

Report to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools
Report submitted by: Head of Service for Asset Management
Date 12 August 2015

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Chorley North; Chorley
Rural West; Leyland Central

**Proposed expansion of Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary
School, Buckshaw Village, Chorley**
(Appendices 'A' to 'D' refer)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

Between 19 January 2015 and 13 February 2015 the authority consulted on a proposal to permanently expand Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School in Buckshaw Village, Chorley, with effect from September 2016.

After carefully considering the outcome of the consultation and agreeing (on 19 May 2015) to proceed with the proposal, the authority published a statutory notice on 16 June 2015. In accordance with the statutory process (as per the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013 for school expansion proposals, the Notice invited representations (objections or comments) within the statutory four-week notice period, i.e. from 16 June 2015 to 13 July 2015.

Under the statutory school expansion process, a decision should now be taken about the proposal. If the authority fails to decide the proposal within two months from the end of the representation period, the proposal and any representations about the proposals must be passed to the schools adjudicator for decision.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and Standing Order 25 has been complied with.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools is recommended to:

- (i) Consider the information in this report;

- (ii) Conditionally approve the proposal to make a prescribed alteration to Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School, Buckshaw Village, Chorley by permanently expanding the number of places available from 60 to 90 pupils for reception year in September 2016 and in subsequent reception years, by utilising the second site secured on Buckshaw Village, subject to the granting of planning permission under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the transfer of the held site from Chorley Borough Council; and
- (iii) Approve that an appropriate statutory decision letter be sent out as specified under legal requirements to give the reasons for the decision to those who are to be informed of them.

Background and Advice

Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School, Buckshaw Village was established in September 2010 to cater for the large housing development known as Buckshaw Village, built on the former Royal Ordnance Factory site. It was established as a one form entry school with the intention to expand to two forms of entry as and when demand for increased places was evident. This demand became evident and from September 2013 the school expanded to take 60 pupils each reception year.

As part of the planning process for part of the development on Buckshaw Village known as 'Group One', a further site was secured on the village, for the provision of primary school places.

Following on from a temporary expansion of Trinity CE/Methodist Primary School, which increased the admission number at the school to 90 for one year only for September 2015, it is proposed to permanently expand the number of places available from 60 to 90 pupils in reception year with effect from September 2016 and in subsequent reception years thereafter. The overall capacity at the school would be increased from 420 to 630. Should the permanent expansion be approved, then additional permanent accommodation will be provided on the 'Group One' site.

This report aims to provide sufficient information on:

- The proposal to expand Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School in Buckshaw Village, Chorley to reflect current and future numbers on roll;
- The responses received during the statutory notice period;
- Factors that the decision maker must take into consideration when determining the proposals; and
- A commentary on how the proposal relates to these factors in order for the decision maker to make a determination in respect of the proposals.

Following a period of consultation, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools agreed, on 19 May 2015, to the publication of a Statutory Notice proposing to expand Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School in Buckshaw Village, Chorley.

After the authority's publication of a Statutory Notice on 16 June 2015, and expiry on 13 July 2015 of the four week statutory period for representations to be made about the proposal, the authority is now at stage 3 of the 4 stage statutory process (as per the new School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013) that is summarised below:

| Stage | Statutory requirement | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Pre-statutory phase | Informal consultation on the proposal | 19 January 2015 to 13 February 2015 |
| 1 | Publication of Statutory Notice | 16 June 2015 |
| 2 | Representations on the Proposal | 16 June 2015 to 13 July 2015 |
| 3 | Decision* | 12 August 2015 |
| 4 | Implementation (if the decision is made to proceed) | Permanent expansion from 1 September 2016 New building completion from September 2016. |

*If the Local Authority is responsible for a decision on the proposal and fails to take it within two months from the end of the representation period (stage 2) the proposal must be passed to the schools adjudicator for decision.

The Decision Maker is required, at this stage, to take account of statutory objections and comments made during the representation period. Details of the school expansion proposal to be considered are set out at Appendix 'A', the consultation booklet, Appendix 'B', the Public Notice, Appendix 'C', the Complete Proposal, and Appendix 'D', the Equality Impact Assessment.

Checks on receipt of Statutory Proposals

School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) Regulations 2013 state the following factors that the decision maker must take into consideration when determining the proposal:

Consideration of consultation and representation period: *The decision-maker will need to be satisfied that the appropriate consultation and/or representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has had regard to the responses received. If the proposer has failed to meet the statutory requirements, a proposal may be deemed invalid and therefore should be rejected. The decision-maker must consider all the views submitted, including all support for, objections to and comments on the proposal.*

Comment: Between 19 January 2015 and 13 February 2015 the authority consulted on a proposal to permanently expand Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School in Buckshaw Village, Chorley, with effect from September 2016. Full details of the consultation process are set out in Appendix 'A'.

After carefully considering the outcome of the consultation and agreeing (on 19 May 2015) to proceed with the proposal, the authority published a statutory notice on 16 June 2015. In accordance with the statutory process for school expansion proposals,

the Notice invited representations (objections or comments) within the statutory four-week notice period, i.e. from 16 June 2015 to 13 July 2015.

By the close of the representation period on 13 July 2015, the local authority had received 21 written representations and 1 petition as follows:

- Eighteen individual letters: 8 from parents of pupils currently at Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School; 7 from parents of future pupils at the school, 1 from a grandparent of a current and future pupils at the school; 1 from a grandparent of a current pupil at the school, and 1 from the MP for South Ribble.
- Two joint responses were received. One sent from Ofsted who noted the proposal and one from Chorley Borough Council who trust that the Local Authority has considered all other options and have determined that the proposal best serves the best interests of children and parents alike. Neither organisation agrees nor disagrees with the proposal.
- One circular response was received: Four parents responded using the circular response, but of these, three had already responded individually, therefore the comments raised in the circular have been included within the individual comments. The circular does not support the proposal and raises the following concerns:
 - The reasons for the expansion;
 - Admission and curriculum arrangements;
 - Governance and administration; and
 - Physical characteristics of the school.
- One petition with 130 signatures including comments.

The 21 written representations expressed the following:

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 12 |

All responses received and the petition including comments, have been placed on C-First. All representation responses are background papers to this report and are available for public inspection through Lancashire County Council School Planning Team (Telephone 01772 531957).

Of the respondents who objected to the proposal the individual objections stated a range of reasons listed below against the proposed expansion of Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School:

Consultation process: It was felt that the consultation was not publicised well enough amongst the community, with the location and distance of the new site and the management of pupils over the split site not being made clear at the outset. Due to these reasons, it was felt that the consultation responses were skewed as responses from parents, future parents and prospective parents were incredibly low compared to the response rate from school staff and governors. Therefore it was felt consultation responses could not be deemed an accurate proportionate collection of views. It was considered that consultation guidance had not been followed as public meetings were not held. One respondent suggested that when the children were consulted teaching staff asked for their views and replies were selectively recorded.

Comments: For a proposal to permanently expand a Voluntary Aided primary school there is a statutory process which the authority, as the proposer must follow. Although there is no longer a prescribed 'pre-publication' consultation period for prescribed alterations, the local authority consulted interested parties through an informal consultation period held from 19 January 2015 to 13 February 2015. This included a consultation document (Appendix 'A') which provided full details of the proposal, including reference to the 'Group One' site. Pages 9 and 11 of the consultation document (Appendix 'A') provided information on how to make views known, and was circulated to people and organisations that may have an interest in the proposals (page 8 of Appendix 'A' refers). Pupils' views from the school were also invited through the children's consultation. The school led on the children's consultation and 338 children were consulted from all year groups. It is not a statutory requirement to hold a public meeting. An appointment led event, rather than a public meeting, was held between 3pm and 8pm on Tuesday 3 February 2015 at Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School. This format of meeting is preferred as it allows the authority to manage the process effectively, minimise waiting times and ensure that appropriate officers are available to offer any interested parties, either individually or in small groups, advice and guidance to enable them to gain a better understanding on all aspects of the proposals.

The consultation event was also advertised at the community 'Hub', a site used by many members of the Buckshaw Village community for various events and meetings. Officers also sought permission to advertise the event at the Community Centre but staff were unwilling to do so.

The event was attended by 3 groups of people: representatives from Euxton Parish Council, parents of a future pupil of the school, and a parent of a child at school and future pupil with a representative of Euxton Parish Council

In response to the demonstrable demand for places, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools approved the temporary expansion of Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School from 60 to 90 pupils for September 2015 on 4 December 2014. On 12 January 2015 the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools agreed that a period of consultation be undertaken to allow a permanent increase in Reception intakes from 60 to 90 from September 2016, initially on the existing school site to be followed by permanent build on the 'Group One' site. As much information as possible was shared at the informal consultation stage of the process. It is for the school's leadership team to decide how to organise the management of the proposed expansion of the school over the two sites and not the local authority.

The formal representation period allows for further comments to be made and considered before the final decision is determined.

Admission and Leadership: Five respondents queried how the proposed expansion would affect future school place applications including what the catchment area would be. Eight respondents queried how the leadership would manage running both sites at the same time. Four respondents stated that the existing school has not been established long enough at its current size to know yet whether the governors and administration team have the skills and ability to manage the complexity of an enlarged twin site school. One respondent added to this stating educational provision concerns due to the school having grown too rapidly since its inception. They felt that trebling its original size across 2 sites 1km apart is a step too far.

Comments: The school's leadership team have decided that, on completion, the new site will be used to accommodate the school's Foundation Stage and KS1 classes.

The following is an extract from the school's Admissions Policy:

'The number of places available for admission to the Reception class in the year 2016 will be a maximum of 90.'

A temporary expansion with an increased admission number of 90 was agreed for 2015-16 (September 2015 reception intakes). The children will all remain on the existing school site during the 2015-16 school year. Consideration of a permanent expansion with an admission number of 90 is underway. If agreed this may require developing a second site within the Buckshaw Village area. Should this happen the governing body will continue to apply their existing admission arrangements (as below).

However for reception intakes for the school year within which the second site will be operational (and thereafter), where there are more applicants than available places, the distance tie break will measure from home address to the nearest of the two school sites.

(Full Admissions Policy Available on the School's website).'

The governors review admission criteria on an annual basis to ensure that they reflect the ethos of the school and remain compliant with admissions legislation. The Church of England Diocese and Methodist Church Authority have been involved in the process throughout to ensure the religious character of the school has been maintained as the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religious denomination was identified as a local need.

There will not be movement of pupils between sites on a daily or weekly basis. There may be occasions during the school year where it is felt important they have an opportunity to be together as a whole school e.g. worship at Christmas and Easter or for Sports Day and therefore some movement will happen but this will, by necessity, be limited.

Whole school activities will be organised as they currently are with organisation taking into account the needs of differing age groups of children and their families' relevant ratios and health and safety.

Staff will be employed to work at Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School which will encompass both sites. Some Leadership staff will work between the two sites but it is not anticipated that there will be a need for other staff to work on both sites. The school governance arrangements remain the same. The head teacher and governors are aware of the importance of ensuring that the two sites are managed effectively and have established a management structure which will ensure that this is achieved. This is not unusual and there are many schools where this model of staffing and organisation is effective. The Local Authority is confident that the leadership team of the school is sufficiently skilled and has the appropriate experience to effectively manage an enlarged twin site school.

Split site: The majority of the respondents who raised concerns, raised concern over Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School being split over two sites. It is felt that the two sites are too far apart, which would inconvenience parents getting children to both sites at the same time and impact on before and after school clubs. Concern was raised about the impact of the split site on the children e.g. the loss of sibling support and the impact of the changes on the education, development and emotional well-being of the children. Seven respondents felt that the split site school was proposed to prevent an Academy school application. Six respondents felt that there would be a clear and distinct separation between infant and junior ages with no integration and unlikely to be any movement between schools during school times due to the complexity of transporting young children between the two sites. A further respondent raised concerns regarding the education time that would be 'eaten into' whilst school children were walked from one school site to another for collective worship each week. A respondent stated that the original Section 106 agreement for Buckshaw Village outlined the provision of a new school on the second parcel of land.

Comments: The split site arrangement is necessary because the existing site is not large enough to accommodate an additional form of entry. As part of the planning process for part of the development on Buckshaw Village, a further site was secured on the village known as 'Group One' for the provision of primary school places. It is the only site available, is accessible to the community that the current school serves and is within walking distance of the existing school site.

The Headteacher and governors are committed to ensuring that the school feels like one school and is perceived as such. There will be a need to share resources in order to facilitate the sense of belonging to a whole school community. The school has the capacity to share playing fields at the existing site for whole school events. The school will also ensure children in Year 2 are sufficiently used to the existing building for an effective transfer into Year 3.

With the new school site located away from the existing site, the building works can take place without disrupting the existing pupils at the Unity Place site. The Headteacher and governors are mindful of the concerns of a split school for parents and pupils and will do everything they can to support them and ensure a smooth transition.

There will not be movement of pupils between sites on a daily or weekly basis. There may be occasions during the school year where it is felt important they have an opportunity to be together as a whole school e.g. worship at Christmas and Easter or for Sports Day and therefore some movement will happen but this will, by necessity, be limited.

Lancashire County Council's 'Strategy for the Provision of School Places and School's Capital Investment' clearly prioritises the expansion of existing provision over and above the provision of a new school wherever possible. Having consulted with all head teachers in the area and elected members, it was decided to propose an expansion of Trinity CE/Methodist Primary School as this would provide the most sustainable school offer and stability for the area. New provision would take longer and could have resulted in places not being available in time for the required increase in demand.

Traffic: Concern was raised over the traffic implications as respondents believe a split site will force more people to drive through the village. It was felt that if buses are provided by the school to take children between sites then both issues would create an even greater traffic danger around the school site. Seven respondents stated that the current school is a local school in walking distance to their homes and is in a convenient location.

Comments: The new site is easily accessible to the community that the current school serves and is within walking distance of the existing school site. The school's Headteacher and governors are committed to addressing traffic concerns. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, which can be found in Appendix 'D'. This includes information regarding strategies to reduce traffic concerns e.g. staggered start times and 'walking buses'.

Parking will be considered as part of the Transport Assessment which will be conducted as part of the application for planning permission required for any permanent build.

Alternative suggestions: An alternative suggestion was made by five respondents and the MP for South Ribble to have two separate schools where children complete their primary education at a chosen site nearest to where they live. It was queried that if a new site can be created, why not a new school? Eleven respondents felt that Buckshaw Village requires a new non-faith community school to allow competition between the schools. A further suggestion was raised by two respondents that the County Council holds another consultation for all interested parties to discuss the following options: a split site school, a new school under the current HT or an Academy/Free School. Four respondents added to this that they felt 30 additional school places will not be enough for the future planned housing and suggested building a new single FE with the ability to expand to 2FE when required. Six respondents asked what consideration has been given for the need of a secondary school. The MP for South Ribble and two respondents also stated that the Ofsted Inspection report is due to be published two days after the representation period closes. Therefore they asked if representation could be extended so that the Ofsted results could be noted by all interested parties and included in the Cabinet Member report.

One petition was also received with 130 signatures and comments which stated that the respondents 'object to Lancashire County Council's plans to expand Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School, Buckshaw Village, (a.k.a – to increase the number of pupils admitted in each reception year from 60 to 90 and the capacity of the school from 420 to 630 from 1 September 2016.) We urge Lancashire County Council to establish/build a new standalone school on the new outlined site'. The petition and comments have been included in the analysis of responses to the representation.

Comments: The local authority has consulted on a proposed expansion only, not a proposed establishment of a new school, therefore the suggestion of replacement provision is legally a separate process to that currently being undertaken. The policy of the local authority, as outlined in the 'Strategy for the Provision of School Places and Schools' Capital Investment is to expand existing provision wherever possible and appropriate, rather than commission new provision. Therefore, should the local authority decide that additional places are needed it would first investigate adding places to existing schools. This approach has the advantage that it can be implemented much more swiftly than commissioning new provision. New provision would take longer and result in places not being available in time for the required increase.

Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School was established as a one form entry school with the intention to expand to two forms of entry as and when demand for increased places was evident. This demand became evident and from September 2013 the school expanded to take 60 pupils each year.

Secondary school places are being monitored in the area, and will be addressed as a separate issue, as and when the need arises to provide additional secondary places in local secondary schools. An additional form of entry has already been provided in Chorley for September 2015 and the authority is already consulting with the local secondary schools about places for the future.

As the current status of this proposal is statutory notice stage (as set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013), this is prescribed by regulations as 4 weeks. Due to this statutory process, the County Council is not in a position to extend the representation period.

The inspection framework means that schools will often be inspected during the process of expansion but, when scoping schools for expansion, we consider the standards and ability of a school to cope with expansion as an intrinsic part of the initial scoping. The school was inspected during the representation period and the results have not yet been made public.

Agreement to the proposal: Of the four respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to the proposal the following reasons were stated as to their approval:

- Buckshaw Village is in desperate need of a second school site and the school is trusted to manage the split arrangements appropriately;
- They don't want any more delay in extra school places being provided in Buckshaw Village;

- They felt when consulting, the County Council should widen participation by using social media more effectively which would have prevented being in the situation we are now where people feel aggrieved;
- They want the County Council to choose this school as it is the local school and in walking distance;
- They look forward to hearing about similar plans for secondary provision; and
- They have concerns how children are kept safe due to speed of traffic around the school. They feel consideration should be given to the school application for Traffic Regulation Order.

Education standards and diversity of provision: *Decision-makers should consider the quality and diversity of schools in the relevant area and whether the proposal will meet or affect the aspirations of parents, raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps. The decision-maker should also take into account the extent to which the proposal is consistent with the government's policy on academies as set out on the department's website.*

Comment: Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School in Buckshaw Village, Chorley is a successful and popular voluntary aided primary school serving its particular community as well as attracting pupils from a wider area and is well placed to meet the present and continuing demand for primary school places. The Ofsted Inspection of the school in March 2012 graded the school as 'good.' The school was inspected during the representation period and the results have not been made public yet.

This is a proposed expansion of a voluntary aided school and therefore, does not fall under the academy presumption.

Demand: *In assessing the demand for new school places the decision-makers should consider the evidence presented for any projected increase in pupil population (such as planned housing developments) and any new provision opening in the area (including free schools). The decision-maker should take into account the quality and popularity of the schools in which spare capacity exists and evidence of parents' aspirations for a new school or for places in a school proposed for expansion. The existence of surplus capacity in neighbouring less popular schools should not in itself prevent the addition of new places. Reducing surplus places is not a priority (unless running at very high levels). For parental choice to work effectively there may be some surplus capacity in the system as a whole. Competition from additional schools and places in the system will lead to pressure on existing schools to improve standards.*

Comment: There is a sustained need for additional places in the Euxton area, which includes the Buckshaw Village development over the next three years. The need is for an additional 47 places in 2015 and 2016 and for 34 places in 2017, based upon live births in the area. However, planned housing in the area has the potential to generate an approximate yield of an additional 6 pupils per year group over the next 5 years. Cabinet Member report dated 12 January 2015 and complete proposals (**Section 8A and Section 9A of Appendix 'C'**) refer.

The school is full in all year groups. In 2012 the school received 52 1st preferences when the schools admission number was 30, in 2013 the schools admission number

raised to 60 and there were 75 1st preferences and for 2014 there were 72 1st preferences. 90 places have been allocated to the school for September 2015 (when the admission number increases for one year to 90).

School size: *Decision-makers should not make blanket assumptions that schools should be of a certain size to be good schools, although the viability and cost-effectiveness of a proposal is an important factor for consideration. The decision-maker should also consider the impact on the LA's budget of the need to provide additional funding to a small school to compensate for its size.*

Comment: All schools within the area of growth were contacted in order to seek expressions of interest in expansion before visits to schools then took place. In an initial assessment of the potential to expand existing schools, the following factors are considered (as stated in the 'Strategy for the Provision of School Places and Schools' Capital Investment');

- The current strength of the school in terms of attainment levels and leadership.
- Parental preference.
- The existing size of the school.
- The existing site and the area available to expand the buildings and maintain adequate play and sports space.
- Access to the site and proximity to the area of growth.
- Any potential joint investment benefits which are immediately obvious.

Whilst we would normally seek to have schools of 2FE and below (as also stated in the Strategy referred to earlier) there are now nine other 3 FE primary schools in Lancashire, who are all graded as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted. The Ofsted Inspection of Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School in March 2012 graded the school as 'good.' The school was inspected during the representation period and the results have not been made public yet.

Proposed admission arrangements (including post-16 provision): *In assessing demand the decision-maker should consider all expected admission applications, not only those from the area of the LA in which the school is situated. Before approving a proposal that is likely to affect admissions to the school the decision-maker should confirm that the admission arrangements of the school are compliant with the School Admissions Code. Although the decision-maker cannot modify proposed admission arrangements, the decision-maker should inform the proposer where arrangements seem unsatisfactory and the admission authority should be given the opportunity to revise them.*

Comment: When considering future need for school places one element of the statistical analysis involves examining the historic popularity of the school and of other establishments in the area. The data, which details parental applications, refers to all which have been received for annual intakes including any from non-Lancashire residents. For community and voluntary controlled schools the Local Authority is the admission authority and proposes and determines the admission arrangements and the published admission number for each establishment. These are reviewed and consulted upon annually within the statutory process required by the Schools Admission Code and associated regulations.

Policies and admission numbers are, therefore, reviewed every year and, following consultation and determination by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, there is a formal objection period for concerns to be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by any interested party (deadline date 30th June in the year of determination).

National Curriculum: *All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum unless they have secured an exemption for groups of pupils or the school community.*

Comment: Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School follows the National Curriculum.

Equal opportunity issues: *The decision-maker must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of LAs/governing bodies, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to: eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations. The decision-maker should consider whether there are any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that arise from the changes being proposed, for example that where there is a proposed change to single sex provision in an area, there is equal access to single sex provision for the other sex to meet parental demand. Similarly there should be a commitment to provide access to a range of opportunities which reflect the ethnic and cultural mix of the area, while ensuring that such opportunities are open to all.*

Comment: The proposal is to expand the school which will not disadvantage any group and will benefit current and additional future pupils at the school. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, which can be found in Appendix 'D'.

Community cohesion: *Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other; by encouraging, through their teaching, an understanding of, and respect for, other cultures, faiths and communities. When considering a proposal, the decision-maker must consider its impact on community cohesion. This will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the community served by the school and the views of different sections within the community.*

Comment: The proposal to extend Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School is to meet the needs of an increased birth rate and the yield from new housing in the surrounding area. The school already has close links with its surrounding community and members of the community were consulted as part of this process. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, which can be found in Appendix 'D'.

Travel and accessibility: *Decision-makers should satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly taken into account and the proposed changes should not adversely impact on disadvantaged groups. The decision-maker should bear in mind that a proposal should not unreasonably extend journey times or increase transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable walking or cycling routes. A proposal should*

also be considered on the basis of how it will support and contribute to the LA's duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to school.

Comment: The proposed expansion will provide additional places in a densely populated residential area with good transport and road infrastructure. The provision will not adversely impact upon disadvantaged groups as additional pupils will be able to access a local school place.

Capital: *The decision-maker should be satisfied that any land, premises or capital required to implement the proposal will be available and that all relevant local parties (e.g. trustees or religious authority) have given their agreement. A proposal cannot be approved conditionally upon funding being made available. Where proposers are relying on the department as the source of capital funding, there can be no assumption that the approval of a proposal will trigger the release of capital funds from the department, unless the department has previously confirmed in writing that such resources will be available; nor can any allocation 'in principle' be increased. In such circumstances the proposal should be rejected, or consideration deferred until it is clear that the capital necessary to implement the proposal will be provided.*

Comment: See financial section below. Should the permanent expansion be approved, then additional permanent accommodation will be provided on the 'Group One' site, on its transfer to Lancashire County Council from Chorley Borough Council. The Local Authority will need to ensure that it is compliant with Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 if proposed works include building on playing fields.

School premises and playing fields: *Under the School Premises Regulations all schools are required to provide suitable outdoor space in order to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and for pupils to play outside safely.*

Comment: The proposal will be delivered by the use of temporary accommodation already in place on the current school site from a previous expansion project, whilst a new permanent school building is constructed on the 'Group One' site. Complete proposals (Section 6A of Appendix 'C') refer. On completion of this build, the school will be a split site school and any development would be subject to all necessary approvals such as Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and planning consent.

In addition for schools which propose to expand on an additional site the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) Regulations 2013 state the following factors that the decision maker must take into consideration when determining the proposal

When deciding on a proposal for an expansion on an additional site(a 'satellite school', decision makers will need to consider whether the new provision is genuinely a change to an existing school or is in effect a new school (which would trigger the academy presumption in circumstance where there is a need for a new school in the area). Decision will need to be taken on a case-by-case basis, but decision makers will need to consider the following non-exhaustive list of factors which are intended to expose the extent to which the new site is integrated with the

existing site, and to ensure that it will serve the same community as the existing community.

The reasons for the expansion

What is the rationale for this approach and this particular site?

Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School, Buckshaw Village was established in September 2010 to cater for the large housing development known as Buckshaw Village, built on the former Royal Ordnance Factory site. It was established as a one form of entry school with the intention to expand to two forms of entry when demand for increased places was evident. This demand rapidly became evident and from September 2013 the school expanded to take 60 pupils each year.

As part of the planning process for a site on the development on Buckshaw Village known as 'Group One', a further site was secured on the village, for the provision of primary school places.

With the further development of houses on Buckshaw Village it became apparent that additional school places would be required. In July 2014, the then Provision Planning Team undertook a survey on Buckshaw Village to gauge the demand for school places required in the near future.

In response to the demonstrable demand for places, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools approved the temporary expansion of Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School from 60 to 90 pupils for September 2015 on 4 December 2014.

On 12 January 2015 the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools agreed that a period of consultation be undertaken to allow a permanent increase in Reception intakes from 60 to 90 from September 2016. Should the permanent expansion be approved this would be accommodated initially on the existing school site but would be followed by a permanent build on the 'Group One' site, to create a split site school.

Admission and curriculum arrangement

How will the new site be used (e.g. which age group / pupils will it serve)?

This is answered in the Admission and Leadership section on pages 5 and 6.

What will the admission arrangements be?

This is answered in the Admission and Leadership section on page 6.

Will there be movement of pupils between sites?

This is answered in the Admission and Leadership section on page 6.

Governance and administration

How will whole school activities be managed?

This is answered in the Admission and Leadership section on page 6.

Will staff be employed on contracts to work on both sites? How frequently will they do so?

This is answered in the Admission and Leadership section on page 6.

What governance, leadership and management arrangements will be put in place to oversee the new site (e.g. will the new site be governed by the same governing body and the same leadership team)?

This is answered in the Admission and Leadership section on page 7.

Physical characteristics of the school

How will facilities across the two sites be used (e.g. sharing of the facilities and resources available at the two sites, such as playing fields)?

This is answered in the Split Site section on page 7.

Is the new site in an area that is easily accessible to the community that the current school serves?

This is answered in the Split Site section on page 7.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

If additional primary school places are not created there is a risk that the authority would fail in its statutory responsibility to make sure that a school place is available to all Lancashire children of the appropriate age range that want one.

Providing additional places increases the overall capacity in the area and, if birth rates fall in the future, there may be surplus places.

Providing any additional accommodation for an increased number of pupils will need to be carefully managed to improve traffic congestion and community facilities at the same time as delivering 21st Century teaching and learning facilities.

If planning permission for the site was not secured by 1 September 2015 this would present a risk to the date of delivering the new building. In order to mitigate the risk, a planning application will be submitted in due course for consideration by the County Council's Development Control Committee.

An additional site on Buckshaw Village for the provision of additional primary school places has been secured via a Section 106 agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The parties to this agreement are Chorley Borough Council and Persimmon (the housing developer on the site). At the time of writing, the local authority is seeking a deed of variation to the S106 agreement to enable the expansion of an existing school onto the site before the land can be transferred to the County Council. Should there be a significant delay in the transfer of the site, this will impact on the delivery of the new building.

Financial

Based on initial costings it is anticipated that a project to build the additional school site will cost in the region of £3.8 to £4.3 million, depending on the decision on how the school wishes to operate across the split site. This funding has been earmarked from within the 2015/16 Schools Single Capital Pot grant which falls within the current capital programme.

The basic need provision of places is the highest priority in terms of allocating capital funding to local authorities and previous capital allocations and processes indicate that funding would be made available for this type of project. Central government has consistently indicated that provision of additional places is a priority for schools' capital investment and the provision of additional permanent places at identified schools across the county are likely to be prioritised for expenditure.

Additional revenue funding will be required to meet the projected growth in pupil numbers regardless of whether capacity is increased. Revenue funding would be found from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is increased in line with rising pupil numbers.

Land and Property

The proposal cannot be delivered within the existing site.

An additional site on Buckshaw Village for a new one Form of Entry school has been secured via a Section 106 agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. As stated earlier in this report, the parties to this agreement are Chorley Borough Council and Persimmon (the housing developer on the site). At the time of writing, the local authority is seeking a deed of variation to the S106 agreement to enable the expansion of an existing school onto the site before the land can be transferred to the County Council.

Equality and Diversity

S. 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the equality duty that public authorities must comply with. The proposal is to expand the school which will not disadvantage any group and will benefit additional pupils who would be able to secure places at the school. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, which can be found in Appendix 'D'.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The considerations for a decision to be taken about a school expansion are contained within this Report and Appendices 'A' to 'D'.

Having considered the responses received from the consultation and the fact that twenty one representations and a petition with 130 signatures and comments were received, although 15 disagreed or strongly disagreed as did the 130 signatures on the petition, it is recommended that the proposal to permanently expand Trinity Church of England/Methodist Primary School in Buckshaw Village, Chorley by 30

additional reception places per year from 1 September 2016, be conditionally approved, subject to the granting of planning permission under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

| Paper | Date | Contact/Tel |
|---|----------------|--|
| All responses received during the Statutory Notice Period | June/July 2015 | School Planning Team (01772) 531957 |