

**Notice of Motion No. 35**

**A Fair Chance for Every Child in Wiltshire  
From Councillors Jon Hubbard and Steve Oldrieve**

To consider the following motion received in accordance with the Council's constitution:

**"The Conservative Government in Westminster have issued a Green Paper suggesting that every school could convert to a Grammar School, reintroducing selective education for children across the county of Wiltshire.**

**Sir Michael Wilshaw\*, the head of Ofsted, has described the expansion of Grammar Schools as a "retrograde step" and this view has been echoed by educationalists from across the country.**

**Currently in Wiltshire there are 2 Grammar Schools, both in Salisbury where there are 5 other state schools offering secondary education. No other community in Wiltshire enjoys having so many comprehensive schools in such a small geographical area.**

**Council notes:**

- **Should one, or more, of Wiltshire's market town schools, which is served by just one secondary school, convert to a grammar school then this would leave many children without a local school to attend**
- **Even Free School founder and right ring columnist Toby Young has publically stated that introducing new grammar schools with do nothing to help boost social mobility\*\***

**Council believes:**

- **That should rural comprehensive schools in Wiltshire be converted to grammar schools it would disadvantage Wiltshire's children, with many being forced to travel significant additional distance to schools each day**
- **That there is a considerable risk to the county's budget, should the council have to fund passenger transport for young people to schools other than those local to them as a result of not passing the 11 plus**
- **That dividing young people at the age of 11, based on their individual performance during a 145-minute\*\*\* one-off exam, is a retrograde step which will end up in the majority of young people be left feeling they are failures**
- **That former Prime Minister David Cameron was correct to say "I think it is delusional to think that a policy of expanding a number of grammar schools is either a good idea, a sellable idea or even the right idea."\*\*\*\***

**Council calls for:**

- **A statement to be issued by Wiltshire Council stating: “This Council does not support the further expansion of grammar schools in Wiltshire”**
- **The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services to lobby all parliamentarians in Wiltshire to do all in their power to prevent existing comprehensive schools being converted to grammar schools**
- **The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services to write to the Secretary of State stating that Wiltshire Council does not believe that the conversion of comprehensive schools to grammar schools in rural communities is in the best interests of *all* young people”**

\* speaking on LBC radio - <http://www.lbc.co.uk/hot-topics/schools/ofsted-chief-no-new-grammar-schools/>

\*\* <http://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/08/why-bringing-back-grammar-schools-wont-help-social-mobility/>

\*\*\* Source of details of 11 plus exams in Wiltshire - <http://www.elevenplusexams.co.uk/schools/regions/wiltshire-11-plus>

\*\*\*\* <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/09/12/david-cameron-is-gone-but-these-tory-mps-will-fight-grammar-scho/>

To assist Council in its consideration of the above motion, a briefing note is attached.