to communicate more clearly and directly with the school community regarding these issues and this was supported by the Children and Young People Committee. As a result, the Council held a meeting with concerned parents as well as holding two further open meetings for all interested parents/carers at the school on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September which were attended by approximately 50 parents. These meetings were also attended by a representative from the Diocese. The feedback provided shows that most parents were more confident in their own understanding of the school place issues as a result of the meetings. There was also a very positive response to the revised plans incorporating the majority of the Haddington St car park.

As a result, the Governing Body are satisfied that the majority of the initial concerns of parents/carers have been addressed by the Council. We acknowledge that this additional time for consultation was necessarily limited due to the Council's need to reach a decision regarding the need for additional places in 2015. However it allowed the opportunity for more constructive and transparent discussion between all key stakeholders in this process. The progression to the next stage of formal statutory consultation also offers further opportunity for continued communication on the key issues.

In agreeing its position on the proposed expansion, the governing body has a responsibility to take a strategic view, as a Church of England school with a Christian ethos, of the role of St Andrew's school in serving both the best interests of the current school community as well as the current and future needs of the wider community. We acknowledge there is an immediate need for additional school places as identified by the Council through their planning process. We also support the exploration of sites for new schools as a sustainable longer term solution. As a

Church of England school it is also important to recognise the guidance we have received from the Diocese of Chichester which actively supports the expansion of St Andrew's to provide an inclusive education and meet the needs of the local community. The Parish Church Council of St Andrew (Old Church) Hove has also provided positive support to the proposed expansion. In addition to this the senior leadership team at St Andrew's school are confident that the strong ethos and high standards can be maintained with the careful management of the proposed expansion.

The Governing Body therefore voted to support the progression of the process to formal statutory consultation, subject to the conditions attached. These were previously agreed by the LA as the basis for informal consultation and have been adapted to take into account the revised plans.

It is essential that the increased level of transparency and engagement with the school community continues in the next phase of consultation. The governing body is committed to ensuring that the school community works closely together to further refine the expansion plans, including the requirements for traffic safety to benefit existing and future pupils. To this end we propose to set up a small working group comprising parents/staff and governors as appropriate to liaise on key issues with the Council. We are confident that through this process we can achieve a solution which will benefit both the school and local community.

## **Conditions**

**In reference to the document sent to us on 8<sup>th</sup> May from Michael Nix the Governors will agree to proceeding to Formal Statutory Consultation subject to the following conditions:**

- The LA recognise the importance of working closely with the school community to build on the constructive consultation of recent weeks to refine the initial plans for planning submission including the requirements for traffic safety. An appropriate small working group of parents, staff and governors will be set up to liaise with the Council on these issues. This will need to start meeting soon and will need regular input to the planning process.
- The extension of the school is as per the LA Revised Plans incorporating the majority of the Haddington St car park as presented at the Open Parents Evenings on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September, including the adequate provision of administration/staff space and an enlarged hall space. In the event that these plans do not receive planning approval, the process of expansion will not continue with alternative plans and further consultation will be required with the school.
- The LA recognises and agrees the reasons why such high priority is given to the issue of outside play space. The initial drawings show how the existing play area will be extended as a result of the use of the Haddington St car park. The LA will work with the school to provide improvements to the outdoor areas to increase all year usability of the space, having regard to expert advice. The exact configuration of the playground area can be agreed as we progress the design in consultation with the school but a commitment to consider changes and to provide access to expert advice on this matter is essential.

- The capital funding available for new build, reconfiguration and outside space is £2.5m – in exceptional circumstances this could be increased with agreement from the Children and Young People Committee and the Council. Significant additional ground works costs such as those potentially posed as a result of the site's previous use, would be regarded as exceptional circumstances and submitted to the Children and Young People Committee for consideration as an exceptional cost beyond the limits of this project funding. The Council also agrees to separately fund the costs for the car park reinstatement so as not to use the capital funding pot of £2.5m.
- The LA will provide an allocation of up to £2500 to support the school in engaging additional project management support.
- The LA will provide the high level of furniture and equipment for classrooms as seen in other recent expansion projects (Aldrington, St Nicholas and Goldstone). Funding will be phased so that appropriate equipment is provided for each classroom as it comes into use.
- In addition to this capital funding for furniture and equipment, there will be additional revenue funding for consumables in relation to new classrooms. As agreed with the Schools Forum this is currently a flat rate of £5,000 per new class which is repeated each year until the new form of entry is complete (seven years).
- The LA education property team will engage a traffic consultant as part of the design and planning process, who will engage with BHCC highways officers to ensure that the traffic solution to the additional pupils is acceptable in planning terms. The LA school travel plan team will work with the school to produce a revised suitable travel plan.
- We agree that access will need to be improved and that parents and carers must be able to safely drop off and collect children. This will be explored as part of the design development.
- A clear plan together with timeframes for the expansion will be provided at least two weeks before the end of the Formal Statutory Consultation Period. This will include completion of the necessary infrastructure (to be agreed) to admit an additional class for September 2015. This will also detail contingencies if this is not possible. The LA will also provide clear information regarding the build specification and quality: this will all be part of the partnership development of the project.
- In addition to the 3 year budget planning for changing management costs for the increased school size, the LA will respond before the end of the formal statutory consultation period to the school's submitted seven year planned staffing costs. It will consider a one-off additional budget allocation as the school will need to bring forward specific changes which would only be funded through the formula as the school grows.