

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL**DECISION OF COUNCILLOR JAN BARBER
THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE'S SERVICES with advice from the
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES****DECISION NO: P&C17****SUBJECT:**

A proposal to expand Winford C of E Primary School from a 140 to a 210-place primary school formally with effect from 1 September 2017.

DECISION:

That the Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services approves the publication of a Statutory Proposal to expand Winford C of E Primary School from a 140 to a 210-place primary school formally with effect from 1 September 2017.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services gave approval on 22 April 2016 to commence the statutory consultation process to make changes at Winford C of E Primary School (Winford School).
- 1.2 Stage 1 of the three-stage School Organisation process commenced on Monday 25 April 2016 and ended on Friday 27 May 2016.
- 1.3 All statutory consultees have been consulted and a total of 20 responses were received (13 paper, 1 telephone call and 6 via the Council's on-line consultation facility (Econsult)). This represented a 5% response rate for paper questionnaires. Comments about the proposal were also recorded at two public meetings and at separate meetings with school stakeholders, pupils and neighbours. A further 22 comments were made at the public consultation events that were largely supportive of the scheme.

Of the 19 written responses received, 13 (65%) supported the changes proposed, 5 (25%) were against the proposal and 1 (10%) expressed no view.

Two public meetings were held on the afternoon and evening of 26 April 2016. Whilst those present indicated overall support to the proposals, they raised concerns in respect of traffic and transport issues around the school site.

- 1.4 In most responses, including those in support of the changes, concerns were expressed about the safety for pedestrians walking to and from school both now and in the future due to the existing road infrastructures surrounding the school. Road

safety concerns have been discussed with highways officers and a way forward has been established. The highways team have been working with the parish council to develop a scheme to slow traffic in the village centre on the main approaches to the school. These changes will form part of the Highways Capital programme in 2016/17. The scheme will be implemented this financial year (subject to the usual statutory consultation processes).

- 1.5 Those in favour of the change (mainly parents/carers) cited the need for more local school places and believed that Winford School would benefit greatly from the expansion. The school is an important and generally welcomed facility within the village and it offers local families the opportunity to attend a local school. The school has developed a good relationship with its neighbours and wishes to maintain this good relationship with the people of Winford.
- 1.6 Full details of the consultation were reported to the CYPS Policy & Scrutiny Panel at their meeting on 14 July 2016. A copy of this report can be seen at <http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc27486.pdf>. Full responses to the consultation can be viewed in full at <http://consult.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/WinfordSchoolExpansion2017/consultationHome>

The aim of the changes at Winford School are to provide additional school places for the village and surrounding area of Winford and to enhance the school's learning environment. The Panel supported moving to the next stage of the statutory process.

- 1.7 Approval was requested at the Executive's meeting on 17 March 2015 for £352,210 to pay for accommodation to meet the need for a single 'breach' class. A further request was made to the Executive on 2 February 2016 for an extra £400,000 to enable a 2-class extension to be funded. A £752,210 capital project at Winford School to progress a 2 classroom expansion is being progressed and pre-planning discussions took place with the local community alongside this school organisational change.

A planning application to deliver extra accommodation was submitted on 13 May 2016 (16/P/1299/RG3) with a consultation expiry date of 23rd June 2016. A decision by North Somerset Council to the scheme is expected by 8 July 2016.

- 1.8 The decisions as to whether or not to progress the scheme are dependent on two separate approvals. Before a final school place expansion decision is made, agreement to the physical increases of the school buildings will need to be determined as part of the planning approval process. If agreed, a final decision as to whether or not to expand the school will be made by the Council's Executive. They will consider the benefits and opportunities of the proposal for the whole community when compared with the any risks and any opposition to the scheme.

2. REASONS:

- 2.1 Local Authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to

educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential.

Decision:

That the Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services approves the publication of a Statutory Notice to expand the provision at Winford C of E Primary School from a 140 to a 210-place primary school formally with effect from 1 September 2017.

Reasons:

To ensure that extra permanent primary school places are made available by the Council to serve the residents of Winford and its surrounding villages.

Other Alternatives Considered:

- To do nothing. If the school were all to be over-subscribed with local pupils in the future, the children would need to be offered places at other nearby schools with vacancies. This could be some distance from their home address.
- To expand other schools within the cluster. There is limited capacity in this cluster to accept additional pupils. Winford Primary supports the communities of Winford, Felton and other nearby hamlets. Winford Primary best meets the criteria for expansion detailed in the Council's approved Education Provision in North Somerset ~ A Commissioning Strategy 2015 – 2018.

Financial Implications:

- Additional funding is available to schools that have a significant pupil growth during the financial year. Exceptional Pupil Growth Funding would be available in this case if the school were to satisfy the three following criteria:
 - a) The increase has been made at the request of the LA;
 - b) There will be an increase in pupil numbers of 2% or more between the October 2015 and October 2016 headcounts – this means that the school's headcount in October 2015 of 145 would need to increase to be 148 or more pupils by October 2016 (2% increase equals 3 extra pupils); and
 - c) The school's notional class bases would need to increase by one – i.e. the school would need 150 + pupils to trigger the need for 5 classes of 30
- This proposal will, due to increasing pupil numbers, have some impact on the individual schools' revenue budgets (as detailed in above) and the overall schools budget, funded by the dedicated schools grant through the strategic schools forum. There are no revenue implications for the Council.
- Any recommendations for an increase in the numbers of pupils to attend the school will be subject to appropriate capital funding being made available to support the

physical changes needed at the school. Approval was requested at the Executive’s meeting on 17 March 2015 for £352,210 to pay for accommodation to meet the need for a single breach class. A further request was made to the Executive on 2 February 2016 for an additional £400,000 to enable a 2-class extension to be funded. A £752,210 capital project at Winford School to progress a 2 classroom expansion is being progressed and pre-planning discussions took place with the local community alongside this school organisational change.

- A planning submission to physically expand the school was submitted on 13 May 2016 (16/P/1299/RG3). Planning consent was granted on the 8th July 2016. Before a statutory proposal to expand the school can be determined, funding and approval to expand the school buildings must be in place. Whilst the school expansion and planning application processes are run in parallel, decisions on each application should be made independently.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE YEARS:

As above.

Signed:
Councillor Jan Barber
Executive Member for Children and Young People’s Services

Dated:

Reviewed:
Sue Ivermee
Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement

Dated:

Confirmation of advice given:

Signed:
Sheila Smith
Director of People & Communities

Dated: