

31st July 2018

Jo Friend
Clerk to Theale Parish Council
Theale Parish Council
Parish Office
The Pavilion
Englefield Road
Theale
Berkshire
RG7 5AS

Chief Executive
West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Market Street Newbury
Berkshire RG14 5LD
Our Ref: nc/rae
Your Ref:
Please ask for: Nick Carter
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Dear Ms Friend

Theale Primary School

You will recall that I wrote to you on 4th June concerning the above and highlighting the need to conclude matters regarding the lease on the North Street Playing Fields by July 31st 2018. Mrs Friend emailed me on 21st June stating that the Parish Council would not be in a position to provide an indication as to whether the Parish Council would agree to relinquishing the lease. I have heard nothing since.

July 31st has now passed and I am writing to inform you that West Berkshire Council has now formally started discussions with neighbouring primary schools to ensure there will be sufficient capacity going forward for Theale children to attend one of these schools since the current Theale Primary School is now at capacity. The resources set aside to invest in a new primary school for Theale will now be directed to the neighbouring school we decide needs to be expanded.

I have received a letter from the Englefield Estate dated July 27th 2018 which includes a revised offer to Theale Parish Council with regard to matters relating to the new school. If this offer is accepted this Council will ensure that it plays its part in implementing what is required. In addition I have received a significant level of correspondence from Theale residents asking West Berkshire Council to give Theale Parish Council more time to make a decision regarding the lease.

As I have stated previously, West Berkshire Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for the children of Theale and we have now been waiting for over a year for the Parish Council to decide whether they will surrender the lease on the Playing Field. Whilst we have no choice but to start planning to expand a neighbouring school, in reality, we cannot take this work forward until the schools return in September. Mindful of this, and the recent offer from the Englefield Estate, Members have agreed that if they receive clear evidence that Theale Parish Council has surrendered its lease on the North Street Playing Fields no later than 5.00 pm on Friday 14th September 2018 they will revisit their decision to cancel the Theale Primary School project.

This Council will be shortly releasing a press release clarifying its position on this matter. Given the public interest in this topic a copy of this letter is also being made available to those with an interest in the matter including the local media.

I hope this clarifies this Council's position on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Carter', written in a cursive style.

Nick Carter
Chief Executive

cc. Cllr Graham Jones
Cllr Lynne Doherty
Cllr Alan Macro
Cllr Mollie Lock
Alok Sharma MP
Headteacher, Theale Church of England Primary School
Chair of Governors, Theale Church of England Primary School
Ian Pearson, WBC
Edward Crookes, Englefield Estate