



# Hampshire County Council

Councillor Ken Thornber CBE  
*Leader of the Council*

*The Castle, Winchester*  
*Hampshire SO23 8UJ*  
Telephone 01962 847750  
Fax 01962 845969  
[www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

July 2006

## **NO NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR WHITELEY**

Dear Whiteley resident,

I wrote to you last month to inform you of my personal delight that Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth Church of England Diocese were a huge step nearer providing your community with a new primary school, church and additional recreation facilities.

Winchester City Council had shown support for the principle of making land at the Meadowside recreation ground available, subject to public consultation and a number of conditions, which we were happy to meet in full.

Sadly, it is with deep regret that I have to let you know that this is no longer the case, after the City Council's Cabinet, at its meeting on 10 July 2006, made a decision recommending not to release the land. It took the view that retaining the land at Meadowside was more important to you than the new school and additional community facilities. I know that view was not supported by the many young families who desperately wanted a school to be built within their neighbourhood, to avoid the need for them to send their children to schools south of the M27, which would also help reduce traffic congestion.

It has taken me a while to come to terms with the realisation that Whiteley will not get the new school that we promised and that you so dearly deserve. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported our efforts to deliver the highest quality education facilities on what was the only site viable within the timescale. Over £4million of Government money towards the scheme has been lost at a stroke.

I want you to know how greatly disappointed I am that the opportunity of providing a new school and a very valuable asset to the community is now lost – at least for five years, probably longer depending on the speed with which decisions are made concerning future housing development. My deepest regret is that it's the children and young people who have lost out the most because there was a feeling from one section in the community that the recreational land we offered in return, alongside the school, football pitch, church, music facilities, hall and computer suite was not enough.

While we have been thwarted in our best efforts to build the new school, I want you to be assured that we remain committed to fulfilling our duties under the Children Act and ensuring that every child has the best opportunity to achieve their full potential, sadly something that is not shared by all.

Yours sincerely,

Ken Thornber  
Leader

