

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

**CHILDREN'S, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION
CABINET COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 8th March, 2023

10.00 am

Council Chamber





SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

CHILDREN'S, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 8 March 2023 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber

Ask for: **Emily Kennedy**
Telephone: **03000 419625**

Membership

Conservative:	Mr M C Dance (Chairman), Mr M Dendor (Vice-Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr D Beaney, Mrs B Bruneau, Mr G Cooke, Ms S Hamilton, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr S C Manion, Ms M McArthur and Mr A Sandhu, MBE
Labour:	Mr A Brady and Dr L Sullivan
Liberal Democrat:	Mrs T Dean, MBE
Green and Independent:	Mr P Stepto
Church Representatives:	Mr M Reidy, Mr J Constanti and Mr Q Roper
School Governor Representatives	Mrs K Moses and Ms R Ainslie-Malik

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

- 9 Contracts Register (Pages 1 - 8)
- 10 Proposed Revision of Rates Payable and Charges Levied for Children's Services in 2023-24 (Pages 9 - 24)
- 12 Family Hub Transformation Funding (Pages 25 - 46)
- 14 Expansion of Wrotham Academy (Pages 47 - 56)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Tuesday, 28 February 2023

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Contract Register – January 2023

CYPE Summary

Cabinet Member	Contract Name	Estimated Value	Annual/Contract Value/Spend	Start Date	End Date	Extension End Date	Contract Type
Sue Chandler	Connecting Adoptive Families Independent Service (CAFIS)	£1,128,825	£376,275	01/10/2018	30/09/2021	30/09/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Young People Supported Accommodation & Floating Support Service	£9,281,628	£2,320,407	01/10/2018	30/09/2022		Contract
Sue Chandler	Shared Accommodation	£29,500,000	£5,900,000	01/11/2017	31/10/2022		Contract
Sue Chandler	Delivery of Millmead Children's Centre	£2,677,570	£222,127	01/04/2013	31/03/2019	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Delivery of Seashells Children's Centre	£2,428,254	£204,302	01/04/2013	31/03/2019	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 1 Ashford	£448,000	£95,750	01/08/2018	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 10 Thanet	£871,337	£136,948	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 11 Tonbridge & Malling	£387,333	£81,800	01/08/2018	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 12 Tunbridge Wells	£354,667	£75,800	01/08/2018	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 2 Canterbury	£692,432	£109,331	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 3 Dartford	£557,270	£87,990	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 4 Dover	£633,209	£99,980	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract

Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 5 Gravesham	£633,333	£100,000	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 6 Maidstone	£580,767	£91,700	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 7 Sevenoaks	£475,000	£75,000	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 8 Folkestone & Hythe	£549,100	£86,700	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 9 Swale	£848,350	£133,950	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Direct Payment and Kent Card Support and Management Service	£1,034,503	£403,000	01/04/2019	31/03/2021	31/03/2023	Contract

Cabinet Member	Contract Name	Estimated Value	Annual/Contract Value/Spend	Start Date	End Date	Extension End Date	Contract Type
Rory Love	Multiply Numeracy Project	£7,500,000	£2,500,000	01/01/2023	31/03/2025		Contract
Rory Love	Inclusion Leadership Service	£800,000	£800,000	01/09/2021	31/03/2024		Contract
Rory Love	Whole School Approaches to Nurture	£900,000	£900,000	01/09/2021	31/08/2024		Contract
Rory Love	Supported Employment in Schools - Mainstream Offer	£997,376	£332,459	01/09/2021	31/08/2024		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	Reconnect Maths Support for Parents	£49,994	£49,994	11/04/2022	30/04/2023		Contract
Rory Love	Reconnect The Incredible Years Dinosaur Curriculum	£15,998	£15,998	22/04/2022	28/02/2023		Contract
Rory Love	Non-Maintained and Independent Special		£65,000,000				Spot Purchase Arrangement

	School (NMISS) Placements						
Rory Love	SEN Home Tuition		£3,054,000	01/04/2023			Spot Purchase Arrangement
Rory Love	SEN Therapies		£428,917				Spot Purchase Arrangement
Rory Love	SEND & The Education Programme SLA	£4,757,467	£206,000	01/01/2022	31/07/2024		Contract
Rory Love	Educational Psychology Assessment Service	£1,380,000	£923,000	01/12/2022	30/11/2023	30/11/2024	Contract
Rory Love	Non-Maintained and Independent Special Schools (NMISS) Placement Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)	£0		01/09/2022	31/08/2025	31/08/2028	Contract
Rory Love	QPL - SEN Therapies	£0		01/06/2022	31/05/2026		Contract
Rory Love	STLS Goldwyn School (Ashford)	£209,517	£502,840	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS St Nicholas School (Canterbury)	£199,517	£478,840	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Rowhill School (Dartford)	£191,179	£458,830	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Elm School (Dover)	£193,013	£463,230	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS The Beacon School (Folkestone & Hythe)	£211,338	£507,210	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Ifield School (Gravesham)	£203,879	£489,310	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Five Acre Wood (Maidstone)	£211,604	£507,850	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS PD	£318,900	£602,367	01/04/2022	31/12/2022		Service Level Agreement

Rory Love	STLS Sensory	£1,420,978	£1,420,978	01/04/2022	31/12/2022		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Valence School (Sevenoaks)	£148,117	£355,480	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Meadowfield School (Sittingbourne)	£257,367	£617,680	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Laleham Gap School (Thanet)	£273,146	£655,550	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Nexus Foundation Special School (Tonbridge)	£189,521	£454,850	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Rory Love	STLS Broomhill Bank School (Tunbridge Wells)	£152,000	£364,800	01/09/2022	31/08/2025		Service Level Agreement
Sue Chandler	Residential Children's Homes	£39,645,578	£18,194,884	01/04/2021	31/03/2022		Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	IFP Non-framework	£3,200,000		01/04/2021	31/03/2022		Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	Residential Family Assessment Centres	£1,514,040		01/04/2021	31/03/2022		Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	Residential Secure	£606,294	£721,000	01/04/2021	31/03/2022		Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	Residential Special Schools	£1,557,492		01/04/2021	31/03/2022		Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	Young People Supported Accommodation & Floating Support Service	£9,281,628	£2,320,407	01/10/2018	30/09/2022		Contract
Sue Chandler	IFP Framework 2022	£44,400,000	£11,073,300	01/04/2022	31/03/2026	31/03/2030	Contract
Sue Chandler	Semi-Independent Accommodation	£6,845,000	£772,500	01/04/2021	31/03/2022		Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	Rights, Representation & Advocacy Services	£750,900	£250,300	01/10/2022	31/09/2025		Contract
Sue Chandler	Shared Accommodation	£29,500,000	£5,900,000	01/11/2017	31/10/2022		Contract
Sue Chandler	Adopter Led Support	£13,500	£13,500	01/04/2022	31/03/2024		Contract

		Groups					
Sue Chandler	Connecting Adoptive Families Independent Service (CAFIS)	£1,128,825	£376,275	01/10/2018	30/09/2021	30/09/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Care and Support in the Home (Childrens)	£1,300,000	£1,300,000	01/02/2022	15/06/2024		Contract
Sue Chandler	Kent and Medway Communication Assisted Technology	£90,000	£90,000	01/04/2016	31/03/2017	31/03/2023	Service Level Agreement
Sue Chandler	Regulation 44 independent Visitor	£71,280	£25,000	01/10/2022	31/03/2025		Contract
Sue Chandler	IASK Information Advice and Support Kent	£30,000	£30,000	01/04/2019	31/03/2020	31/03/2023	Service Level Agreement
Sue Chandler	Short Breaks Grants Programme	£1,060,000	£1,060,000	01/04/2022	31/03/2023	31/03/2024	Grants
Sue Chandler	Direct Payment and Kent Card Support and Management Service	£1,034,503	£403,000	01/04/2019	31/03/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Residential, Residential Special Schools, Family Centres, Children's Homes		£11,140,000	01/04/2022			Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	IFP Framework and Spot Positive Behaviour Service (PBS)		£2,370,576	01/04/2022			Spot Purchase Arrangement
Sue Chandler	Together with parents	£2,400,000	£800,000	01/07/2020	31/01/2023		Service Level Agreement
Sue Chandler	Young Carers Service	£1,108,140	£369,380	01/04/2022	31/03/2025		Contract
Sue Chandler	Kent Supported Employment - CORE Service CYPE	£976,500	£325,500	01/05/2022	30/04/2025		Contract
Sue Chandler	NEET Support Service	£2,961,600	£740,400	01/04/2018	31/03/2024		Service Level Agreement
Sue Chandler		£500,000	£500,000	01/10/2020	30/09/2023		Service Level Agreement

Sue Chandler	Delivery of Millmead Children's Centre	£2,677,570	£222,127	01/04/2013	31/03/2019	31/03/2023	Contract
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Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 8 Folkestone & Hythe	£549,100	£86,700	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Youth Services Lot 9 Swale	£848,350	£133,950	01/12/2016	30/11/2021	31/03/2023	Contract
Sue Chandler	Speech , Language and Communication Needs for Young Offenders (SLCN)	£94,418	£94,418	01/12/2022	30/11/2023		Contract
Sue Chandler	Serious Youth Violence and Prevention Project	£898,000	£449,000	05/06/2020	04/06/2022	31/05/2023	Contract
		£143,011,000					

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From: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

To: Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee - 8 March 2023

Subject: **PROPOSED REVISION OF RATES PAYABLE AND CHARGES LEVIED FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN 2023-24**

Classification: Unrestricted

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: All

Summary:

This paper sets out the proposed revision to the rates payable by children's services within Kent for the 2023-24 financial year.

Recommendation(s):

The Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE** or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member covering proposals to:

- (i) Change the rates payable by Children's Services in 2023-24 as detailed in section 2 and Appendix 2 of this report.
- (ii) **NOTE** the changes to the rates that are set by the Government/external agencies: including inter-agency charges and Essential Living Allowance
- (iii) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report is produced annually and seeks approval for the Council's proposed rates for Children Social Services for the forthcoming financial year.

1.2 The report distinguishes between these rates over which Members can exercise their discretion and those which are set by the Government/external agencies.

1.3 In relation to those rates where Members can exercise their discretion, we have traditionally increased these annually in line with either the annual CPI increase or more recently, when CPI has been low, the average percentage increase for KCC pay performance. For 2023-24, we are proposing a

general inflationary increase of 8.8% for most rates. This inflationary increase is in line with the CPIH increase between September 2021 and September 2022. CPIH is considered an appropriate measure of inflation and is used by the Government as its headline measure of inflation.

- 1.4 These proposals include applying an uplift to the maintenance element of the foster carer payment in a different way for 2023-24. The uplift to the weekly maintenance payment has previously been directly linked to the DFE published rates (known as the National Minimum Allowance or NMA). The DFE have increased the NMA for Local Authorities in the South-East by 12.6% in 2023-24, this is higher than the current rate of inflation. Therefore, the proposal is to split the value of this uplift between increasing the maintenance rate by 8.8% (in line with other rates) and providing a £500 one-off payment to each of our foster carers during 2023-24.
- 1.5 The security of an annual uplift continues to form part of Kent Fostering's approach to improving the recruitment and retention of foster carers by enabling the service to provide a more competitive package in the carer's marketplace.
- 1.6 Further explanations of individual price uplifts are given in Appendix 2.
- 1.7 The effective date for all proposed rate changes is 1 April 2023 and they will apply until 31 March 2024 or until a decision is taken to revise these rates further, whichever is sooner.

2. Rates payable by Children's Services

- 2.1 Appendix 1 provides a list of all rates proposed for 2023-24 compared to the approved 2022-23 rates. The methodology for each proposed rate increase is outlined in Appendix 2.
- 2.2 All payments will continue to be made in line with the prevailing policy including the Fostering Payment Policy shared with this Cabinet Committee on 11th March 2020. The policy is due to be reviewed during 2023.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 In relation to the proposed increases to the rates we pay, additional funding has been included within the Directorate's 2023-24 budget proposals, under the heading "Inflation - Children's Social Care" at just over £7.0m. This calculation includes an assumed uplift for all in-house fostering and associated payments.
- 3.2 The 2023-24 budget is based on a set of assumptions where price uplifts are unknown. Since the agreement of this budget, the DFE have published the National Minimum Allowance (NMA) for foster carer payments. This is used to set the maintenance element of the foster carer payment (which is also used to set the adoption and special guardianship payments). The NMA uplift was higher than assumed in the budget. The proposed uplifts in this paper will cost approximately £0.6m more than initially budget. Consideration was given to lowering the rates, but it was felt the risk to the

recruitment and retention of foster carers was too high to propose a lower inflationary increase. Our in-house foster carers continue to provide the most cost-effective provision for our looked after children. The Directorate will look to see what alternative management action could be taken to mitigate against this increase in costs and the resulting impact will be reported in the monitoring throughout the forthcoming year. Where alternative compensating actions are not possible the Council has approved a £12m contribution to the risk reserve in 2023-24.

4. **Legal Implications**

The national minimum standards, together with regulations on the placement of children in foster care, such as the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of fostering services. The report distinguishes between those rates over which Members can exercise their discretion, and those set by Government or external agencies.

5. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

We have not assessed any adverse impact within these proposals to increase funding rates for children's services.

6. Recommendation(s):

The Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE** or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member covering proposals to:

- (i) Change the rates payable by Children's Services in 2023-24 as detailed in section 2 and Appendix 2 of this report.
- (ii) **NOTE** the changes to the rates that are set by the Government/external agencies: including inter-agency charges and Essential Living Allowance
- (iii) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision.

5. **Background Documents (plus links to document)**

The Fostering Payment Policy presented to CYPE Cabinet Committee on 11th March 2020:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s96325/Item%208%20-%20Kent%20Fostering%20Payments%20Policy%20App%203.pdf>

6. **Contact details**

Report Author

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Relevant Directors:

- Sarah Hammond
- Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education
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- sarah.hammond@kent.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Children's Social Care – Comparison between approved 2022-23 and proposed 2023-24 rates and charges

Description of Payment/Charge	Basis	2022-23	2023-24	Movement in Rate	
		Rate	Proposed Rate	£	%
		£	£	£	%
Adoption Service Charges (administered through Regional Adoption Agency)					
<i>Local Authority</i>					
One child	per child	£27,000	£27,000	£0	0%
2 Siblings	per child	£43,000	£43,000	£0	0%
3+ Siblings	per child	£60,000	£60,000	£0	0%
<i>Voluntary Adoption Agencies</i>					
One child	per child	£33,871	£35,565	£1,694	5.0%
2 Siblings	per child	£54,630	£57,362	£2,732	5.0%
3 Siblings	per child	£74,297	£78,012	£3,715	5.0%
4 Siblings	per child	£85,222	£89,483	£4,261	5.0%
5 Siblings	per child	negotiated	negotiated	n/a	n/a
Ongoing supervision	per child	£939.00	£986.00	£47.00	5.0%
Foster Care – Maintenance					
All placements under 2 years old	Weekly	£163.69	£178.09	£14.40	8.8%
All placements 2 to 4 years old	Weekly	£169.08	£183.96	£14.88	8.8%
All placements 5 to 10 years old	Weekly	£186.31	£202.71	£16.40	8.8%
All placements 11 to 15 years old	Weekly	£213.23	£231.99	£18.76	8.8%
All placements over 16 years old	Weekly	£248.77	£270.66	£21.89	8.8%
One-off payment	Per foster carer	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00	100%

Description of Payment/Charge	Basis	2022-23 Rate	2023-24 Proposed Rate	Movement in Rate	
Foster Care – Reward					
Non-related placements for 0 to 8 years old	Weekly	£125.15	£136.16	£11.01	8.8%
Non-related placement for 9 to 18 years old	Weekly	£237.71	£258.63	£20.92	8.8%
Foster Care - Disability Enhancement					
Standard	Weekly	£71.31	£77.59	£6.28	8.8%
Enhanced	Weekly	£95.08	£103.45	£8.37	8.8%
Foster Care Skills Based Payments					
Skilled (Level 2)	Weekly	£22.71	£24.71	£2.00	8.8%
Advanced (Level 3)	Weekly	£55.74	£61.73	£4.99	8.8%
Foster Carer Mileage Rate					
Rate per mile	Mile	45p	45p	0p	0%
Emergency Foster Carer Payment					
Retainer	Weekly	£250.00	£250.00	0p	0%
Foster Care - Sessional & Day Care Rates					
Sessional Work	Hourly	£10.45	£10.92	47p	4.5%
Day Care	Hourly	£10.45	£10.92	47p	4.5%
Foster Carer – Parent & Child (Rate adjustment)					
Income Support personal allowance for a lone parent over 18	Weekly	£77.00	£84.00	£7.80	10.0%

Description of Payment/Charge	Basis	2022-23 Rate	2023-24 Proposed Rate	Movement in Rate	
Foster Carer – Savings adjustment					
Savings (from week 14 onwards)	Weekly	£10.00	£10.00	0p	0%
Kent Supported Homes (Host payments)					
Standard Support	Weekly	£154.5	£168.10	£13.60	8.8%
Enhanced Support	Weekly	£257.5	£280.16	£22.66	8.8%
Complex Support (legacy cases only)	Weekly	£200	£200	£0	8.8%
Mother and Baby Arrangement Support	Weekly	£309	£336.19	£27.19	8.8%
Outreach support	Hourly	£10.45	£10.92	£0.47	4.5%
Rent (16/17 year old and 18+ who are not eligible to claim benefits)	Weekly	£72.10	£78.44	£6.34	8.8%
Rent (University non-term time)	Weekly	LHA** rate	LHA** rate	n/a	n/a
Staying Put Extended Foster Care Rate	Weekly	various	various	n/a	n/a
Essential Living Allowance					
Job Seekers Allowance rate for single adult aged under 25	Weekly	£61.05	£67.20	£6.15	10%

Please note: The table above lists the component parts the fostering rate only. The total amount paid to a foster carer will be a combination of the payments listed above dependent on both the foster carer and type of placement. Further details on the different type of payment structure can be found in the Kent Fostering Payments Policy presented to Cabinet Committee on 11th March 2020 (please see [background documents](#)).

**LHA Rate – Local Housing Authority Rate

Appendix 2: Methodology for each proposed rate increase set out in Appendix 1.

To aid understanding each charge as been labelled as either “to be noted” or “to be approved” in line with the recommendations. Where a charge is to “to be noted” these relate to charges that are set by or in line with the Government or external agencies.

1.1 Adoption Service Charges (to be noted)

Inter-Agency Charges – Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Local Authorities

The inter-agency fee for adoption was first introduced in 1992 to reflect the expenditure incurred in family finding, preparation and placement of children. These charges are agreed by the following; Local Government Agency (LGA), Consortium of Voluntary Agencies (CVAA), Association of Directors of Children Services (ADCS) and Society of Local Authority Chief Executive (SOLACE) and therefore are not within our discretion to alter. The rates between Local Authorities remain unchanged since 2014-15.

In 2018, the CVAA announced the decision to link the interagency rate for Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA) to the CPIH measure (including owner occupier’s house costs) for the preceding financial year. This is to reflect the upward pressure on staff salaries and the complexity of work involved in the adoption placements. However, for 2023-24 they have agreed to contain their increase to 5.0%, rather than the CPIH measure for 12 months to December 2022 of 9.2%.

The interagency charges between Local Authorities are set by the Association of Directors of Children’s Services. There is no increase expected for 2023-24.

From 2023-24 all inter-agency charges will be co-ordinated and incurred by the Adoption Partnership on behalf of Kent.

1.2 Foster Care Payments

Further details on the different types of Foster Care Payments can be found in Kent Fostering Payments Policy (please see [background documents](#)).

a) Maintenance (to be proposed)

The Council has traditionally maintained a link to the Department for Education (DfE) published fostering rates known as the National Minimum Allowance. This reflects the minimum payment foster carers should expect to receive to help cover the cost of caring for a child. The DfE have recently confirmed the National Minimum Allowance for 2023-24. The proposal is to increase the weekly maintenance payment by 8.8%, along with a one-off payment of £500 to each foster carer during 2023-24. The proposals will ensure Kent will continue to pay above the DfE rate to cover holidays, birthdays, religious observations & Christmas.

Please note the weekly rates also apply to Permanency Arrangement Orders payments within Children's Services e.g. Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders.

b) Reward Element (to be proposed)

An inflationary increase of +8.8% is proposed.

c) Disability Enhancement (to be proposed)

There are currently two rates:

Standard – Carers will receive an enhancement payment of 30% uplift of the higher reward element.

Enhanced – Carers will receive an enhancement payment of 40% uplift of the higher reward element.

Therefore, an inflationary increase of +8.8% is proposed.

d) Foster Care Skills Based Payments (to be proposed)

This rate has historically been uplifted in line with the CPIH rate +8.8%.

e) Foster Carer Mileage Rate (to be proposed)

The mileage rates paid to foster carers is proposed to remain unchanged at 45p per mile in line with KCC staff.

f) Emergency Foster Carer Retainer (to be proposed)

This is not subject to standard inflationary uplift and it is proposed this rate remains unchanged for 2023-24.

g) Sessional & Day Care Rates (to be proposed)

The rate is aligned with changes to the National Living Wage where the daycare/sessional rate proposed each year, will be set as 50p above the National Living Wage.

h) Foster Carer Parent & Child – Rate adjustment (to be noted)

Where a foster carer is in receipt of an enhanced parent and child payment, a reduction in the foster carer's maintenance fee equivalent to the income support personal allowance for a lone parent over 18, is made. The Income Support Personal Allowance for a lone parent over 18 has been confirmed by DWP as £84.00 from 1 April 2023.

i) Foster Carer – Savings adjustment (to be noted)

It is expected that all carers/providers save a minimum of £10.00 a week for any child in care from the maintenance payment starting at week 14 of a child or young person coming into care. When the child or young person has been in care for a year, it is expected that this amount (a minimum of £10.00 a week) for any child or young person in care, is paid into either a Child Trust Fund or a Junior ISA. The £10.00 per week will be automatically deducted from the maintenance payment and paid into a Child Trust Fund or a Junior ISA directly by KCC.

1.3 **Kent Supported Homes** (to be proposed)

The payment to hosts is split into 2 parts: a support payment and a rent payment. The support payment is proposed to increase in line with foster carers reward rate of 8.8% inflation. The rent payment is applicable where the host is supporting a young person who is under 18 years old or over 18 years old and not eligible for Housing Benefit/Universal Credit. The rent payment will vary depending on the circumstances of young person. The hourly rate for outreach support is aligned with the foster carer sessional/daycare work.

The Staying Put Extended Foster Care Rate may be applicable where the young person is in further education (this is subject to the Staying Put policy and the rate will vary dependent on circumstances).

1.4 **Essential Living Allowance** (to be noted)

This is the weekly payment to Care Leavers including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). The rate payable is in line with the Job Seeking Allowance for a single adult aged under 25 which has been confirmed by DWP as £67.20 from 1 April 2023.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services

DECISION NO:

To be allocated by Democratic Services

For publication [Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
 - the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
 - significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Proposed Revisions of Rates Payable by Kent County Council for Children’s Social Care Services in 2023-24

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services, I agree to:

- a)
 - i. The weekly Foster Care Maintenance allowance is increased to:

All placements under 2 years old	£178.09
All placements 2 to 4 years old	£183.96
All placements 5 to 10 years old	£202.71
All placements 11 to 15 years old	£231.99
All placements over 16 years old	£270.66

- ii. Additional one-off payment of £500 per foster carer in 2023-24

- iii. The weekly Foster Care Reward element is increased to:

Non-related placements 0 to 8 years old	£136.16
Non-related placements 9 to 18 years old	£258.63

- iv. The weekly Foster Care Disability Enhancement is increased to:

Standard	£77.59
Enhanced	£103.45

- v. The weekly Foster Care Skills Based Payment is increased to:

Skilled (Level 2)	£24.71
Advanced (Level 3)	£61.73

vi. The weekly Emergency Foster Carer Retainer payment remains at:

Retainer	£250.00
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vii. The hourly Sessional & Day Care payments increase to:

Sessional Work	£10.92
Day Care	£10.92

viii. The Foster Carer Mileage Rate will remain at 45p per mile in line with KCC staff.

ix. The Kent Supported Homes (Supporting Lodging payments to hosts) remain at:

Standard Support (per week)	£168.10
Enhanced Support (per week)	£280.16
Complex Support (legacy cases only) (per week)	£200.00
Mother and Baby Arrangement Support (per week)	£336.19
Outreach support (per hour)	£10.92
Rent (16/17 year old and 18+ who are not eligible to claim benefits) (per week)	£78.44
Rent (University non-term time)	LHA** rate
Staying Put Extended Foster Care Rate	Various**

*LHA – Local Housing Authority

**Various – the rate will depend on circumstances and agreed in line with the Staying Put policy.

b) NOTE:

x. The rates which are dictated by external agencies i.e. Inter-agency charges and Essential Living Allowance

c) DELEGATE:

xi. Authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officers, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background

The rates payable by Children’s Services are reviewed annually, with any revisions normally introduced from the start of the new financial year.

Some of the increases are directly linked to the published Department for Education fostering rates, which are reviewed by the Department annually.

Financial Implications

The increase in payments and income have been reflected in the Council’s budget plans presented to County Council on 10 February 2023 under the heading “Inflation - Children’s Social Care” at just over £7.0m. This calculation includes an assumed uplift for all in-house fostering and associated payments. It is estimated the cost of these proposals will be £0.6m more than provided in the budget as the DFE annual uplift to the National Minimal Allowance was greater than estimated. The

Directorate will look to see what alternative management action could be taken to mitigate against this increase in costs and the resulting impact will be reported in the monitoring throughout the forthcoming year. Where alternative compensating actions are not possible the Council has approved a £12m contribution to the risk reserve in 2023-24.

Legal implications

The national minimum standards, together with regulations on the placement of children in foster care, such as the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of fostering services. The report distinguishes between those rates over which Members can exercise their discretion, and those set by Government or external agencies.

Equalities implications

We have not assessed any adverse impact within these proposals to increase funding rates for children's services.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Children's and Young People Cabinet Committee considered the decision on 8th March 2023.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The alternatives would be to either:

- Freeze the rates at 2022-23 level or apply a lower percentage increase than proposed. This was rejected on the basis that the security of an annual uplift continues to form part of Kent Fostering's approach to improving the recruitment and retention of foster carers by enabling the service to provide a more competitive package in the carer's marketplace and by not applying a reasonable uplift could put at risk this strategy.
- Apply a higher percentage uplift than propose. This was rejected on the basis that this would be unaffordable within the allocated budget.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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signed

.....
date

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From: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 8 March 2023.

Subject: 23/00015 - Family Hub Transformation Funding

Decision Number - 23/00015

Key decision

- *It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions*
- *It involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m (Over several phases)*

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: Decision - 22/00094 - Family Hubs Transformation

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All

Summary: Kent County Council has been successful in receiving Family Hub Transformation Authority status and has therefore received designated Family Hub Transformation Funding.

Further work now needs to commence to begin exploring how the Family Hub model could work in Kent. To align with this, expenditure of funding allocated for financial year 2022 - 2023 needs to take place.

Following key decision 22/00094 which relates to the acknowledgement of status and acceptance of funding as part of the Family Hubs Transformation programme, a further key decision is now required in order to allocate expenditure for financial year 2022 – 2023 and commence development activity for Family Hubs.

The Council must take a formal decision to enable this financial year's funding to be allocated and support the development of further proposals regarding future delivery.

Allocation of this initial expenditure will allow further work to be undertaken to develop more detailed and co-designed proposals for delivery alongside proposed allocation of expenditure for subsequent years, which will be subject to governance through normal Executive Decision making arrangements.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the proposed decision to:

- a. commence development and co-design of the Family Hub model for Kent in line with Government Family Hub framework for delivery and associated plans.
- b. note and confirm the expenditure, activity and planning for funding already allocated under Key Decision 22/00094, progressed under the delegation to receive and deploy initial funding in accordance with the requirement to develop and explore detailed transformation plans.
- c. Note that the implementation of the full range of changes required to transform KCC's existing provision to meet the requirements set out in the Government's Family Hub model plan will be subject to future Executive decision-making.
- d. to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, to take necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has been exploring how Kent could implement the national Family Hubs programme, in line with Government guidance and best practice and has been appointed a Family Hub Transformation Authority.
- 1.2 As a Family Hub Transformation Authority, the Council has been awarded some initial funding for this financial year (2022 – 2023) in order to undertake preliminary work to establish how Kent council implement the national Family Hub Framework.

2. Current context

- 2.1 The Council has been notionally allocated to receive up to £10million over three years as part of the Family Hubs Transformation Funding Programme and on the 9 February 2023, Kent was announced as one of 14 national Family Hub trailblazer areas who will receive transformation funding as set out in this report.
- 2.2 Trailblazer areas will receive additional support from the Department of Education (DfE) and be expected to work with other transformation authorities to progress Family Hub Transformation work.
- 2.3 The DfE have specified this funding should be used to develop and scope how Family Hubs could be transformed, incrementally add to existing services, complement existing services and/or offer new services in order to improve

services to whole families in Kent, ensuring open access provides a 0-19 years model and children get the 'Best Start to Life'.

- 2.4 For 2022-23, £2,830,000 Family Hubs funding has been provisionally allocated by the DfE to Kent, with £138,164 of this being capital expenditure. A further £183,000 in revenue funding has also been allocated specifically to begin to undertake preliminary transformation activity during this financial year.

3. Activity to date

- 3.1 Due to Family Hub Transformation Programme delays and DfE deadlines extending, spending the allocated funding has been delayed and the Council remain in discussions with DfE around expectations and timelines for monies which are committed but not spent at the end of this financial year.
- 3.2 Initial payments of £1.4m from the total year 1 allocation, have been received by the Council in November 2022 and January 2023, however discussions remain ongoing with the DfE in relation to the remaining funding with further payments anticipated to be received by the Council by the end of the March 2023.
- 3.3 Of the initial funding received, £1.3m has been forecasted to be spent by the end of March 2023, and the remainder of year 1 allocation committed to be spent in early 23-24, subject to DfE approval.
- 3.4 To date, a total of £776,200 has been spent/ payments are in progress, with the majority attributable to staffing costs for planning and preparatory work and the purchasing of some equipment to support outreach services, where needed.
- 3.5 As part of our activities we have engaged with key stakeholders, including initial Parent Carer groups to help plan the detail of the future delivery model and ensure meaningful coproduction, notwithstanding, we are not able to declare which buildings will become Family Hubs until after the Kent Communities consultation concludes.
- 3.6 As previously noted, the delivery plan is iterative, although Public Health, Midwifery and Integrated Childrens Services will continue to deliver core and statutory services.

4. Options considered and dismissed and associated risk

- 4.1 *Do nothing* – additional funding to support the improvement of Family Services in Kent will not be able to be utilised failure to make use of this grant may result in it needing to be repaid unless confirmed otherwise by DfE.

Should funding not be utilised for this financial year it could put any future Family Hubs Transformation Funding for subsequent years at risk of non-receipt.

Progress expenditure - of the limited funding allocated for this financial year and utilise it to further develop and progress further exploration of what Family Hub services could look like, including improving access through community

outreach, community engagement, project development and an enhanced digital offer.

Delay – further delivery of Family Hubs Transformation and request for Kent's delivery timeframes to be pushed back. DfE have outlined that they would not be in agreement, and this may impact future funding and outcomes reporting.

There is also, currently an expectation from DfE that as part of this Transformation Programme, Kent will have opened some Family Hubs by the end of the first half of 2023.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The Council is facing significant financial challenges and it is critical that any obligations created to deliver the programme are fully funded by the grant.

5.2 This report only covers the grant funding for the current financial year, totalling £2.8m. The latest forecast indicates that only £1.3m of that total will be spent by the end of the financial year. The DfE have not yet confirmed whether it will be possible to utilise unspent year 1 (22-23) grant funding in future years. If that is not the case, year 2 and 3 funding plans will need to be reprioritised to ensure total spending commitments can be fully contained within the grant received.

5.3 The spending plans are prepared in accordance with DfE conditions of grant including the proportion of spend that can be spent on each area of activity. These include:

- Family Hubs Transformation
- Home Learning Environment Services
- Perinatal Mental Health & Parent-Infant Relationships
- Parenting Support
- Infant Feeding Support
- Publishing Start for Life Offers & establishing parent carer panels

6. Legal implications

6.1 The Council has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Education (DfE) which creates obligations to progress transformation scoping and proposal development activity this financial year.

6.2 Access to the associated funding of up to £10m, depending on the type and level of transformation activity eventually progressed, is conditional on compliance with the terms of the MOU and demonstration of progress toward an effective Family Hub Model.

6.3 The places and spaces where family hubs will be formed will be informed by the outcome of the Community Assets consultation, however the development of the practice model is independent of the outcome of the consultation.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 Initial assessment and attached Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has not identified any negative implications. Further EQIAs will need to be developed as part of future decision making in relation to individual aspects of Family Hub delivery once developed.

8. Risk and Other Factors

- 8.1 Currently there is a consultation taking place regarding Community Assets in which some family services are currently being delivered.
- 8.2 The outcome of this consultation will inform some aspects of further Family Hub proposals, specifically with regards to Community Assets, however the Family Hubs Transformation Programme has other workstreams, such as outreach and digital services which are not impacted and can progress.

9. Governance

- 9.1 Cabinet Member decision will provide the strategic policy position of KCC on the development of the Family Hub expenditure for 2022-2023 and delegate authority for required activity to support the further progression on design when it is appropriate to do so.
- 9.2 The decision provides clear delegation for the ongoing submission of updates to Government on the iterative Delivery Plans and to enter into relevant legal agreement (e.g. MOUs) when these do not create commitments outside the scope of activity approved by this and previous Family Hub decisions.
- 9.3 Detailed proposals for the Family Hub model in Kent will still be subject to future decision-making, with the relevant consultation and governance activity.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 Taking into account the Key Decision already made, with the support of Transformation Funding the Council will be able to continue to explore, design and develop what improved services for families in Kent could look like with service user feedback at the heart of the development.
- 10.2 Failure to be able to spend funding allocated this year may delay this progress and risk not receiving future Transformation Funding from Government.

10. Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the proposed decision to:

- a. commence development and co-design of the Family Hub model for Kent in line with Government Family Hub framework for delivery and associated plans.
- b. note and confirm the expenditure, activity and planning for funding already allocated under Key Decision 22/00094, progressed under the delegation to receive and deploy initial funding in accordance with the requirement to develop and explore detailed transformation plans.
- c. Note that the implementation of the full range of changes required to transform KCC's existing provision to meet the requirements set out in the Government's Family Hub model plan will be subject to future Executive decision-making.
- d. delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, to take necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

11. Background Documents

- [Family Hub Model Framework](#)
- [The Best Start for Life: Early Years Healthy Development Review Report](#)

12. Appendices

- a. Equality Impact Assessment

13. Contact details

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

DECISION NO:

23-00015

For publication [Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]

Key decision: YES / NO

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
 - the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
 - significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Family Hub Transformation Funding

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services s, I agree to:

- a. commence development and co-design of the Family Hub model for Kent in line with Government Family Hub framework for delivery and associated plans.
- b. note and confirm the expenditure, activity and planning for funding already allocated under Key Decision 22/00094, progressed under the delegation to receive and deploy initial funding in accordance with the requirement to develop and explore detailed transformation plans.
- c. Note that the implementation of the full range of changes required to transform KCC's existing provision to meet the requirements set out in the Government's Family Hub model plan will be subject to future Executive decision-making.
- d. to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, to take necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council has been exploring how Kent could implement the national Family Hubs programme, in line with Government guidance and best practice and has been appointed a Family Hub Transformation Authority.

1.2 As a Family Hub Transformation Authority, the Council has been awarded some initial funding for this financial year (2022 – 2023) in order to undertake preliminary work to establish how Kent council implement the national Family Hub Framework.

2. Current context

2.1 The Council has been notionally allocated to receive up to £10million over three years as part of the Family Hubs Transformation Funding Programme and on the 9 February 2023, Kent was announced as one of 14 national Family Hub trailblazer areas who will receive transformation funding as set out in this report.

2.2 Trailblazer areas will receive additional support from the Department of Education (DfE) and be expected to work with other transformation authorities to progress Family Hub Transformation work.

2.3 The DfE have specified this funding should be used to develop and scope how Family Hubs could be transformed, incrementally add to existing services, complement existing services and/or offer new services in order to improve services to whole families in Kent, ensuring open access provides a 0-19 years model and children get the 'Best Start to Life'.

2.4 For 2022-23, £2,830,000 Family Hubs funding has been provisionally allocated by the DfE to Kent, with £138,164 of this being capital expenditure. A further £183,000 in revenue funding has also been allocated specifically to begin to undertake preliminary transformation activity during this financial year.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Due to Family Hub Transformation Programme delays and DfE deadlines extending, spending the allocated funding has been delayed and the Council remain in discussions with DfE around expectations and timelines for monies which are committed but not spent at the end of this financial year.

3.2 Initial payments of £1.4m from the total year 1 allocation, have been received by the Council in November 2022 and January 2023, however discussions remain ongoing with the DfE in relation to the remaining funding with further payments anticipated to be received by the Council by the end of the March 2023.

3.3 Of the initial funding received, £1.3m has been forecasted to be spent by the end of March 2023, and the remainder of year 1 allocation committed to be spent in early 23-24, subject to DfE approval.

3.4 To date, a total of £776,200 has been spent/ payments are in progress, with the majority attributable to staffing costs for planning and preparatory work and the purchasing of some equipment to support outreach services, where needed.

3.5 As part of our activities we have engaged with key stakeholders, including initial Parent Carer groups to help plan the detail of the future delivery model and ensure meaningful coproduction, notwithstanding, we are not able to declare which buildings will become Family Hubs until after the Kent Communities consultation concludes.

3.6 As previously noted, the delivery plan is iterative, although Public Health, Midwifery and Integrated Childrens Services will continue to deliver core and statutory services.

4. Financial implications

4.1 The Council is facing significant financial challenges and it is critical that any obligations created to deliver the programme are fully funded by the grant.

4.2 This report only covers the grant funding for the current financial year, totalling £2.8m. The latest forecast indicates that only £1.3m of that total will be spent by the end of the financial year. The DfE have not yet confirmed whether it will be possible to utilise unspent year 1 (22-23) grant funding in future years. If that is not the case, year 2 and 3 funding plans will need to be reprioritised to ensure total spending commitments can be fully contained within the grant received.

4.3 The spending plans are prepared in accordance with DfE conditions of grant including the proportion of spend that can be spent on each area of activity. These include:

- Family Hubs Transformation
- Home Learning Environment Services
- Perinatal Mental Health & Parent-Infant Relationships
- Parenting Support
- Infant Feeding Support
- Publishing Start for Life Offers & establishing parent carer panels

5. Legal implications

5.1 The Council has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Education (DfE) which creates obligations to progress transformation scoping and proposal development activity this financial year.

5.2 Access to the associated funding of up to £10m, depending on the type and level of transformation activity eventually progressed, is conditional on compliance with the terms of the MOU and demonstration of progress toward an effective Family Hub Model.

5.3 The places and spaces where family hubs will be formed will be informed by the outcome of the Community Assets consultation, however the development of the practice model is independent of the outcome of the consultation.

6. Equalities implications

6.1 Initial assessment and attached Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has not identified any negative implications. Further EQIAs will need to be developed as part of future decision making in relation to individual aspects of Family Hub delivery once developed.

7. Risk and Other Factors

7.1 Currently there is a consultation taking place regarding Community Assets in which some family services are currently being delivered.

7.2 The outcome of this consultation will inform some aspects of further Family Hub proposals, specifically with regards to Community Assets, however the Family Hubs Transformation Programme has other workstreams, such as outreach and digital services which are not impacted and can progress.

8. Governance

8.1 Cabinet Member decision will provide the strategic policy position of KCC on the development of the Family Hub expenditure for 2022-2023 and delegate authority for required activity to support

the further progression on design when it is appropriate to do so.

8.2 The decision provides clear delegation for the ongoing submission of updates to Government on the iterative Delivery Plans and to enter into relevant legal agreement (e.g. MOUs) when these do not create commitments outside the scope of activity approved by this and previous Family Hub decisions.

8.3 Detailed proposals for the Family Hub model in Kent will still be subject to future decision-making, with the relevant consultation and governance activity.

Risk and Other Factors

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Children's and Young People Cabinet Committee consider the decision on 8 March 2023

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Do nothing – additional funding to support the improvement of Family Services in Kent will not be able to be utilised failure to make use of this grant may result in it needing to be repaid unless confirmed otherwise by DfE.

Should funding not be utilised for this financial year it could put any future Family Hubs Transformation Funding for subsequent years at risk of non-receipt.

Progress expenditure - of the limited funding allocated for this financial year and utilise it to further develop and progress further exploration of what Family Hub services could look like, including improving access through community outreach, community engagement, project development and an enhanced digital offer.

Delay – further delivery of Family Hubs Transformation and request for Kent's delivery timeframes to be pushed back. DfE have outlined that they would not be in agreement, and this may impact future funding and outcomes reporting.

There is also, currently an expectation from DfE that as part of this Transformation Programme,

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None

.....
signed

.....
date

Family Hubs EQIA Appendix

This appendix provides some additional detail on the proposals to support Equality Analysis at a centre-by-centre level. This includes:

- Transport information
- Numbers of Non-White British Service Users
- Number of Service Users with SEND

Transport Information

Increased Journey Length

We know that increased journey lengths may impact on how families access our services. Where journeys are longer, families may access our services less frequently or not at all depending on the level of disruption.

We anticipate the impact related to 16 of the centres will be minimal. The rationale for this is below.

Of the 37 centres proposed to close, there are 5 where the nearest alternative is less than a 5-minute walk away. We do not anticipate there will be any travel related impact to families accessing these services. There are a further 3 which are within a 10-minute walk, whilst this will be manageable for most families, we are conscious that those with specific needs may not be able to manage this journey by foot. All 8 of the wards impacted by these closures are 100% within the public transport catchment area which we anticipate will mitigate against any impact and the overall impact for will be low.

There are 8 centres proposed to close which are a 10 – 30-minute walk away and within approximately 10 minutes by car. As they are all within the public transport catchment area, we anticipate families will still be able to access Family Hub services. However, the increased journey length may impact on families where they may need to use a private vehicle or utilise public transport.

We anticipate the impact related to the other 21 centres may be higher. The rationale for this is below.

The walking time to access alternative provision from these centres will be over 30 minutes. Whilst some families may be able to access our services in this way, this may be disruptive. Of these 21 centres, 13 of them are within 10 minutes by private vehicle. We anticipate this could have an impact on personal finances related the cost of accessing centres. This will be mitigated for 6 of the centres through a new Start for Life outreach offer. The 7 centres which may be impacted by further travel distance where outreach has not been proposed are Swalecliffe Children's Centre, Apple Tree Children's Centre, Maypole Children's Centre, Dymchurch Children's Centre, Hawkinge Children's Centre, Callis Grange Children's Centre and Harmony Children's Centre. 3 of these centres may also impacted by less consistent public transport which is discussed separately below.

The remaining 8 centres are approximately 11-31 minutes away by road, which will have the greatest impact. This will be minimised by a new Start for Life outreach offer to mitigate the closures at Spring House, Little Explorers, and Marden Children's Centre. The impact will also be minimised by a Health Visiting outreach offer to mitigate closures at New Ash Green Children's Centre, The Sunflower Children's Centre and West Kingsdown Children's Centre.

Commentary on the remaining 2 centres is below

- Beaches Children’s Centre. ??% of households are within 30 minutes of an alternative on public transport, and the journey is approximately 22 minutes by private vehicle. We will consider feedback from the public consultation to understand how this may impact families.
- The Tina Rintoul Children’s Centre. 99% of households are within 30 minutes of an alternative on public transport, and the journey is approximately 16 minutes by private vehicle. We will consider feedback from the public consultation to understand how this may impact families.

Public Transport

We know that service users may be reliant on public transport in order to access Family Hub services in person. We’ve analysed the connectivity of these sites to help us understand the impact of these proposed closures. The public transport information is based on an outward journey between 8AM and 5PM on a Tuesday from households within the same ward as the existing Children’s Centre or Youth Hub.

Of the 37 wards directly impacted by proposed closures, 24 of them are 100% within reach of an alternative site by public transport in under 30 minutes. We anticipate all families will be able to access Family Hub services at one of these centres even if reliant on public transport.

Of the 12 which are not entirely within the catchment area of another site by public transport, 4 of them will benefit from a new Start for Life outreach service. These additions are intended to reduce the need for families to travel to access Family Hub services. Another 3 will benefit from a Health Visiting Outreach service. It is anticipated that improved collaborative working across multidisciplinary team will be able to inform other Family Hub services of increasing need in this area. Specific commentary on the ability to access wider Family Hub services is below:

- The Sunflower Children’s Centre (Dover). 74% of household are within the 30-minute public transport catchment area. We anticipate most families would be able to access a centre via public transport or private vehicle, but we will consider feedback from the public consultation to support this assumption.
- New Ash Green Children’s Centre (Sevenoaks). No households are able to reach another centre via public transport, so households are likely to be reliant on private vehicles and our digital offer. We will consider feedback from the consultation to further understand the impacts to families in this area.
- West Kingsdown Church of England Primary Children's Centre (Sevenoaks). 84% of household are within the 30-minute public transport catchment area. We anticipate most families would be able to access a centre via public transport or private vehicle, but we will consider feedback from the public consultation to support this assumption.

The remaining 5 wards which would no longer have a permanent building, where not all households are within 30 minutes of public transport and are not proposed to receive outreach services may feel the most severe impact where families are reliant on public transport. Specific commentary on these is provided below:

- Little Explorers Children’s Centre (Ashford). No households are able to reach another centre via public transport, however new outreach is proposed in a neighbouring ward, Tenterden North which is only 0.4miles from the existing centre. We anticipate families will be able to access this location and digital services.

- The Tina Rintoul Centre (Canterbury). 99% of households are within the 30-minute public transport catchment area. We anticipate most families would be able to access a centre by public transport or private vehicle, but we will consider feedback from the public consultation to support this assumption.
- Apple Tree Children’s Centre (Canterbury). 75% of household are within the 30-minute public transport catchment area. We anticipate most families would be able to access a centre via public transport or private vehicle, but we will consider feedback from the public consultation to support this assumption.
- Dymnchurch Children’s Centre (Folkestone & Hythe). 95% of household are within the 30-minute public transport catchment area. We anticipate most families would be able to access a centre via public transport or private vehicle, but we will consider feedback from the public consultation to support this assumption.
- Hawkinge Children’s Centre (Folkestone & Hythe). 83% of household are within the 30-minute public transport catchment area. We anticipate most families would be able to access a centre via public transport or private vehicle, but we will consider feedback from the public consultation to support this assumption.

The full transport table is presented below:

Building Name (and Ward)	Nearest Alternative Family Hub (Miles by Road)	% of households within 30 minutes by Public Transport*	Approximate Drive Time	Approximate Walk Time	Is a New Start for Life Outreach Offer proposed in this Ward?
Ashford					
Ray Allen Children’s Centre (Stanhope)	Proposed Community Hub at Stanhope Library (0.4 miles)	100%	2 minutes	8 minutes	No
	The Willow Children’s Centre (1.1 miles)		4 minutes	18 minutes	
Bluebells Children’s Centre (Upper Weald)	Sure Steps Children’s Centre (4.1 miles)	34%	10 minutes	1 hour 18 minutes	Yes
Little Explorers Children’s Centre (Tenterden South)	Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library (8.6 miles)	0%	19 minutes	2 hours 53 minutes	No – but new proposed outreach provision in Tenterden North (0.4 miles from existing provision)

Canterbury					
Riverside Children's Centre (Northgate)	Riverside Youth Centre (0.1 miles). Existing Health Visiting Outreach in Gorrell Ward (1 mile)	100%	N/A	N/A	No
Swalecliffe Children's Centre (Swalecliffe)	Whitstable Youth and Community Centre (1.6 miles) Existing Health Visiting Outreach in Sturry ward (2.4 miles)	100%	5 minutes	32 minutes	No
Joy Lane Children's Centre (Seasalter)	Whitstable Youth and Community Centre (1.5) Existing Health Visiting Outreach in Gorrell Ward (1 mile)	100%	5 minutes	26 minutes	No
The Tina Rintoul Children's Centre (Sturry)	Riverside Youth Centre (4.8 miles)	99%	16 minutes	1 hour 21 minutes	No
Apple Tree Children's Centre (Chartham and Stone Street)	Little Hands Children's Centre (3.5 miles)	75%	8 minutes	34 minutes	No
Dartford					
Greenland's at Darenth Children's Centre (Darenth)	Oakfield Children's Centre (3.1 miles)	100%	9 minutes	1 hour 6 minutes	Yes
Maypole Children's Centre. (Joyden's Wood)	Oakfield Children's Centre (2.3 miles)	100%	6 minutes	38 minutes	No
Brent Children's Centre. (Newtown)	Proposed Community Hub at Temple Hill Library (0.6 miles). Oakfield Children's Centre (1.0 miles)	100%	3 minutes 5 minutes	13 minutes 28 minutes	Yes
Temple Hill Children's Centre (Temple Hill)	Proposed Community Hub at Temple Hill Library (0.4 miles) Oakfield Children's Centre (1.8 miles)	100%	3 minutes 9 minutes	8 minutes 35 minutes	No
Dover					
The Sunflower Children's Centre (Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell)	Buckland Children's Centre (6.1 miles)	74%	14 minutes	1 hour 48 minutes	Yes – Health Visiting Only

Blossom Children's Centre (Walmer)	Deal Youth Hub (1.3 miles)	100%	6 minutes	17 minutes	No
Folkestone and Hythe					
Dymchurch Children's Centre (Romney Marsh)	New Romney Children's Centre (3.9 miles)	95%	8 minutes	1 hour 14 minutes	No
Five (Shepway Youth Hub) (Folkestone Central)	Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre (1.0 miles)	100%	1 minute	4 minutes	No
Hawkinge Children's Centre (North Downs East)	The Village Children's Centre (2.7 miles)	83%	8 minutes	47 minutes	No
Lyddle Stars Children's Centre (Walland and Denge Marsh)	New Romney Children's Centre (4.2 miles)	91%	10 minutes	1 hour 20 minutes	Yes
Gravesham					
New Beginnings Children's Centre (Whitehall)	Next Steps Children's Centre (0.6 miles)	100%	1 minute	3 minutes	No
Maidstone					
Eastborough Children's Centre (East)	Sunshine Children's Centre (1.6 miles).	100%	6 minutes	26 minutes	No
Marden Children's Centre (Marden and Yalding)	Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library (Tunbridge Wells) (7.4 miles)	79%	17 minutes	2 hours 27 minutes	Yes
Sevenoaks					
Swanley Children's Centre (Swanley White Oak)	Swanley Youth & Community Centre (0.5miles)	100%	4 minutes	15 minutes	No
New Ash Green Children's Centre (Ash and New Ash Green)	Next Steps Children's Centre, Gravesham (8.3 miles)	0%	31 minutes	2 hours 31 minutes	Yes – Health Visiting only
West Kingsdown Church of England Primary Children's Centre (Fawkham and West Kingsdown).	Swanley Youth & Community Centre (6.8 miles)	81%	17 minutes	2 hours 6 minutes	Yes – Health Visiting only
Spring House Children's Centre (Sevenoaks Eastern)	Health Visiting Services will continue to be delivered from this site and will not be impacted by the changes. Edenbridge Children's Centre (9.9 miles)	100%	N/A 24 minutes	N/A Over 3 hours	Yes
Swale					
St Mary's Children's Centre	Bysing Wood Children's Centre (1.5 miles).	100%	8 minutes	29 minutes	No

(Abbey)	Existing Health Visiting Outreach in Abbey Ward (0.3 miles)				
Grove Park Children's Centre (Borden and Grove Park)	Woodgrove Children's Centre (1.4 miles).	100%	5 minutes	18 minutes	No
Ladybird Children's Centre (Queenborough and Halfway)	Seashells, Sheerness Children's & Family Centre (commissioned service) (3.3 miles).	100%	10 minutes	53 minutes	Yes
Beaches Children's Centre (Sheppey East)	Proposed community hub at Queenborough Library (8.0 miles) Seashells, Sheerness Children's & Family Centre (commissioned service) (9.0 miles)	??	22 minutes	2 hours 43 minutes	No
New House Youth and Sports Centre (Chalkwell)	Milton Court Children's Centre (0.6 miles)	??	4 minutes	7 minutes	No
Thanet					
Callis Grange Children's Centre (Beacon Road)	Cliftonville Children's Centre (2.3 miles) Six Bells Children's Centre. (2.8 miles)	100%	8 minutes 9 minutes	43 minutes 49 minutes	No
Priory Children's Centre (Central Harbour)	Community hub at Ramsgate Library (0.3 miles). Newlands Children's Centre (1.0 miles).	100%	3 minutes 5 minutes	5 minutes 15 minutes	No
Tonbridge and Malling					
Burham Children's Centre (Burham and Wouldham)	Snodland Children's Centre and Samays Youth Centre (5.3 miles) Woodlands Children's Centre (5.5 miles)	59%	10 minutes 10 minutes	1 hour 21 minutes	Yes
Tunbridge Wells					
Cranbrook Children's Centre (Benenden and Cranbrook)	New Community Hub at Cranbrook Library (0.1 miles)	82%	1 minute	1 minute	No
Harmony Children's Centre (Rusthall)	Tunbridge Wells Youth Hub (2.2 miles) Little Forest Children's Centre (3.6 miles)	100%	8 minutes 12 minutes	40 minutes 1 hour 7 minutes	No
Southborough/High Brooms Children's Centre (Southborough and Highbrooms)	Little Forest Children's Centre (2.2 miles)	100%	8 minutes	41 minutes	Yes

The Ark Children's Centre (Broadwater)	Tunbridge Wells Youth Hub (1.2 miles) Little Forest Children's Centre (2.9 miles)	100%	5 minutes 10 minutes	25 minutes 58 minutes	No
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Service users currently accessing Bluebells Children's Centre, Little Explorers Children's Centre, Sunflower Children's Centre, New Ash Green Children's Centre, and Burham Children's Centre are likely to be more heavily impacted if they are reliant on public transport to access Family Hub services because our analysis suggests 75% of households within a 30-minute catchment area.

Additional Data to Support Equality Analysis

Known Numbers of Service Users with Special Educational Needs Accessing Children's Centres proposed to close

Children's Centre	SEND Service Users (Rounded) - 2019
Ashford	
Bluebells Children's Centre (Hothfield)	5
Little Explorers Children's Centre	10
Ray Allen Children's Centre	60
Canterbury	
Apple Tree Children's Centre	5
Joy Lane Children's Centre	30
Riverside Children's Centre (Canterbury)	50
Swalecliffe Children's Centre	10
The Tina Rintoul Centre	5
Dartford	
Brent (YMCA) Children's Centre	25
Greenlands at Darenth Children's Centre	10
Maypole Children's Centre	0
Temple Hill Children's Centre	50
Dover	
Blossom Children's Centre (Hornbeam)	35
The Sunflower Children's Centre	10
Folkstone and Hythe	
Dymchurch Children's Centre	5
Hawkinge & Rural Children's Centre	15

Lydd'le Stars Children's Centre (Lydd)	10
Gravesham	
New Beginnings Children's Centre	#N/A
Maidstone	
Eastborough Children's Centre	10
Marden Children's Centre	10
Sevenoaks	
New Ash Green Children's Centre	5
Spring House Children's Centre	10
Swanley Children's Centre	35
West Kingsdown Children's Centre	0
Swale	
Beaches Children's Centre	15
Grove Park Children's Centre	25
Ladybird Children's Centre	30
St Mary of Charity Children's Centre	25
New House Youth and Sport Centre	
Thanet	
Callis Grange Children's Centre	10
Priory Children's Centre	35
Tonbridge and Malling	
Burham Children's Centre	5
Tunbridge Wells	
Cranbrook Children's Centre	10
Harmony Children's Centre	5
Southborough Children's Centre	15
The Ark Children's Centre	15

Rounded Numbers of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Children Accessing Children's Centres proposed to close in 2019

CYPE buildings	District	BAME - Service Users (Rounded)
Bluebells Children's Centre (Hothfield)	Ashford	40
Little Explorers Children's Centre	Ashford	10
Ray Allen Children's Centre	Ashford	255
Apple Tree Children's Centre	Canterbury	10
Joy Lane Children's Centre	Canterbury	95
Riverside Children's Centre (Canterbury)	Canterbury	215
Swalecliffe Children's Centre	Canterbury	20
The Tina Rintoul Centre	Canterbury	35
Brent (YMCA) Children's Centre	Dartford	480
Greenland's at Darenth Children's Centre	Dartford	115
Maypole Children's Centre	Dartford	5
Temple Hill Children's Centre	Dartford	650
Blossom Children's Centre (Hornbeam)	Dover	25
The Sunflower Children's Centre	Dover	25
Dymchurch Children's Centre	Folkestone & Hythe	5
Hawkinge & Rural Children's Centre	Folkestone & Hythe	75
Lydd'le Stars Children's Centre (Lydd)	Folkestone & Hythe	10
New Beginnings Children's Centre	Gravesham	#N/A
Eastborough Children's Centre	Maidstone	130
Marden Children's Centre	Maidstone	20
New Ash Green Children's Centre	Sevenoaks	30

Spring House Children's Centre	Sevenoaks	75
Swanley Children's Centre	Sevenoaks	195
West Kingsdown Children's Centre	Sevenoaks	10
Beaches Children's Centre	Swale	35
Grove Park Children's Centre	Swale	85
Ladybird Children's Centre	Swale	30
St Mary of Charity Children's Centre	Swale	55
Callis Grange Children's Centre	Thanet	30
Priory Children's Centre	Thanet	60
Burham Children's Centre	Tonbridge and Malling	20
Cranbrook Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells	25
Harmony Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells	50
Southborough Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells	40
The Ark Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells	70

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EXECUTIVE DECISION

From: Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: Rory Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Subject: Proposed Expansion of Wrotham School

Decision Number and Title – **for Cabinet Member Decisions only**

Key decision:

- *It involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m*

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Harry Rayner – Malling West

Summary: This report sets out the proposed expansion of Wrotham School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7RD.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member, concerning the proposals to:

- a) authorise the allocation of £6,880,428 from the Children Young People and Education Services Basic Need Capital Budget to fund the permanent expansion of Wrotham School, with the provision of 265 additional places across the year groups (years 7-11) to increase its Published Admission Number (PAN) to 210 places from September 2025.
- b) authorise the Corporate Director of Finance (s151 officer) and Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- c) authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts. Variations to contract value to be no more than 10% above the capital funding agreed by the Cabinet Member without requiring a new Record of Decision.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 KCC has identified the need for additional places within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group. It has therefore agreed with the

Character Education Trust to permanently expand Wrotham School's PAN to 210 from September 2025 via the commissioning of 265 additional places across the school year groups.

- 1.2 Kent County Council (KCC) as the Local Authority (LA), has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2023-27 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent.

2. Body of the report

- 2.1 In July 2021 Wrotham School was selected for rebuilding as part of the second round of the School Rebuilding Programme (SRP). The SRP is a Department for Education (DfE) scheme that carries out major rebuilding and refurbishment projects at school and sixth-form college buildings across England, with buildings prioritised according to their condition.
- 2.2 The Wrotham School project comprises the substantial rebuilding of the current school accommodation within its existing site. The rebuilding scheme will be managed and funded (via the SRP award) by the DfE.
- 2.3 Additionally, KCC has identified a need for additional places within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group. It has therefore been agreed with the academy and the DfE to commission 265 additional places across the year groups (7 to 11) at Wrotham school to enable its PAN to be increased permanently to 210. The additional places will be included within the rebuilding project, which will be managed by the DfE and KCC will meet the associated costs of the additional works via Basic Need Capital funding.
- 2.4 The proposed expansion relates to providing additional places which are needed for the current population in the local area and existing permitted housing growth; the proposed expansion does not relate to any major developments within the area which may be proposed in future, either through the Borough's Local Plan process or planning applications which are yet to be made. Any such future development proposals would need to be considered and mitigated independently at the appropriate stage in the town planning and school place commissioning processes.

3. Alternative options

- 3.1 There are only 3 three schools within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green non-selective planning group, including Wrotham, and the other 2 schools have recently been expanded and therefore cannot easily accommodate additional places.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The total scheme cost is £34,432,292, with the DfE providing £27,551,865 from the SRP scheme to fund the rebuilding of the existing accommodation and KCC

providing £6,880,428 from the Basic Need Capital Budget to fund the additional places.

- 4.2 Wrotham School has offered over PAN for the school years commencing in September 2021, 2022, 2023 and is expected to in 2024. This was at the request of the County Council to ensure a sufficient supply of places within the area and represents bulge intakes prior to the construction of the permanent accommodation. These bulge admissions have been accommodated within the school's existing premises and also through the provision of mobile accommodation. The County Council has funded the hire cost of this temporary mobile accommodation which will be removed upon completion of the school rebuilding scheme. The total expected revenue cost of providing the temporary accommodation until September 2025 is £257,026.83, of which £221,801.58 has been incurred to date.
- 4.3 Revenue Funding: Should the scheme progress, £6,000 per new learning space would be provided towards the cost of furniture and equipment. This relates to the additional accommodation provided for the Basic Need element and not the rebuilding element. This would be provided to the school to purchase required equipment. In addition, an allowance of up to £2,500 may be payable to outfit each new teaching room with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment. The school would receive funding for the additional pupils that it admits in line with the funding allocated to schools through KCC's funding formula. This also relates to the additional accommodation provided for the Basic Need element and not the rebuilding element.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Planning permission will be required for the new accommodation to enable the rebuilding and expansion of the school. The DfE are responsible for securing the planning permission.

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been produced and no issues were identified in the early stage EqIA, but the assessment will be reviewed as the project continues.

7. Governance

- 7.1 The authorise the Corporate Director of Finance (s151 officer) and Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts/agreements on behalf of the County Council. It will also authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

8. Consultation

8.1 In accordance with the DfE's Statutory Guidance 'making significant changes to an existing academy', the expansion proposal can be fast tracked without the Trust having to provide a full business case to the EFA. However, the academy is required to carry out a public consultation with stakeholders as part of their fast-track application.

9. Views

9.1 The View of the Local Members

The KCC Members for Malling West, Harry Rayner, has been consulted on this proposal.

9.2 The View of the Area Education Officer

The Area Education Officer fully supports this proposal as it will ensure that there are sufficient non-selective places within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group.

10. Conclusions

10.1 This report sets out a proposal to expand Wrotham School to meet the forecast need for additional places within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group. The proposed expansion would be completed as part of the DfE managed and funded rebuilding scheme. KCC would fund the expansion element of the build via Basic Need Capital funding and will benefit from the economies of scale and value for money from the work being completed as part of the larger rebuilding scheme.

11. Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is asked to agree to:

- a) authorise the allocation of £6,880,428 from the Children Young People and Education Services Basic Need Capital Budget to fund the permanent expansion of Wrotham School, with the provision of 265 additional places across the year groups to increase its Published Admission Number (PAN) to 210 places from September 2025.
- b) authorise the Corporate Director of Finance (s151 officer) and Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- c) authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts. Variations to contract value to be no more than 10% above the capital funding agreed by the Cabinet Member without requiring a new Record of Decision.

13. Background documents

14. Contact details

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services /
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

To be allocated by
Democratic Services

For publication

Key decision: YES

- *It involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m*

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Proposed Expansion of Wrotham School

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

- (i) authorise the allocation of £6,880,428 from the Children Young People and Education Services Basic Need Capital Budget to fund the permanent expansion of Wrotham School, with the provision of 265 additional places across the year groups to increase its Published Admission Number (PAN) to 210 places from September 2025.
- (ii) authorise the Corporate Director of Finance (s151 officer) and Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- (iii) authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts. Variations to contract value to be no more than 10% above the capital funding agreed by the Cabinet Member without requiring a new Record of Decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

KCC has identified the need for additional places within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group. It has therefore agreed with the Character Education Trust to permanently expand Wrotham School’s PAN to 210 from September 2025 via the commissioning of 265 additional places across the school year groups.

KCC as the Local Authority (LA), has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available. The County Council’s Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2023-27 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC’s future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the plan can be viewed from this link:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/education-skills-and-employment-policies/education-provision-plan>

Background

In July 2021 Wrotham School was selected for rebuilding as part of the second set of The School Rebuilding Programme (SRP). The SRP is a Department for Education (DfE) scheme that carries out major rebuilding and refurbishment projects at school and sixth-form college buildings across England, with buildings prioritised according to their condition.

The Wrotham School project comprises the substantial rebuilding of the current school accommodation within its existing site. The rebuilding scheme will be managed and funded (via the SRP award) by the DfE.

Additionally, KCC has identified a need for additional places within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group. It has therefore been agreed with the academy and the DfE to commission 265 additional places across the year groups (7-11) at Wrotham school to enable its PAN to be increased permanently to 210. The additional places will be included within the rebuilding project, which will be managed by the DfE and KCC will meet the associated costs of the additional works via Basic Need Capital funding.

The proposed expansion relates to providing additional places which are needed for the current population in the local area and existing permitted housing growth; the proposed expansion does not relate to any major developments within the area which may be proposed in future, either through the Borough's Local Plan process or planning applications which are yet to be made. Any such future development proposals would need to be considered and mitigated independently at the appropriate stage in the town planning and school place commissioning processes.

Financial Implications

The total scheme cost is £34,432,292, with the DfE providing £27,551,865 from the SRP scheme to fund the rebuilding of the existing accommodation and KCC providing £6,880,428 from the Basic Need Capital Budget to fund the additional places.

Wrotham School has offered over PAN for the school years commencing in September 2021, 2022, 2023, and is expected to in 2024. This was at the request of the County Council to ensure a sufficient supply of places within the area and represents bulge intakes prior to the construction of the permanent accommodation. These bulge admissions have been accommodated within the school's existing premises and also through the provision of mobile accommodation. The County Council has funded the hire cost of this temporary mobile accommodation which will be removed upon completion of the school rebuilding scheme. The total expected revenue cost of providing the temporary accommodation until September 2025 is £257,026.83, of which £221,801.58 has been incurred to date.

Legal implications

Planning permission will be required for the new accommodation to enable the rebuilding and expansion of the school. The DfE are responsible for securing the planning permission.

Equalities implications

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been produced and no issues were identified.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Children's and Young People Cabinet Committee considered the decision on 8th March 2023.

In accordance with the DfE's Statutory Guidance 'making significant changes to an existing academy', the expansion proposal can be fast tracked without the Trust having to provide a full business case to the EFA. However, the academy is required to carry out a public consultation with stakeholders as part of their fast-track application.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

There are only 3 three schools within the Sevenoaks and Borough Green non-selective planning group, including Wrotham, and the other 2 schools have recently been expanded and therefore cannot easily accommodate additional places.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the

Proper Officer:

None

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signed

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date

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