



**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE  
CABINET MEMBER MEETING  
ADDENDUM**

**4.00PM, MONDAY, 20 APRIL 2009**

**COMMITTEE ROOM 3, HOVE TOWN HALL**



# ADDENDUM

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**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for questions submitted by a member of the public who either lives or work in the area of the authority.

The question will be answered without discussion. The person who asked the question may ask one relevant supplementary question, which shall be put and answered without discussion. The person to whom a question, or supplementary, has been put may decline to answer it.

The following written question(s) have been received from members of the public.

(a) **Mr S McGregor**

“The Somerhill Governors are disappointed to note that the proposed expansion has been sent to informal consultation before suitable plans have been made available to parents. At no time since January 2008 have Davidgor & Somerhill schools been consulted together, and any combined activities have been initiated by the schools, not the Local Authority. The proposed feasibility study undertaken in July 2008, turned into nothing of substance and I wrote to Di Smith about this in September 2008 expressing concerns. This could almost be considered a deliberate attempt to minimise engagement, despite words to the contrary. However, I would like to concentrate on the future and would like to ask the Cabinet *Member* how they propose to ensure that real and effective participation will be actively supported by the Council, to ensure that any expansion is innovative and visionary, to ensure that we have schools fit for learning and teaching for the next 25 years.”



# CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER MEETING

**Agenda Item 104**  
Brighton & Hove City Council

**Subject:** Proposed Expansion of Somerhill Junior School  
**Date of Meeting:** 20 April 2009  
**Report of:** Director of Children's Services  
**Contact Officer:** Name: Gillian Churchill Tel: 29-3515  
E-mail: [gillian.churchill@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.churchill@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
**Key Decision:** Yes Forward Plan No. CYP8680  
**Wards Affected:** All

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE LATE ITEM

Note: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Council Procedure Rule 7, Access to Information Rule 5 and Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act as amended (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) was that the consultation period required under Government guidance closed on 10 April 2009, therefore after the deadline for reports to Children and Young People Cabinet Member Meeting.

### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 As part of the Council's future development of Schools within the city it is proposed to expand Somerhill Junior School by one form of entry from September 2011.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to set out the background and rationale for this proposed expansion and to seek Cabinet Member endorsement for proceeding to the next stage of the statutory process, which is the publication of the required Statutory Notice.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To note and endorse the proposal to expand Somerhill Junior School by one form of entry from September 2011.
- 2.2 To agree to the publication of the required Statutory Notice to progress this proposal.
- 2.3 That the results from the statutory consultation process are referred to Cabinet Member Meeting in July 2009 for decision.

### **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 Brighton and Hove City Council has a legal requirement to provide sufficient school places for all school age children in the city. School places should be provided in such a way that parents and pupils can access a local school wherever possible.
- 3.2 Over recent years there has been a considerable increase in the number of children growing up in the part of the city that is served by Somerhill Junior School. This is evidenced by the fact that we had to temporarily increase the size of the adjacent Davigdor Infant School by one form of entry in September 2008. This increased intake will be looking to access a junior school place in September 2011.
- 3.3 The proposal is to now expand Somerhill Junior School so that it becomes a four form entry school with a yearly intake of 120 from September 2011.
- 3.4 To support the expansion of the school there will be an extension of the school premises that will be funded by a combination of the Primary Capital Programme funding, the schools Devolved Formula Capital and other council capital funding. This extension will provide additional classrooms to accommodate the extra pupils. There will also be some internal remodelling and refurbishment to provide accommodation that will better fit the needs of current teaching and learning and the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 3.5 The governing body of the junior school has been consulted as has the governing body of the adjacent Davigdor Infant School. This proposal is linked to a proposal to permanently expand Davigdor Infant School by one form of entry from September 2010.
- 3.6 The views of the governing body will be finalised in light of the consultation. The initial view of the governing body was that providing an additional form of entry at the junior school would create too large a school with an over demand put on existing facilities. They were also concerned that the school's present high standards may be negatively affected. However they are aware that the proposal could benefit the increasing number of parents and pupils of the community served by the school. Governors will hold a special meeting at the end of the consultation period to determine their final views on the proposal.
- 3.7 In proposing the expansion of Somerhill Junior School the following programme is to be followed.

Publication of Consultation Document	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2009
Public Consultation Meeting	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2009
Last date for responses	10 <sup>th</sup> April 2009
Report back to Children and Young People CMM	20 <sup>th</sup> April 2009



Issue Public Notice	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2009
End of public notice period	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2009
Decision by the Children and Young People CMM	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2009
Provisional Opening	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2011

3.8 As this proposal is inextricably linked to the proposal to expand the adjacent Davigdor Infant school the two notices will be combined and published at the same time. It will be made clear in the notice that neither proposal will be implemented independently. The timetable will allow full analysis of responses to the notice to be prepared and presented to the Cabinet Member Meeting to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009. The report to that meeting will seek the final decision on the combined proposal.

3.9 A copy of the draft statutory notice is attached to this report at Appendix 1.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 A document outlining the expansion process was issued to governors, staff, pupils and parents and carers of Somerhill Infant School on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2009 and copies were made available to any other interested parties. This consultation document is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

4.2 As part of the public consultation process a public meeting was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2009. This meeting gave parents and carers, governors and other interested parties the opportunity to put forward their views. This meeting was attended by councillors, governors of both Somerhill and Davigdor Schools, the head teachers of both schools and approximately 12 others. A record of the points raised at the meeting was kept and a copy is attached at Appendix 3 to this report.

4.3 This initial stage of the consultation came to a close on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2009. The responses to this consultation exercise have been collated and analysed. Copies of the responses received have been copied and put in the members rooms.

4.4 In summary 18 responses were received of which 4 were in favour of the proposal and 14 were against the proposal.

4.5 The responses from those who supported the proposals said that they understood the need for additional places in the area and welcomed the increase in capacity for the school as this would increase the chances of local children being able to gain a place at their local school.

4.5 The main reasons for opposing the proposal were:

- that the site of the schools is too small to accommodate an increased number of pupils;
- the schools would be too big at four forms of entry;
- smaller schools are better;
- a new school is needed rather than expanding existing schools;

- there will be disruption during any associated building works;
  - That there had been insufficient consultation and that this had been carried out separately from the consultation for the proposal to expand Davigdor Infant school;
  - Concern at the loss of outside space at the school.
- 4.6 Analysis of existing pupil placements suggests that those who do not achieve a place at Somerhill Junior School are allocated places across a range of other schools right across the city. The Council believes that there will be no negative impact on other local primary schools as a result of this proposal. It is anticipated that the present trend of rising primary aged pupil numbers in the city combined with potential new developments will mean that further additional places will be required in this part of the city even if this proposal is implemented.
- 4.7 The mix of pupils in primary schools generally reflect their local communities hence there is generally a narrower variation of social mix than that found within secondary school cohorts. The DCSF particularly supports the expansion of popular and successful schools where possible to better provide for parental preferences.
- 4.8 Regarding the argument that there is no need for an increase in places within the City, last year saw an increase in infant place provision to accommodate a significant rise in numbers within the Hove area. These have been temporary provisions prior to proposed permanent expansion and a desired new primary school in Hove. It can reasonably be expected that these infant school pupils will be seeking a junior school place in Hove for September 2011.
- 4.9 The funding for the proposed expansion is from a combination of the Primary Capital Programme funding, the schools Devolved Formula Capital and other Council capital funding. The Primary Capital Programme will provide significant funding for a large number of primary schools within the city over the next fourteen years and enables the Council to address the practicalities of school place planning and parental wishes. The proposal to expand Somerhill Junior School forms part of the wider strategy for providing school places across the City.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 Any implications for funding the additional floor area at Somerhill Junior School will be met from the Individual School Budget (ISB), which may increase as a result of any additional pupils into the Authority as a result of the expansion. If no additional pupils come into the Authority then the additional funding Somerhill Junior School will receive will come from within the existing ISB. Any capital costs arising from the proposal would have to be met from within the existing Education Capital Programme which includes streams such as the Primary Capital Programme, NDS modernisation and a contribution from the schools Devolved Formula Capital (DFC). The full cost of this project will be reported in due course.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Sue Coleman*

*Date: 03/04/2009*

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 In order to achieve the proposed expansion, statutory notices will need to be published in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and associated regulations. There will then follow a period of 4 weeks within in which any person may make comment or objection to the proposal.

At the end of the publication period for the notice a decision will have to made within 2 months of the end of the publication period.

*Layer Consulted: Natasha Watson*

*Date: 27/03/09*

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Planning and provision of school places is conducted in such a way as to avoid potentially discriminatory admissions priorities or planning processes. The city council and voluntary aided school governing bodies must be mindful of bad practice as described in the Admission Code of Practice.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Planning and provision of school places are intended, so far as it is possible, to provide pupils, parents and carers with local places where they have asked for them. This is subject to limitations in school capacity, the funding available and the priority order for capital development determined by the Council.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no implications for the prevention of crime and disorder arising from this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are no risk issues in terms of resources or risks to children as a result of this proposal.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 All planning and provision to for school places in the city should be operating on the basis of admission limits and admission priorities which have been the subject of broad consultation. The effective coordination of planning arrangements should lead to sufficient school paces in all areas of the city and the removal of excess provision.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 The alternative option is to leave the school as a three form entry school.

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Brighton and Hove City Council has a legal requirement to provide sufficient school places for all school age children in the city. School places should be provided in such a way that parents and pupils can access a local school wherever possible. This proposal will provide additional places where they are wanted by parents and carers.

- 7.2 The views of the parents and carers, staff, governors and pupils of the school expressed during the consultation have been considered. It is not intended to build on the playing field as has been suggested.
- 7.3 Consideration has been given to the concerns about the size of the site raised by respondents to the consultation exercise. It is accepted that the combined site does not meet the recommendations within BB99 Briefing Framework for Primary School Projects in respect of a new school. However the combined site is more than double the size shown for a school on a constrained site.
- 7.4 The requirements for team games playing surfaces are detailed in the Education (School Premises) regulations 1999. Using the proposed total number of children that will attend Somerhill and Davigdor schools if the proposal is successful this regulation requires 15,000m<sup>2</sup> of team games playing space. This can be either grass, hard porous surface or polymeric surface, with both hard porous surfaces and polymeric surfaces counting as double their actual areas. In the case of Somerhill and Davigdor schools there is a total of 14,900m<sup>2</sup> of team games playing space available. While this does not actually meet the requirement of the regulations the difference is so small that it is not considered a material factor in progressing the proposal.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Draft Statutory Notice
2. Consultation document for the proposed expansion
3. Record of the public meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2009

### **Documents In Members' Rooms**

1. Consultation responses

### **Background Documents**

1. None

**Proposed Expansion and Enlargement of Davigdor Community Infant School and Somerhill Community Junior School**

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Brighton & Hove City Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Davigdor Community Infant School, Somerhill Road Hove, BN3 1RG from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009 and Somerhill Community Junior School Somerhill Road Hove BN3 2RP from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011.

It is proposed to expand Davigdor Community Infant School by one form of entry (30 additional pupils) and enlarge the premises accordingly from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009 and to expand Somerhill Community Junior School by one form of entry (30 additional pupils) and enlarge the premises accordingly from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011. These two proposals are related.

**Davigdor Infant School**

The current capacity of the school is 270 and the proposed capacity will be 360. The current number of pupils registered at the school is 300. The current admission number for the school is 90 and the proposed admission number will be 120.

**Somerhill Junior School**

The current capacity of the school is 354 and the proposed capacity will be 480. The current number of pupils registered at the school is 381. The current admission number for the school is 90 and the proposed admission number will be 120.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: Gil Sweetenham, Assistant Director - Schools & Central Team, Brighton & Hove City Council, King's House, Grand Avenue, Hove, BN3 2SU. 01273 293474 or via email from [gil.sweetenham@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:gil.sweetenham@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Ms D Smith, Director of Children's Services, Brighton and Hove City Council, Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove, BN3 2SU.

Proposed Expansion of Davigdor Infant School by one form of entry

Signed:

Publication Date:

Davigdor Infant School was temporarily expanded by one form of entry in September 2008, temporary accommodation was provided to facilitate this. If this proposal is successful work to provide a permanent extension to the school will be commenced in the summer 2009 with completion in

the early part of 2010. Until the permanent extension is completed further temporary accommodation will be provided to accommodate the additional pupils.

The admission number for Davigdor Community Infant School has been set at 120 for the school year starting September 2009 following the normal admissions consultation process.

The proposal to expand Davigdor Infant School will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009 and the proposal to expand Somerhill Junior School will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 which is the start of the school year when those additional pupils admitted to Davigdor Infant School in September 2008 will be starting Junior School.

These two proposals are related, this means that if one part of the notice is approved both parts will be approved and if one part of the notice is rejected both parts will be rejected.

draft



**Brighton & Hove**

## **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

### **PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SOMERHILL JUNIOR SCHOOL TO FOUR FORMS OF ENTRY FROM SEPTEMBER 2011**

**- inviting you to have your say -**

#### **Why are we consulting you?**

This document is published by Brighton and Hove City Council and is intended as a basis for consultation with governors, staff, pupils, parents and other interested groups about a proposal to expand Somerhill Junior School to four forms of entry.

This document sets out the reasons for the proposal, identifies the issues for consideration and explains the arrangements for consultation. At the end you will find details of a public meeting to which you are invited and a reply slip for you to let us know what you think. There is also some information about what happens after consultation.

#### **Some background facts**

Brighton and Hove City Council has a legal requirement to provide sufficient school places for all school age children in the city. School places should be provided in such a way that parents and pupils can access a local school wherever possible.

#### **The current position**

Somerhill Junior School is a highly successful and popular school in Somerhill Road in the heart of Hove immediately adjacent to Davigdor Infant School. It caters for children primarily living in the BN3 1, BN3 2 and BN3 3 postcode areas of the city. Apart from Davigdor Infant School the nearest community primary phase schools to the east are Stanford Infant and Junior Schools and to the west are West Hove Infant and Junior Schools. Also to the west is St Andrews, a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary school.

Over the last few years there has been year on year growth in the number of pre-school age children registered with General Practice

(GP) Surgeries in the city. This increase seems particularly acute in the area of the city served by Somerhill Junior School. It is anticipated that this situation is going to continue. Information on GP registration data shows that the number of children registered in this part of the city has increased from 150 in 1999 / 2000 to 350 in 2006/2007.

It is recognised that not all of these children will enter the maintained education sector, some will opt to attend church schools or private school, it is also recognised that parents of pre school age children tend to be most geographically mobile in the first four years of a child's life. However even taking these figures into account the increase in the number of pre school age children in this part of the city is significant.

The Council has a statutory duty to provide a maintained school place for any child that wants one. We are committed to working with schools to make them centres for community learning, and supporting them in meeting the wider needs of the community by engaging social services, health, the police, and the voluntary sector. For this to be successful it is important that children can access a primary school that is local to their home.

### **What is proposed?**

The proposal is to expand Somerhill Junior School to a four form entry school with a yearly intake of 120, an increase of 30 places per year.

To support the expansion of the school there will be an extension of the school premises that will be funded by a combination of the Primary Capital Programme funding, the schools Devolved Formula Capital and other Council capital funding. This extension will provide additional classrooms to accommodate the extra pupils. There will also be some internal remodelling and refurbishment to provide accommodation that will better fit the needs of current teaching and learning and the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum.

### **What might be the advantages of expanding the school to four forms of entry?**

Expanding the school by one form of entry (an additional 30 places each year) will ensure that more families can access their local school. This means that children will be able to attend school with friends that they have made in the Infant school, parents will not have to travel long distances to deliver their children to school and extended services offered by the school can be tailored to meet the needs of the whole community.



## **What might be the disadvantages of expanding the school to four forms of entry?**

A concern often put forward regarding expansion is that larger schools can be more stressful for the pupils and that staff will not be able to get to know every pupil. Parents are often concerned that the educational outcomes for their children will not be as good in a larger school. Brighton & Hove currently has 6 infant and junior schools that are four form entry schools (the size now proposed for Somerhill Junior School), 3 of these schools have been graded as outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspections. A further 2 schools have been graded as good and one is expected to achieve outstanding at their next inspection. This suggests that outcomes for children are not necessarily affected by the physical size of the school.

## **Views of the Governing Bodies**

The governing body of Somerhill Junior School has been consulted prior to taking the decision to hold a public consultation. The initial view of the governing body was that providing an additional form of entry at the Junior school would create too large a school with an over demand put on existing facilities. They were also concerned that the school's present high standards may be negatively affected. However they are aware that the proposal could benefit the increasing number of parents and pupils of the community served by the school.

The Governing Body of the Infant School has already agreed to consult on their expansion by one form of entry. This process has now progressed to the statutory consultation stage which will run in parallel with Somerhill should this be agreed.

The views of the governing bodies will be finalised in light of the consultation results.

## **Consultation arrangements**

This consultation will run in parallel with the school's action plan for engaging staff, pupils and parents enabling these groups to have a fair and appropriate input to the consultation process.

If, having read this document, you would like to comment on the proposals, there are several opportunities for doing so:

- You should complete and return (either to the school or Kings House) the reply slip included in this document.

- You can send a letter to the Assistant Director Central Area and School Support, Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove BN23 2SR. Please mark your letter for the attention of Gil Sweetenham
- In the interests of economy, letters will not be acknowledged or responded to.

- **Replies must be received by 10 April 2009**

- You are welcome to attend the **Public Meeting** which has been arranged for:

**Date: 2 April 2009**

**Time: 7pm**

**Venue: Somerhill Junior School**

- At this meeting parents and others will have the opportunity to put forward their views. Officers from the Children and Young Peoples Trust will be present to clarify points of detail.

### **The next stage**

All of the views put forward during the consultation stage will be reported to the Cabinet Member for the Children and Young Peoples Trust. This will allow an informed decision to be made regarding progression to the next stage in the process.

If it is decided to move ahead with the proposal the next stage is the issuing of a Statutory Notice detailing the proposal. The notice will be in force for a period of four weeks during which time objections to and comments on the proposal may be made by any person or group. Details of how to make an objection or comment will be incorporated within the Statutory Notice.

The Council is empowered to make the decision on whether to implement the proposal contained in the Statutory Notice but in doing so has to take account of guidance issued by the Department of Children Schools and Families. Any comments or objections have to be considered as part of the decision making process. The Final decision regarding this proposed change will be made by the Cabinet Member for the Children and Young Peoples Trust.

The proposals set out in this document are put forward as a basis for consultation only. It is stressed that **no decisions have yet been made** and that none will be made until consultations have been completed and all views carefully considered by Brighton and Hove City Council.

The Children and Young Peoples Trust major objective is to ensure the outcome of this consultation has local support and is in the best interests of pupils in Brighton and Hove.

**DO PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR VIEWS**

**Gil Sweetenham**

Assistant Director, Central Area and School Support  
Brighton and Hove Council 01273 293433

Table 1 – Current and forecast rolls for Somerhill Junior School and surrounding schools

		<b>Forecast Rolls assuming proposal implemented</b>						
		<b>Capacity Range</b>	<b>Admission Numbers</b>	<b>Spring 08</b>	<b>Jan 09</b>	<b>Jan10</b>	<b>Jan 11</b>	<b>Jan 12</b>
Somerhill School	Junior	243-270	120	381	379	380	380	480
Stanford School	Infant	243-270	90	270	269	269	270	270
West Hove School	Infant	291-324	120	259	358	360	360	360
Davigdor School	Infant	318-354	120	270	300	330	360	360
Stanford School	Junior	314-349	93	364	362	370	372	372
West Hove School	Junior	432-480	128	493	495	492	500	500

If you require any further copies of this document please request them by ringing 01273 293474 or emailing [marie.chesham@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:marie.chesham@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Address for this returning this document:  
**Marie Chesham Brighton & Hove City Council**  
**Room 320, King's House, Grand Avenue**  
**HOVE, BN3 2ZZ**

Please return by 10 April 2009

**All responses will be treated confidentially**  
**Thank you for your assistance in our review**

***The following timetable is proposed:***

Publication of Consultation Document	26 February 2009
Public Consultation Meeting	2 April 2009
Last date for responses	10 April 2009
Report back to Cabinet Member for the Children and Young Peoples Trust	19 April 2009
Issue Public Notice	1 May 2009
End of public notice period	29 May 2009
Decision by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young Peoples Trust	6 July 2009
Provisional Opening	1 September 2011

The Councillors for the area are:

Goldsmid	Ayas Fallon-Khan, Paul Lainchbury, Melanie Davis
Brunswick and Adelaide	Paul Elgood, David Watkins
Central Hove	Jan Young, Averil Older

**Please Note:** Apart from the public meeting on 2 April 2009 which will be held at the school, all other meetings are held at Hove Town Hall. For the exact times, please contact Marie Chesham on telephone number:

01273 293474

## RESPONSE FORM

Please return no later  
than  
**10 April 2009**

To: Gil Sweetenham  
Assistant Director Central Area  
And School Support  
Kings House

Tel: (01273) 293433

Fax: (01273) 293596

### Proposed Expansion of Somerhill Junior School by one form of Entry

**Name**

**Address**

(Please tick as appropriate) I am:

The parent of a pupil:

I support the proposal

A member of staff:

A school governor:   
(please state which school)

I do not support the proposal

Other interested party:   
(please state which)

My comments are as follows: *(please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)*



**Public Meeting at Somerhill School held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2009 at 19.00hrs**

The meeting was attended by the head teacher, chair of governors and a number of other governors of the Somerhill Junior School, The head teacher and governors of Davigdor Infant School, Gil Sweetenham and Gillian Churchill from the Local Authority, a number of local councillors, Celia Barlow MP and approximately 12 members of the community.

The meeting was publicised in a consultation document that was distributed by the school, approximately 750 copies of the document were distributed to parents and carers of pupils at both Somerhill Junior School and Davigdor Infant School. Copies of the document were made available to anyone who requested a copy.

The Chair of Governors (COG) of Somerhill Junior School opened the meeting and gave a brief introduction outlining the proposal to expand the school by one form of entry from September 2011. He explained that this meeting was to discuss the education reasons for the expansion.

Gil Sweetenham made a presentation on the reasons for the proposal and the statutory framework.

Following the presentation the floor was handed to the community to ask questions on the proposal.

**The CoG asked about the building programme.** It was explained that at present proposals for any associated building works were at a very early stage and that there would be opportunities in the future to discuss the building form should the proposals progress. A meeting between the school and the Local Authority (LA) had recently taken place, at this meeting the LA gave an undertaking that the schools visions and ideas would be an important part of the development process. If the decision is made at the Cabinet Member Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009 to progress with the proposals work would start in earnest on the design of the proposed extension. It is anticipated that a planning application would be submitted in September 2009. There will be considerable dialogue with the school (including governors, staff, pupils and parents) and local residents during the summer term prior to submitting the planning application.

**How many additional pupils would be in each of the schools and what additional support would be offered to the schools?** There would be 90 additional pupils in Davigdor Infant School and 120 additional pupils in Somerhill Junior School. The additional support offered will be tailored to meet the needs of the schools. Ensuring that standards are maintained is paramount.

**Celia Barlow MP asked if children would be admitted into Years 4, 5 and 6 or just into year 3.** It is the intention that the school will fill from Year 3

onwards. However it cannot be guaranteed that the appeals panel will uphold decisions made by the LA.

**Will there be a joined up approach to the expansion proposals?** The governing bodies of both schools have been consulted and the schools have now set up a joint working group. It has been agreed that the two proposals are inextricably linked and therefore neither proposal will proceed in isolation. The two schools share the kitchen and dining facilities and therefore any proposals affecting this area in particular will be jointly discussed with both schools.

**There has only been limited information about the extension proposals to date.** It was explained that at present the only work that had taken place was options appraisal to ensure that the required internal accommodation could be accommodated on the site without encroaching on to the outside space. The proposals for the extension at Davigdor Infant School are more advanced because the school had engaged in the process at an earlier date.

**What would happen if the proposals are rejected?** It would be necessary to find spaces for the children at other schools. It is possible that this would be at schools in different parts of the city.

**There is no mention in the consultation document about the outside space.** It is accepted that the schools have limited outside space, however it is not possible to increase the amount of outside space under these proposals. Consideration can be given to making use of public spaces such as parks although often these arrangements are not well used.

**Concern was raised about what would render the proposals unacceptable if it is accepted that there is inadequate external space.** The LA uses the recommendations of BB99 Briefing Framework for Primary School Projects as the basis of its works. If it was not possible to meet the internal requirements of BB99 we would not continue with the proposals.

**What would happen if the planning application was refused?** If the decision is to be made to implement the proposals the LA is legally bound to implement the proposal. We will need to work with planning officers to ensure that a scheme is developed that meets the needs of the school and that is acceptable in planning terms.

**Who will be the Decision Maker?** It will be Councillor Vanessa Brown the Children and Young People Cabinet Member.

**Concern that the decision on the education element of the proposal will be determined prior to the design being finalised.** This is unfortunate, however if the decision is taken to proceed with publishing the statutory notice the design work will commence in the early part of the summer term. This will mean that the design will be significantly developed prior to the final decision being taken on the education proposal on 6<sup>th</sup> July.



**What guarantee is there that the budget for the scheme will not be cut?**

There can be no absolute guarantee on this point. However the funding allocations for the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years are known and it is this funding that will be used for the project should it proceed.

**Is it the need for places that is the driver for these proposals?** Primarily yes. The head teacher at Davigdor said that although this is the case he feels that the school have benefited from receiving a very good quality design and that the school are very happy with the interaction between themselves and the LA and the outcome.

The meeting closed at 20.15hrs.

