



AGENDA

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 19th March, 2008, at 10.30 am Ask for: **Geoff Mills/Karen Mannering**

**Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**

Telephone **(01622)
694289/694367**

Tea/Coffee will be available from 10.15am in the meeting room

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

1. Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2008 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Repton Park (also known as Templar Barracks), Ashford - Proposed New Primary School Provision - Outcome of Consultation (Pages 5 - 32)
5. Education on the Isle of Sheppey - Outcome of Further Consultation on Proposed Changes to the School System (Pages 33 - 198)

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)

Geoff Mills
Democratic Services
(01622) 694287
11 March 2008

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the School Organisation Advisory Board held on Thursday, 7 February 2008 at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (Chairman), Mr R B Burgess (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Angell, Mr C J Capon, Mr A D Crowther, Mr M J Northey, Mrs E Green (substitute for Mr A R Poole), and Mr M J Vye.

OFFICERS: Dr I Craig (Director – Operations), Children, Families and Education Directorate; Mr M Doole, Area Education Officer, Thanet and Dover; Mr S Webb, Area Education Officer, Dartford and Gravesham; and Mr G K Mills (Legal and Democratic Services).

CABINET MEMBER: Mr M C Dance, Cabinet Member for Operations, Resources and Skills (CFE).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 January 2008
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2008 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Proposal to Relocate and Enlarge Rowhill Special School and to Relocate the West Kent Health Needs Education Service and the Phoenix Centre Pupil Referral Unit
(Item 4 – Report by Director - Operations)

(1) This report presented the results of a public consultation on the proposal to relocate Rowhill Special School onto the old West Kent Hospital School site on Main Road, Longfield, enlarge Rowhill Special School to 120 places and relocate the West Kent Health Needs Education Service the Phoenix Centre onto the old Rowhill Site and Stock Lane, Wilmington.

(2) During the course of discussion, both Mr Crowther and Mrs Angell raised questions relating to the consultation process and the level of responses. Dr Craig said that usually, it would be expected that the response to proposals relating to special schools would be higher than had been so in this particular case. On a general point he said he would be happy to discuss outside of the meeting any views Members may have on how the consultation processes might be improved.

(3) Following further discussion, the Advisory Board agreed to the issuing of a public notice relating the to the relocation and enlargement of Rowhill Special School, the relocation of the West Kent Health Needs Education Service and the relocation of the Phoenix Centre Pupil Referral Unit. The Advisory Board also agreed that subject to approval of the proposal following the end of the objection period, the resources necessary to implement the scheme be provided on the basis identified in the report.

3. Proposed Closure of Axton Chase School and its Replacement with a Government Funded Academy

(Item 5 – Report by Director - Operations)

(The Chairman declared consideration of this item to be urgent because although it had been intended to report on this matter to the meeting of the Advisory Board in March 2008, the DCSF, under the direction of the Minister, had requested the County Council's consultation to be moved ahead as expediently as possible, to ensure funding was made available for the benefit of the school and community).

(1) Axton Chase School is an 11-19 mixed (non-selected foundation) high school which serves both rural and urban communities located in the Dartford area. In Axton Chase School, the socio-economic profile of the student intake is below national and Kent average overall. The proportion of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is 6%, above the Kent (2.8%) and the National average (2.2%). The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is 10%, which is below the national average of 13.6% and the Kent average of 7.9%.

(2) The vision for the Axtane Academy is that it will develop new first class approaches to education. The Academy will have a particular focus on vocational education, creating a mix of academic and vocational experiences. The Academy will also specialise in science and the creative and expressive arts with a bias to technology based programmes. It would also have a specialist centre for students in the Autistic Spectrum. The Academy would also form part of a hard federation with the Leigh Technology Academy which is the lead sponsor, with the County Council being a co-sponsor together with the University of Kent.

(3) During the course of discussion, Mrs Angell expressed strong concerns about the way the consultation relating to the establishment of this Academy had been handled to date. She said there had been little timely information made available to either the school, parents or elected Members. She said she understood that there were circumstances that needed to be taken into account when considering when information should be made public but that elected Members ought to be given relevant information even if for a period of time that had to be on a confidential basis.

(4) Dr Craig said that the County Council was totally constrained in these matters by Government rules and procedures and that timely information had been provided as soon as the County Council had been told by the Minister that the consultation process could begin. However, he understood the point being made about the position of elected Members and he said that he would speak to the Department on that particular point and advise Members of its response.

(5) During the course of further discussion, Members of the Advisory Board raised a number of points relating to a range of matters including seeking confirmation that when the Academy comes into place, there would be one Governing Body which would oversee both the Axtane Academy and the Leigh Technology Academy. Officers also confirmed that although the admission arrangements to the two schools would be set by the Governing Body, it would nonetheless have to comply with the Admissions Code. It was also said that the new Academy should not draw any more numbers than the current school was now but that did not effect where those numbers may actually come from. Officers also confirmed that the staff at the school had been informed of these proposals as had the Unions and that there would be further consultations with these groups during the course of the formal consultation process.

(6) The Advisory Board unanimously agreed that a public consultation exercise should be undertaken in conjunction with the Governing Body on the proposal for the closure of the Axton Chase School and its replacement with a Government funded Academy.

4. The Proposed Change of Age Range for Green Park Community Primary School, Dover

(Item 6 – Report by Director – Operations)

(Mr W Newman and Mr G Cowan attended and spoke in relation to this item as local Members)

(1) This report explained the need to bring forward a proposal to change the age range of Green Park Community School, Dover and to close the maintained nursery unit with effect from 19 October 2008.

(2) Mr Newman said that these proposals raised a number of important issues for local people. He said he believed that the proposals being put forward were the best option available to keep nursery provision in the Buckland area so he was generally in support of the recommendations. He did however, seek assurances regarding the future of the staff and on a general point said that as one of the local Members he had been given insufficient time in which to submit his views in advance of the meeting of the Advisory Board. Mr Cowan said that his main concern was also about the fact that he had only been advised of these proposals some eight days before the meeting of the Advisory Board. Therefore, whilst he supported the general principles of these proposals he felt local Members should have been given more time in which to submit a response.

(3) Mr Doole said he accepted the point made about the lack of time in which to respond to this report, but this was the start of what would be a full and detailed consultation process following which there would be a further detailed report to the Advisory Board.

(4) Following further discussion, the Advisory Board agreed to the proposals that there should be a public consultation on the possible change of age range of Green Park Community School, Dover and the closure of the existing maintained nursery unit on the former Melbourne Site with effect from 19 October 2008.

6. Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status

(Item 7- Report by Director - Operations)

This report informed Members of the Advisory Board of the current situation regarding Foundation/Trust proposals. During discussion, Mr Crowther said that in relation to the proposals to establish an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey, local Members other than those immediately affected should be included in the consultation process. Dr Craig said that he understood the point that was being made but when undertaking consultations there had to be some discretion and flexibility as to how wide in terms of area the consultation process went.

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By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 19 March 2008

Subject: REPTON PARK (also known as Templar Barracks), ASHFORD – PROPOSED NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION, OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the results of the public consultation on the need for a new primary school in Ashford. It seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on the issuing of a competition notice.

Introduction

1. Ashford is a designated growth area with 30,000 new houses planned for the period up to 2030. One major site is Repton Park where 83 replacement dwellings have been built and planning permission granted for 1250 new homes on the site. The developer contribution (S106) agreement has recently been signed off. This provides the County Council with contributions for various services including primary school education. A site for a two form entry school and nursery class, and £4.08M is being provided.

Background Information

2. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 now requires the Local Authority (LA) to undertake a competition to find a promoter for any new primary school. However, before we undertake a competition we are required by statutory guidance to undertake a public consultation. This should ask whether or not the community considers that a new school is needed. At its meeting of 14 November 2007, SOAB agreed that a public consultation should be undertaken. This report sets out the case for a new school and reports back on the outcome of the consultation. Full details of the competition process is set out in the report on New School Competitions presented to the Board on 14 November 2007.

School Capacity in Ashford

3. (1) The Repton Park development has commenced. The school site is available to the LA after the 150th occupation. Details of the anticipated pupil product from the development (approximately 284 in total) is included in Appendix 1.

(2) Appendix 1 sets out the capacities and rolls of the schools within 1, 2 and 3 miles of the development. It also sets out the forecasts for the next 5 years. For primary school aged pupils, KCC strives to ensure that adequate provision exists within 2 miles of their homes, nearer if possible.

(3) Appendix 1 indicates that currently there are sufficient places within 3 miles of Repton Park. These places are in schools situated between one and three miles away. However, there are no places within one mile of the development. Within two miles of the development there are currently 3.4% surplus places and this is forecast to

fall to 2.7% by 2012. The corresponding figures for a 3 mile radius are 4.6% reducing to 1.9%.

(4) The map attached as Appendix 2 shows the location of the development site, together with the locations of schools within the 1, 2 and 3 miles radius.

(5) The forecasts indicate that there is a need for new provision to cater for the Repton Park development specifically (i.e. make provision within one mile), and more generally to ensure that the additional pupils generated by the development do not inhibit access to local schools by other families moving into other areas of the Town.

The Proposal

4. (1) The forecasts indicate there is a need for additional provision on the Repton Park site. The proposal is to establish a new primary school for 210 boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 11 years (30 places per year group). This will be a state funded school that provides free education for pupils. A 26 place nursery facility would also be created for use by a private, voluntary or independent provider. The proposed new school would open on 1 September 2010 within the Repton Park housing development in Ashford.

(2) The school should be built with the ability to expand easily to accommodate an additional 210 pupils. This means some spaces, such as the hall, kitchen and staff room, will be large enough for the future needs of the school to minimise disruption. It will be accessible to pupils with physical disabilities and will admit pupils with special educational needs if their needs can be met in a mainstream school. The school will be built primarily to serve the new community from Repton Park and neighbouring developments and will seek to provide high quality learning provision for this new community.

(3) The nursery facility will be attached to the school but will be run separately as a private, voluntary registered or independent nursery. It is likely that the facility will offer full day care either for children aged 0 to 4 years old, or 2 to 4 years old, depending upon demand and the business case. By the time this proposal is implemented, all children aged three and above will be eligible for 15 hours of free early years education per week. This proposed nursery would be registered to provide this free provision.

Consultation Process

5. (1) The consultation document was widely distributed, some of the consultees included: Cabinet Members, SOAB Members, Local Members, Local Member of Parliament, Parish Councils, Ashford Borough Council (including the Local Ward Councillor), primary and secondary schools in the Ashford Clusters, Kent Governors Association, Diocesan Boards, all early years settings in Ashford, key colleagues within the Children, Families and Education Directorate, Ashford's Future Board, houses and marketing suites on the Repton Park development, Primary Care Trust, Willows Children's Centre and the Ray Allen Children's Centre.

(2) Approximately 1,000 copies of the document were circulated, which included a form for written responses. A copy is attached as Appendix 3.

(3) A public meeting was held at Highworth Grammar School for Girls on 23 January 2008. Mrs Valerie Dagger, Chair of SOAB, chaired the meeting. In attendance were Dr Ian Craig, Director of Operations, David Adams, Area Education

Officer and other KCC Officers. 41 people attended. Around 80% of the audience were residents from the Goat Lees estate. The Local Member, Mrs Elizabeth Tweed and Local Ward Councillor, Mrs Rita Hawes also attended the meeting.

Response to the consultation

Written responses

6 (1) At the end of the consultation period, 16 written responses were received. The consultation asked four questions.

A summary of responses is below:

Question	Yes	No
Do you think there is a need for a new primary school in Repton Park?	16	0
Do you agree that the school should initially offer 30 places per year group (210 places in total) and be for pupils aged 4-11 years?	15	1
Should a 26 place nursery be provided?	16	0
Should the school be built in a way that it can easily be expanded?	14	2

(2) A detailed analysis of written responses is attached in Appendix 4.

(3) A summary of the points, questions and comments made at the public consultation meeting are attached in Appendix 5.

Views of Ashford Parents Forum

7. The Ashford One Parents Forum considered the proposal on 23 January 2008. Parents supported a local school in the community. Some questioned whether an all through (primary and secondary) provision could be created.

Views of the Local Member

8. The Local Members is Mrs Elizabeth Tweed who spoke at the public meeting in support of the proposal. She welcomed a school being built at an early stage of the community's development. Also, she supported the calls for further discussion about a new school in Goat Lees.

Views of the Ashford Cluster Boards

9. (1) Ashford 1 Cluster Board is aware of the proposal and expressed support for building new schools in new communities and nursery provision close to areas of need. The Board supported the need for children to be able to walk to school. Four queries were raised – there is nursery provision in the wider areas, will it be affected? How does this link with the possible relocation of Victoria Road School? What about a new school, in the Goat Leas? Will this impact adversely on rural schools?

(2) The views of the Ashford Rural Cluster Board will be reported to the Board meeting on 19 March.

Views of the Local Member of Parliament

10. (1) Mr Damian Green, MP for Ashford is in favour of the building of the school, and would argue very strongly that it should be built in a way that can easily be expanded into two-form entry at a later date. The model of Furley Park school in Park Farm applies here. He had no comments on the provision of a nursery at the school.

(2) Mr Green believes that the school should be built in a way that minimises its carbon footprint. He would be delighted to see either solar or wind power used to generate the school's electricity, and for water saving measures to be used within the school.

Views of Ashford Borough Council

11. David Hill, the Chief Executive and the Regeneration team are aware of the proposal. A response has not yet been received.

Views of Parish Council

12. Great Chart, Hothfield, Kingsnorth, Stanhope and Westwell Parish Councils are aware of the proposal. Responses have not yet been received from any of the Parish Councils.

Views of the Area Education Officer

13. (1) The purpose of this consultation is to determine whether the community support the building of a new school, and if so, whether the proposed 'specification' is right.

(2) There have been few written responses to the consultation. Those received indicate that the proposal for a school to be built early in the development of this community is supported. Equally the specification of the school is generally considered appropriate. (i.e. 1FE, hybrid school, for boys and girls aged 4-11 years, with nursery space).

(3) A few comments were received that I feel require a response:

- The school should be smaller (i.e. remain at 1FE/have smaller classes) – initially the school will be 1FE, but its infrastructure will enable future expansion should this be required. Any expansion will require a further public consultation process. There seems to be support for the hybrid model to ensure we have flexibility in the future. I appreciate the response that requested smaller classes, but the economics of school currently prohibits this.
- Why 210 places if 284 pupils are forecast? – KCC's Primary strategy advocates new schools are built at 1FE or 2FE. Clearly a 1FE school might be too small in the longer term. The housing development is due for completion in 2014. A 2FE school would provide over capacity in the short term, and this is likely to fill with pupils from more distant communities.
- Creation of secondary provision on site – the site is too small to enable an all-through school to be created. This might be something to consider in future development areas.
- Local nursery provision might be compromised – There is currently a 55 place deficit of nursery places in the area. A 26 place nursery for a

1250 house development does not seem to be creating significant over capacity.

(4) It is evident from the public meeting that there is some parental demand for a primary school to be built in Goat Lees in Ashford (see map at Appendix 2). A school site exists in Goat Lees, but when the housing was built, places existed in other schools. Future housing in the locality is scheduled for the period 2011 – 21. However, a windfall site (the former Police Training Ground) may obtain planning consent in the near future, possibly for 500 houses. In response to these representations I have arranged a public meeting to be held in Goat Lees to listen to the public views and discuss a way forward.

(5) The possible relocation of Victoria Road Primary School has been raised. Victoria Road is currently a no-through road. Kent Highways Services have plans to alter this to create a through road as part of the strategy to break Ashford's ring road. Discussions are ongoing regarding the alignment of the road, its nature, and the impact on the school. The Children, Families and Education Directorate has agreed to relocate the school if necessary, provided this is a cost neutral act (i.e. site and capital is provided in exchange for the school site).

Transport and Environmental Impact including Community Implications

14. (1) The creation of a school should reduce the risk of the LA needing to transport primary aged pupils to access education. Government requirements emphasise the need for new schools to be built with a zero carbon foot-print.

(2) The creation of a school early in the development of the Repton Park site will have a positive impact on generating a sustainable community in this locality. It will enable the community to gel, and create a heart which is essential for community well being. This fits with the LA's vision of schools at the heart of their community.

Resource Implications

Capital

15. (1) The site and the capital costs of this development are available via developer contributions. The anticipated costs for a 1FE hybrid school with nursery is £3M. The remaining developer contributions may be used at a later date to enable expansion to 2FE subject to demand.

Revenue

(2) The school will be funded via the Dedicated Schools Grant according to KCC's funding formula. The LA's allocation from Central Government is increased according to rising pupil numbers.

(3) KCC's current policy is to provide reorganisation fund money to new schools. The current allocation is £47,100 lump sum plus £6,728 per class. An existing budget exists to meet this cost. The exact allocation made available to this new school would be derived according to the policy and rates that apply in the year of opening.

[4] The nursery will be funded in accordance with the County Council's Early Years funding mechanism.

Equality Issues

16. (1) The proposal to consult on the need for a school does not in itself present any equalities issues, provided adequate consideration is given to ensuring consultation process is accessible to all members of the community.

(2) The school will be fully accessible, thereby increasing the range of provision available to pupils with a physical disability.

(3) If it is decided to proceed with creating a new school, an assessment will be made of the equalities issues arising from any proposal received.

School Effectiveness

17. The ambition to create a new school early in the building of the development aims to avoid the negative impact on neighbouring schools of children being admitted due to a lack of on-site provision, only to leave when the new school opens.

Links to Primary Strategy

18. The proposal complies with recommendations 14 (all through primary schools), 18 (organised as 1FE or 2FE), and 19 (new schools built with infrastructure to enable expansion).

Proposed Timetable

19. If it is decided that a public consultation should be undertaken in respect of the proposal, the following timeline could apply:

Report to SOAB	14 November 2007
Consultation document issued	4 January 2008
Public Meeting	Mid January 2008
End of Public Consultation period	15 February 2008
Report back to SOAB	19 March 2008
Cabinet Member Decision	by end of March 2008
Scrutiny Committee (if required)	23 April 2008
Issue Public Notice	30 April 2008
Close of Invitation to bid period	31 August 2008
Report to CFE Senior Management Team	week commencing 1 September 2008
Publication of proposals (Public Notice)	week commencing 15 September 2008
Public Consultation Meeting	week commencing 29 September 2008
Close of Representation period	31 October 2008
Report to SOAB	10 December 2008
Cabinet Member Decision	10 December 2008
Scrutiny Committee (if required)	by 31 December 2008
Implementation date	1 September 2010

20. The views of the School Organisation Board are sought on the issuing of a competition notice.

David Adams
Area Education Officer
Ashford & Shepway
Tel 01233 898559

The local member is: Mrs Elizabeth Tweed

Background documents:

- SOAB paper (dated 14.11.07) 'New School Competitions' (paper outlines process in detail)
- Education & Inspection Act 2006

School Planning data – area of Templar Barracks development

School name	Status	Type	Published admission number 2008 (1)	No. of year groups	School capacity (2)	Actual roll	Forecast roll (3)				
						Jan-07	Jan-08	Jan-09	Jan-10	Jan-11	Jan-12
Godinton PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	418	-	-	-	-	-
St Mary's CEPS	Voluntary aided	Primary	60	7	420	426	-	-	-	-	-
St Teresa's Catholic PS	Voluntary aided	Primary	30	7	210	215	-	-	-	-	-
Total pupils - within 1 mile		-	150	-	1050	1059	1064	1068	1072	1076	1085
Surplus/deficit on capacity - within 1 mile (4)		-	-	-	-	-9	-14	-18	-22	-26	-35
Victoria Road PS	Community	Primary	30	7	210	205	-	-	-	-	-
Great Chart PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	428	-	-	-	-	-
Downs View IS	Community	Infant	90	3	270	264	-	-	-	-	-
Linden Grove PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	388	-	-	-	-	-
Ashford South/Oak Tree CPS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	405	-	-	-	-	-
Kennington CEJS	Voluntary controlled	Junior	90	4	360	351	-	-	-	-	-
John Wesley	Voluntary aided	Primary	30	7	210	0	-	-	-	-	-
St Simon of England RCPS	Voluntary aided	Primary	30	7	210	204	-	-	-	-	-
Phoenix School	Community	Primary	30	7	210	214	-	-	-	-	-
Beaver Green PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	543	-	-	-	-	-
Total pupils - within 2 miles		-	600	-	4200	4061	4087	4057	4050	4063	4089
Surplus/deficit on capacity - within 2 miles (4)		-	-	-	-	139	113	143	150	137	111
East Stour PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	293	-	-	-	-	-
Willesborough IS	Community	Infant	120	3	360	341	-	-	-	-	-
Furley Park PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	409	-	-	-	-	-
Kingsnorth CEPS	Voluntary controlled	Primary	60	7	420	378	-	-	-	-	-
Willesborough JS	Foundation	Junior	120	4	480	542	-	-	-	-	-
Total pupils - within 3 miles		-	900	-	6300	6024	6081	6074	6079	6111	6181
Surplus/deficit on capacity - within 3 miles (4)		-	-	-	-	276	219	226	221	189	119

Notes:

(1) Maximum number admitted for entry in September 2008

(2) This is the assessed net capacity of the school as yet at Summer 2007 (or the amalgamated net capacity for school reorganisations)

(3) Forecast roll data is based on projections made in Summer 2007. (4) A negative number indicates that there may not be sufficient places available to meet demand. A positive number indicates that there may be surplus school places.

INSERT DOT MAP HERE

**PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN REPTON PARK,
ASHFORD**

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 1,000

Responses received: **16**

1. Do you think there is a need for a new primary school in Repton Park, Ashford?	Yes	No	Total
Parent (pre-school)	4		4
Parent (primary)	5		5
Parent (secondary)	1		1
Teacher			
Governor	2		2
Pupil/Student (Pre-school, Primary, Secondary)			
Early Years Provider	1		1
Other	3		3
Total	16		16

2. Do you agree that the school should initially offer 30 places per Year Group (210 places in total), and be for pupils aged 4-11 years?	Yes	No	Total
Parent (pre-school)	4		4
Parent (primary)	5		5
Parent (secondary)		1	1
Teacher			
Governor	2		2
Pupil/Student (Pre-school, Primary, Secondary)			
Early Years Provider	1		1
Other	3		3
Total	15	1	16

If no, please tell us why and what you would like to see instead:

- Smaller classes.

3. Should a 26 place nursery be provided?	Yes	No	Total
Parent (pre-school)	4		4
Parent (primary)	5		5
Parent (secondary)	1		1
Teacher			
Governor	2		2
Pupil/Student (Pre-school, Primary, Secondary)			
Early Years Provider	1		1
Other	3		3
Total	16		16

Should the school be built in a way that it can be easily expanded?	Yes	No	Total
Parent (pre-school)	4		4
Parent (primary)	4	1	5
Parent (secondary)	1		1
Teacher			
Governor	1	1	2
Pupil/Student (Pre-school, Primary, Secondary)			
Early Years Provider	1		1
Other	3		3
Total	14	2	16

If no, please tell us why:

- Other schools (i.e. Phoenix) should expand first.
- Prefer smaller schools – not so over powering for pupils to adapt to.

Other Comments

In support of the proposal:

- Learn by the mistakes of the Goat Lees development and build this school
- The new development warrants a new school, but only one form of entry.
- Consider an expansion to include a new secondary school.
- Use facilities for after school activities.
- Keep the school small as it is better for the children's learning.
- The new school is a greatly needed facility in this part of Ashford. It will be an excellent opportunity to create a better community in North West Ashford.
- The information on projected places needs to be accurate in order not to have a detrimental effect on the school rolls of nearby existing schools.
- Will residents of Orchard Heights, Lodgewood Drive, etc get equal opportunity to send their children to the new school as Repton Park residents.
- Why are plans being made for 210 pupils when the Local Authority has estimated that 300 places will be required? (x2)
- The nursery is absolutely vital
- Build the infrastructure before the population of Ashford expands

Against the proposal:

- New nursery may affect the future sustainability of local playgroup's (i.e Godinton Park playgroup)
- It is unsafe and unreasonable to expect children to walk to a primary school in Repton Park from the Goat Lees area
- The schools in the immediate area to Goat Lees are already full and those with space do not have 5% - 7% flexibility that KCC requires
- A new school at Repton Park will increase the amount of traffic around the Trinity Road, Junction 9 of the M20 and Fougères Way.
- The development on the former Police College site will further increase the need for a primary school on the Goat Lees estate
- A primary school in Goat Lees would act as a focal point for the community.
- A school at Goat Lees would reduce the amount of traffic along Trinity road
- It is 2 years since KCC analysed the demographic of the Goat Lees area – these figures may now be an inaccurate.
- A school in Goat Lees will finally put the wasteland allocated for a school to good use.

PROVIDING A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN REPTON PARK, ASHFORD

Summary of the public meeting held on 23 January 2008 at
Highworth Grammar School for Girls

Issue or Comment	Response
Consultation Process	
<p>The consultation document states that the consultation started on 7 January – does it mean that we have until 15 February to make a response?</p>	<p>Yes, during this consultation process we have made attempts to consult more widely. Today we met with the Ashford One parents forum to discuss the proposal.</p>
Primary School provision on the Goat Lees estate	
<p>It is important to provide the new school on the estate at the same time as people move into the development to serve those children of the community, unlike the situation at Goat Lees.</p> <p>The 3 acre empty site, which was earmarked for the primary school, is now full of rough grass and is attracting anti-social behaviour. If this site is not used as a school it would go back to the developer and would provide over 100 more dwellings, of which, a percentage would have to be affordable housing. This housing would potentially bring a lot more children to the area.</p> <p>Would be impossible for parents to travel to Repton Park without the use of a car. Residents of Goat Lees want to know when they will have a decision about Goat Lees.</p> <p>Why was a primary school promised in the first place?</p> <p>The police training ground, which has been earmarked for housing development (around 500 houses) would surely bring additional children to the area and therefore provide a definite need for a primary school on the Goat Lees site?</p> <p>How does the Local Authority obtain its pupil forecasts?</p>	<p>The Local Authority is fully aware of the site's condition. Historically, the process for opening a new school included contribution from developers. No cash contribution was received from the developer for Goat Lees. To-date we have not been able to make a case on actual numbers to attract Government funding for the school. We have £4 million for the new school at Repton Park. We aim to get it right in Repton Park.</p> <p>The Local Authority never promised that a school would be provided on Goat Lees. There are currently 180 children on the Goat Lees estate who attend neighbouring schools. If a new school were to be built on the estate the children at these neighbouring schools would be sucked out to attend the new school. This would have a detrimental affect on the schools nearby.</p> <p>The Local Authority is aware of the police training ground. It has not yet been sold and that planning permission has not yet been approved. We need to strike a balance between being certain of development and moving forward early at risk, early, as we do not want to build a new school in an area which would not have sufficient children.</p>

<p>Do the forecast roll figures included pupils from all the Ashford developments?</p> <p>What is the rule regarding siblings and over subscribed schools?</p> <p>Will the new school at Repton Park poach teachers from neighbouring schools?</p>	<p>There is a robust process which the Local Authority follows to formulate the forecasts. We know how many children are currently in pre-school settings and schools. We also include health data (eg, births and deaths). We are also aware of pupil mobility, those going into school and out of school.</p> <p>If they have planning consent, yes. We are also aware of the overall development plans and make allowance for these. From the projected forecasts it was clear that a primary new school on the Goat Lees site cannot be justified at the moment. We have reserved a site on the development in case a need for a new school becomes apparent. We do not have the money to carry out the build. It is, worth noting that if there is an economic slow-down and houses start not to sell, then this would be another variable which would need to be considered when planning for the new school.</p> <p>The sibling criteria is higher than distance. All schools have to publish their over subscription criteria. KCC can assure this happens via the schools adjudicator.</p> <p>This is a real issue, but the Local Authority cannot constrain teacher's movements. As Ashford expands we will need more teachers.</p> <p><i>Mrs Valerie Dagger, Chair of the meeting, explained to the audience that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the plans for the new school on Repton Park and not Goat Lees. It was agreed that David Adams would arrange a local meeting with the residents of Goat Lees to discuss all their particular issues.</i></p>
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Hothfield School Closure

<p>Was Hothfield primary school closed as part of Primary Strategy to provide the new primary school on Repton Park?</p>	<p>Primary Strategy was about taking provision out of schools in communities that did not need it. There were two amalgamations in South Ashford, which removed places, but left schools in these communities. Beaver Green was amalgamated with Hopewell on the same site. Ashford South and Oak Tree are to amalgamate onto the Oak Tree site. We are still providing sufficient school provision in these older communities. Phoenix school has been rebuilt with the capacity for 210 pupils, rather than 420. This has been done to provide capacity for Goat Lees.</p> <p>Primary strategy and the reduction of capacity across Ashford was a deliberate strategy. The shape of Ashford is changing and the Local Authority needs to plan to accommodate its future needs.</p>
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	<p>Hothfield primary school was closed as it was not a viable or effective school. There were not enough pupils on roll. It had to be closed.</p>
<p>Sustainability of Neighbouring Nursery Provision</p>	
<p>The new 55 place nursery at Repton Park could affect the viability of the Godinton play group.</p>	<p>The Section 106 agreement provides resources for the creation of new nursery provision. The proposed new nursery would serve the Repton Park community and would not have a knock-on effect to the Godinton playgroup and should therefore not affect an early years registered provision.</p>
<p>Transport Issues</p>	
<p>The infrastructure at Repton Park must be put in at the right time. The local authority needs to ensure that adequate transport is provided. This needs to be talked through during the planning process.</p>	<p>All transport concerns will be picked up through the specification process to seek a promoter. Part of their response has to be about what transport facilities there will be and what other transport arrangements will be put in place, i.e, walking bus.</p> <p>The Kent Freedom Pass which will be rolling out to Secondary children, is not yet in Ashford, but will be soon.</p> <p>Extended schools will ensure the communities will have full access to schools between the hours of 8am and 6pm. This may go some way in reducing traffic congestion around school start and end times of the day.</p>

Public Consultation Document

Consultation on providing a new primary school in Repton Park, Ashford



Date of Public Meeting: **Wednesday 23 January 2008 at 7pm**

Venue for Public Meeting: **Highworth Grammar School for Girls**

Kent County Council would like to hear your views

This consultation document is available on:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations>



INTRODUCTION

Ashford is designated as a major growth area for the South East of England, with 30,000 houses planned to be built in the period up to 2030. This growth is changing the shape of the town, bringing new families to the area and creating new communities. It requires the infrastructure to meet the future needs of the town and its residents.

Repton Park (also known as Templar Barracks) is a development site with planning permission for 1250 new dwellings, in addition to the 83 replacement dwellings already built. A school site has been identified within the development boundary.

This consultation seeks to:

- explain the process for opening a new school;
- determine whether local people believe a new school is needed in Repton Park;
- establish what sort of school (if any) is needed.

PROCESS FOR OPENING A NEW SCHOOL

The first thing Kent County Council has to do is ask local people if they feel that a new school is needed and if it is, what the 'specification' of the school should be (e.g. how big it will be, what age the children should be who go to it).

If there is support for a new school, the second stage is for us to hold a competition to see if any organisation or group wants to set up the school (known as a promoter). The County Council cannot simply open the school itself, although it may submit its own proposal into the competition.

The competition runs for four months, during which time any promoters send in their proposals. We then print (in a local newspaper) details of all the proposals we receive and ask local people for their views about these. Following this second consultation, a decision would be made about which promoter will set up the new school.

Any promoter interested in submitting a proposal during the bid period should access the '*Guide for those responding to a competition for a new school*' on the national Department for Children, Schools and Families' website.

SCHOOL PLACES IN ASHFORD

Ashford town has been earmarked by the Government as a growth area with 30,000 new houses planned up to 2030. The Repton Park development is in its early stages with planning permission recently granted for 1250 new homes to be built over the next few years. The new homes will bring additional pupils to this area of Ashford, of which a number will be of primary school age. The school planning data (table on page 4), shows that there are currently no primary school places within one mile of the development. The three primary schools currently within a one mile radius (Godinton, St Mary's and St Teresa's) are full and the shortfall of local places is set to increase over the next five years.

There are primary school places available within three miles of the proposed new school, (see map on page 5) although these are forecast to reduce significantly within the next five years.

We anticipate that the Repton Park development is likely to produce about 300 primary school aged pupils. Other developments (for example, Warren Road) will produce further pupils in this area. Ideally, these pupils would be able to access provision in their community, rather than be displaced to a variety of schools across the Town. This will help to develop a sense of belonging for the children, support friendship groups, promote community development and reduce the need for car journeys.

We believe that by creating a new primary school in the early stages of the Repton Park development it will help to generate a sustainable community within this area of Ashford and ensure the school is at the heart of the community.

There is currently a deficit of 55 nursery places in the locality, and therefore we believe that a nursery space is needed.

School Planning data – Area of Repton Park Development

School name	Status	Type	Published admission number 2008 (1)	No. of year groups	School capacity (2)	Actual roll	Forecast roll (3)				
							Jan-07	Jan-08	Jan-09	Jan-10	Jan-11
Godinton PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	418	-	-	-	-	-
St Mary's CEPS	Voluntary aided	Primary	60	7	420	426	-	-	-	-	-
St.Teresa's Catholic PS	Voluntary aided	Primary	30	7	210	215	-	-	-	-	-
Total pupils - within 1 mile			150	-	1050	1059	1064	1068	1072	1076	1085
Surplus/deficit on capacity - within 1 mile (4)			-	-	-	-9	-14	-18	-22	-26	-35
Victoria Road PS	Community	Primary	30	7	210	205	-	-	-	-	-
Great Chart PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	428	-	-	-	-	-
Downs View IS	Community	Infant	90	3	270	264	-	-	-	-	-
Linden Grove PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	388	-	-	-	-	-
Ashford South/Oak Tree CPS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	405	-	-	-	-	-
Kennington CEJS	Voluntary controlled	Junior	90	4	360	351	-	-	-	-	-
John Wesley	Voluntary aided	Primary	30	7	210	0	-	-	-	-	-
St Simon of England RCPS	Voluntary aided	Primary	30	7	210	204	-	-	-	-	-
Phoenix School	Community	Primary	30	7	210	214	-	-	-	-	-
Beaver Green PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	543	-	-	-	-	-
Total pupils - within 2 miles			600	-	4200	4061	4087	4057	4050	4063	4089
Surplus/deficit on capacity - within 2 miles (4)			-	-	-	139	113	143	150	137	111
East Stour PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	293	-	-	-	-	-
Willesborough IS	Community	Infant	120	3	360	341	-	-	-	-	-
Furley Park PS	Community	Primary	60	7	420	409	-	-	-	-	-
Kingsnorth CEPS	Voluntary controlled	Primary	60	7	420	378	-	-	-	-	-
Willesborough JS	Foundation	Junior	120	4	480	542	-	-	-	-	-
Total pupils - within 3 miles			900	-	6300	6024	6081	6074	6079	6111	6181
Surplus/deficit on capacity - within 3 miles (4)			-	-	-	276	219	226	221	189	119

Notes:

Maximum number admitted for entry in September 2008.

This is the assessed net capacity of the school as yet at Summer 2007 (or the amalgamated net capacity for school reorganisations)

Forecast roll data is based on projections made in Summer 2007

A negative number indicates that there may not be sufficient places available to meet demand. A positive number indicates that there may be surplus school places.

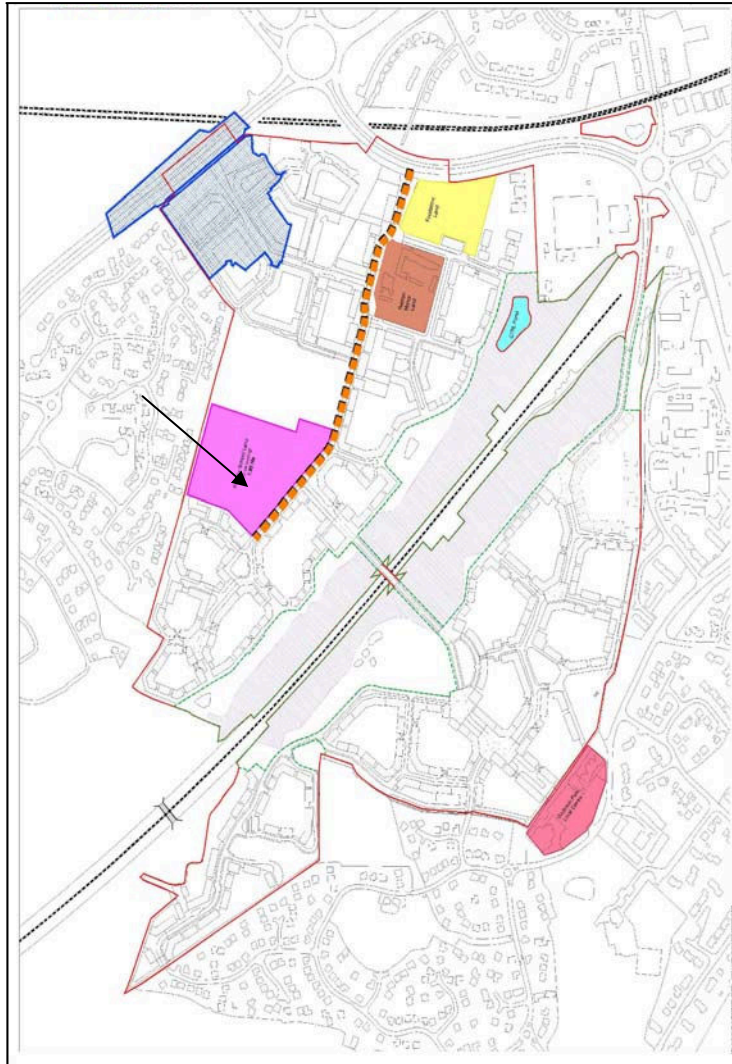
WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED — THE SPECIFICATION?

Kent County Council is consulting on establishing a new primary school for 210 boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 11 years (30 places per year group). This will be a state funded school that provides free education for pupils. A 26 place nursery facility would also be created for use by a private, voluntary or independent provider. The proposed new school would open on 1 September 2010 within the Repton Park housing development in Ashford. The plan on page 7 shows the school site.

The school should be built with the ability to expand easily to accommodate an additional 210 pupils. This means some spaces, such as the hall, kitchen and staff room, will be large enough for the future needs of the school to minimise disruption. It will be accessible to pupils with physical disabilities and will admit pupils with special educational needs if their needs can be met in a mainstream school. The school will be built primarily to serve the new community from Repton Park and neighbouring developments and will seek to provide high quality learning provision for this new community.

The nursery facility will be attached to the school but will be run separately as a private, voluntary registered or independent nursery. It is likely that the facility will offer full day care either for children aged 0 to 4 years old, or 2 to 4 years old, depending upon demand and the business case. By the time this proposal is implemented, all children aged three and above will be eligible for 15 hours of free early years education per week. This proposed nursery would be registered to provide this free provision.

The proposed site of the new primary school is shown below (follow arrow)



HOW TO GIVE YOUR VIEWS

We would like to know your views on this proposal, including the sort of primary school you would like to see in Repton Park, Ashford.

You can respond to the consultation by either:

Completing and returning the attached response form to:

David Adams, Area Education Officer, Mid Kent Education Office,
Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24
8XU

Deadline for response forms—by 5pm on 15 February 2008

or

**Attending the public meeting at Highworth Grammar School
for Girls on Wednesday 23 January 2008:**

An elected member of Kent County Council will Chair this meeting, at which all interested parties will have an opportunity to put forward their views. Officers from the Local Authority will also be present to clarify points of detail.

or

Sending an Email to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

Dr Ian Craig
Director (Operations)
Children Families and Education
Kent County Council
4 January 2008

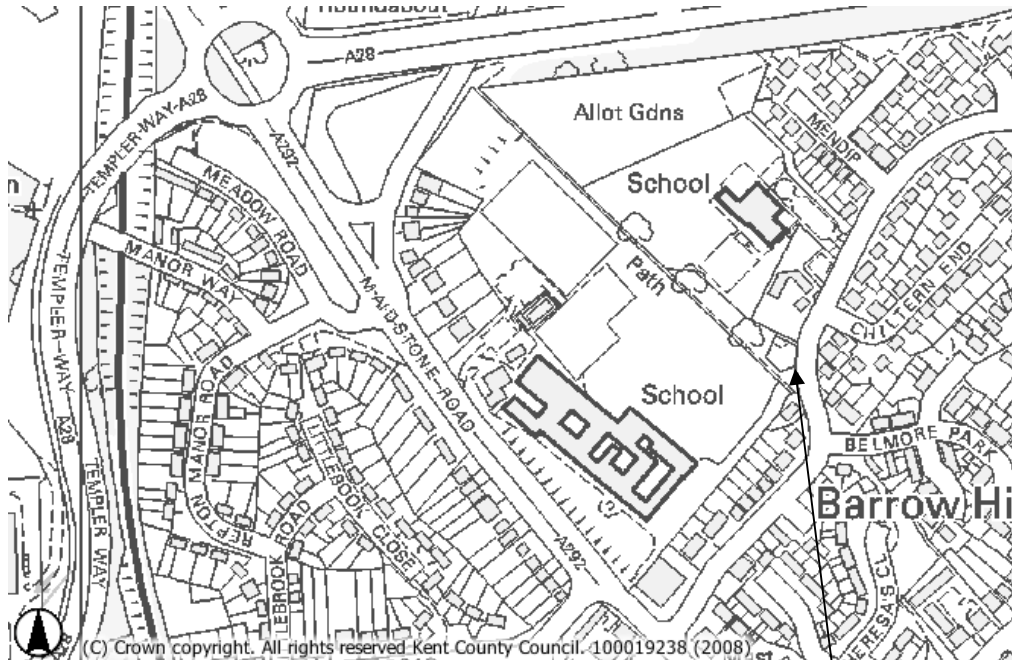
CONSULTATION TIMETABLE

Public Consultation begins	7 January 2008
Public Meeting to be held at Highworth Grammar School for Girls, Quantock Drive, Ashford TN24 8UD	23 January 2008
Closing date for responses to consultation	15 February 2008
School Organisation Advisory Board	19 March 2008
Cabinet Member Decision	End March 2008

Commence competition—issue Public Notice	30 April 2008
Competition closes	31 August 2008

Summary of competition proposals to be published in a public notice	w.c. 15 September 2008
Public Meeting	w.c. 29 September 2008
Consultation Closes	31 October 2008
School Organisation Advisory Board	10 December 2008
Cabinet Member Decision	10 December 2008
Implementation	1 September 2010

PUBLIC MEETING VENUE



Directions to Highworth Grammar School for Girls, Quantock Drive, Ashford TN24 8UD:

Please access via the School's entrance in Quantock Drive. To do this:

- Turn left off the Maidstone Road into Quantock Drive. The school entrance is on the left after approximately 300m (as indicated by the arrow on the map above).
- From the car park follow signs to the school hall where the public meeting will be held.



Public Consultation Response Form

CLOSING DATE FOR RESPONSES: 5pm on Friday 15 February 2008

To: David Adams, Area Education Officer, Mid Kent Area Education Office,
Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford Kent TN24 8XU.

Fax: (01233) 898500

Please complete the following questions. Additional comments can be made at the end of this form

1. Do you think there is a need for a new primary school in Repton Park, Ashford

YES

NO

If no, please explain why and then proceed to question 5.

2. Do you agree that the school should initially offer 30 places per Year Group (210 places in total), and be for pupils aged 4-11 years?

YES

NO

If no, please tell us why and what you would like to see instead:

3. Should a 26-place nursery be provided?

YES

NO

If no, please tell us why and, if appropriate, what alternative you would like to see:

4. **Should the school be built in a way that it can easily be expanded?**

YES NO

If no, please tell us why:

5. **Please circle whether you are a:**

Parent Teacher Governor Pupil/Student Early Years Provider Other

If you are a parent or pupil/student, please circle the relevant school phase your child(ren)/you are in:

Pre-School Primary Secondary

My comments are as follows:

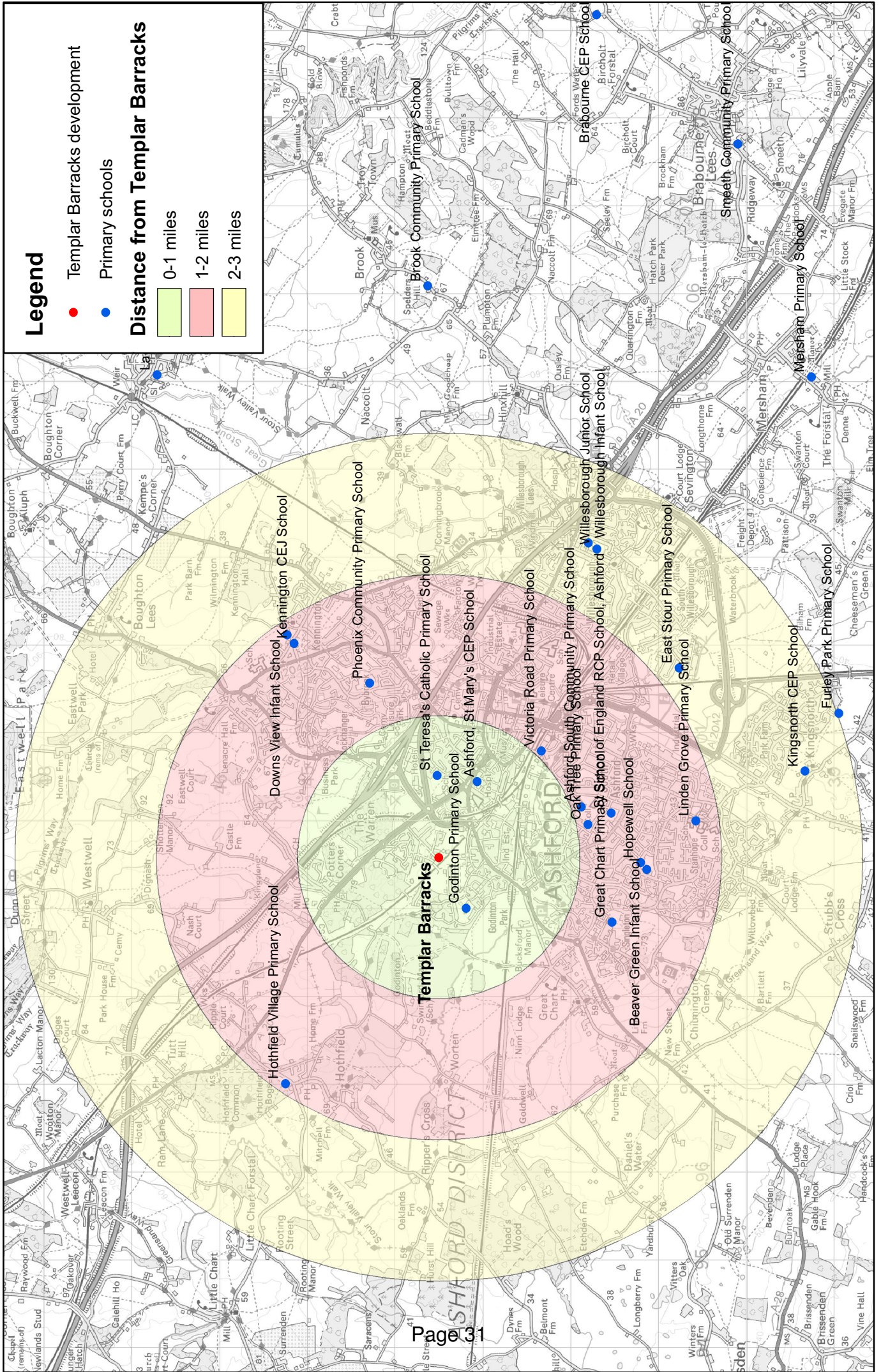
(please complete on an additional sheet if necessary)

Name:

Address:

Kent County Council is a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. We will ensure that your personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and in this instance used only for the purpose of validation, which will enable a fair and just consultation

Location of Templar Barracks development and primary schools within 1, 2 and 3 miles radius



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By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 19 March 2008

Subject: EDUCATION ON THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY – OUTCOME OF FURTHER PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the results of further public consultation on the proposal to reorganise education provision from a three-tier system to a two-tier system, with transfer at 11+, and on the shape of secondary education on the Isle of Sheppey.

Introduction

1. (1) The current education provision on the Isle of Sheppey is a three-tier comprehensive system. The remainder of Kent (with the exception of one school) operates a two-tier system with pupil transfer from the primary to the secondary phase at 11+. The system in Sheppey is therefore out of phase with the rest of Kent. The majority of Local Authorities with three-tier systems have undertaken reorganisation into two-tier systems following the introduction of the National Curriculum with its Key Stages. Other three-tier systems in Kent re-organised into a two-tier model some years ago.

(2) At its meeting on 24 July 2006 (report attached as Appendix 1) the School Organisation Advisory Board supported the proposal to consult on the principle of reorganisation from a three-tier system to a two-tier system with transfer at 11+. This followed early discussions in 2004. Consultation including 10 public meetings on the principle of changing to a two-tier system was carried out between September and November 2006 and the results were reported to the School Organisation Advisory Board on 13 December 2006 (report attached as Appendix 2) which recommended implementation. A Cabinet Member decision to implement this proposal was recorded on 10 January 2007.

(3) Public consultation on the primary phase including 7 public meetings on detailed proposals for each first school and St George's CE Middle School was carried out in March 2007, and the results were reported back to the School Organisation Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 May 2007 (report attached as Appendix 3). Permission to issue a public notice was given by the Cabinet Member on 24 July 2007. This public notice was then issued on 6 September 2007. There was one letter in response to the public notice. The 4 week statutory appeals period brought no statutory objections and arrangements were made to implement.

(4) Consultation on the proposal for the secondary phase of education through establishment of an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey has been carried out by consultants (Mouchel) who were appointed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At its meetings on 17 October and 14 November 2007 (reports attached as Appendices 4 and 5) the School Organisation Advisory Board supported a proposal to issue a public notice to close Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School and to replace them with an Academy conditional upon the Schools Minister signing a Funding Agreement.

(5) In October 2007 a letter was received from Leigh Day Solicitors on behalf of a parent of children attending schools in the current three phases of education on the Isle of Sheppey. A second letter in December 2007 called for a Judicial Review of the decision to implement the primary phase of education claiming that it was unreasonable of Kent County Council to expect parents to be able to make an informed decision about the primary phase proposals without further information on the Academy proposed for the secondary phase.

(6) After seeking legal advice Kent County Council decided to apply to quash the primary phase notice and to consult further on the proposals for the two-tier system in order to ensure that consultees were fully informed of the proposals for both the primary and secondary phases of education. This was the only route which offered the opportunity to implement as planned. Because of the timescale involved in responding to the legal challenge, even success in the case would not allow the 2 year implementation to begin in September 08. To defend any future challenge it was important to be able to demonstrate further consultation.

(7) Two further consultation documents were distributed. These documents are attached as Appendices 6 and 7. Copies of the consultation documents issued in 2006 on the principle of change to a two-tier system and in 2007 on the individual proposals for the primary phase were made available at the Public Meetings and on the KCC website. These are included within the SOAB reports attached as Appendices 2 and 3. In addition information was provided by Mouchel on the Academy proposal including access to their website. The current brochure is attached as Appendix 8 and was available at all the meetings.

Background and Accommodation Issues

2. (1) There are at present seven first schools on the island. These schools cater for pupils aged 4-9 years. The schools are:

Eastchurch Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) School
Halfway Houses (Foundation) School
Minster-in-Sheppey (Community) School
Queenborough (Community) School
Richmond (Community) School
Rose Street (Community) School } Federated
West Minster (Community) School }

(2) In addition there is already one all-through primary school catering for pupils aged 4-11 years. This school is:

St Edward's Roman Catholic (Voluntary Aided) School

(3) There are at present three middle schools catering for pupils aged 9-13 years. The schools are:

Cheyne (Foundation) School
Danley (Community) School
St George's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) School

(4) There is at present one wide ability upper school catering for pupils aged 13-18 years. This school is:

Minster (Foundation) College

(5) The total number of pupils on school rolls in Sheppey in January 2008 was 5362. Table 1 gives details of the total school capacities and surplus places in the current three phases.

Table 1.

First Schools (includes St Edward's Catholic primary School)

	Schools' Net Capacity	January 2008 Roll	Surplus Places
Current position	2631	2138	493

Middle Schools

	Schools' Net Capacity	January 2008 Roll	Surplus Places
Current position	2020	1714	306

Upper School

	School Net Capacity	January 2008 Roll	Surplus Places
Current position	1576	1510	66

The Proposal

3. (1) The proposal for a two-tier system of education would create primary and secondary phases.

Primary Phase

(2) The primary phase would comprise nine primary schools (including the current Roman Catholic primary schools and St George's CE Middle School as a primary school) to cater for pupils aged 4-11. Kent County Council's preferred option for the primary phase is to change the age range of the seven first schools from 4-9 to 4-11 and to change the age range of St George's CE Middle School from 9-13 to 4-11.

- In September 2008 pupils who have just completed Year 4 at a first school would stay at the school for Year 5 and in September 2009 the Year 5 children would stay on for Year 6. The schools would then be teaching the full primary age range.
- In September 2008 St George's CE Middle School would not have a Year 5 intake and would therefore have an age range of 10-13 years. In September 2009 those pupils would transfer to the secondary phase and the school would admit pupils aged 4-11 and be teaching the full primary age range.
- There is at present no primary provision at the eastern end of the Island (Warden Bay/Leysdown area). The proposal for Eastchurch CE School includes additional new provision to be established in the Warden Bay locality.

Secondary Phase

(3) The secondary phase would provide for pupils aged 11-18 either through an Academy located on two sites, or through maintained schools on separate sites. Kent County Council's preferred option for the secondary phase is the establishment of an Academy on the Minster College and Cheyne Middle School sites. Separate consultation is taking place on establishing an Academy.

(4) If an Academy was not agreed, KCC would retain and refurbish the

buildings used for Minster College and one or both of the middle schools. The age ranges of the schools would change and secondary education could be provided through the implementation of one of the options below.

- i. The establishment of two maintained secondary schools on the Minster College site and Cheyne Middle School site. The school on the Minster College site would provide for pupils aged 11-18 and the school on the Cheyne site for pupils aged 11-16. Danley Middle School would close under this option.
- ii. The establishment of two maintained secondary schools on the Minster College and Danley Middle School sites. The school on the Minster College site would provide for pupils aged 11-18 and the school on the Danley site for pupils aged 11-16. Cheyne Middle School would close under this option.
- iii. The establishment of three maintained secondary schools on the sites of Minster College, Danley Middle School and Cheyne Middle School. The school on the Minster College site would provide for pupils aged 11-18 and the schools on the middle school sites for pupils aged 11-16.

(5) These proposals are being made on the basis of discussions undertaken over a number of years. On the basis of all the consultations, including the current one, there now seems to be widespread support for the principle of changing to a two-tier system.

(6) Kent's Primary Strategy supports change from the current system to one of primary and secondary schools (Recommendation 16). A two-tier system would be in line with the rest of Kent, and with most of the national education system.

(7) The current three-tier system has been in place for 35 years and is incompatible with the National Curriculum Key Stages.

(8) There is a need to improve the overall education experience, and the outcomes, for pupils on the island, and to respond to the changing economy of Sheppey and Swale. The latest data on standards is given in Appendix 9. This data shows that pupils on the Isle of Sheppey still perform less well than their counterparts in the rest of Kent and nationally. It should be noted that the most recent results show improvement in pupil outcomes at Minster College.

(9) Transition from the current to the new system would take place over 2 years. Appendix 10 shows how this will be achieved.

Consultation Process

4. (1) The latest consultation documents (Appendices 6 and 7) were distributed to staff, governors and parents at the schools, County Councillors, the Member of Parliament, Parish Councils, the Diocesan Authorities, local libraries, the Borough Council and others in accordance with the agreed County policy. The documents were also posted on the KCC website.

(2) Approximately 7000 copies of each document were circulated, and a separate form was included for written responses. Copies of the documents were also available at all the public meetings together with the current Academy brochure which is attached as Appendix 8.

(3) Separate meetings were held with all staff of all Sheppey schools during 2007 and further meetings are being planned together with the Academy consultants. Professional associations and trade unions are invited to the meetings, where employment issues can be discussed, outside the framework of public meetings.

(4) Ten public meetings were held at Sheppey schools according to the schedule as shown in Appendix 11. The Academy consultants were also present at each meeting. Two separate meetings to discuss the Academy were held by Mouchel on 11 and 12 March. KCC attended these information meetings.

(5) A number of briefing meetings were held with interested groups including Swale Borough Council, the 14-19 Planning Forum and the Urban Swale Cluster.

Responses to the Public Consultation

Written Responses

5. (1) Summary tables and an analysis of written responses received is attached as Appendix 12.

(2) A digest of written comments received is attached as Appendix 13.

Public Meeting Responses

(3) A summary of the main points made at the meetings is attached as Appendix 14.

(4) A summary of the views of the headteachers recorded at the public meetings is attached as Appendix 15.

(5) A summary of the views of the chairmen of governors recorded at the public meetings is attached as Appendix 16.

Views of Elected Members

Kent County Council

6. (1) The local members are Mr Adrian Crowther and Mrs Angela Harrison.

(2) Mr Crowther fully supports the proposed change to a two-tier system. "It would bring Sheppey in line with the rest of Kent, children would only have one change of school and parents would not have to buy 3 different school uniforms as under the current system."

(3) Mrs Harrison has not made a written response but has attended some of the public meetings and has spoken in support of both the two-tier system and the establishment of an Academy.

Swale Borough Council

(4) The response from Swale Borough Council supporting the establishment of an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey is attached as Appendix 19.

(5) Mr Roger Truelove sent a written response on behalf of the Sittingbourne and Sheppey Labour Party giving their view that change was needed to the future provision of education on the Isle of Sheppey and part of that change should be to reduce the three-tier system to two-tiers. A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix 17.

Views of the Local Member of Parliament

7. Mr Derek Wyatt, the local Member of Parliament has not made a written response to this consultation, but has always supported the change to a two-tier system and the establishment of an Academy as proposed. Mr Wyatt has played a strong part in the four years of discussion about the future of the Island's education system.

Views of the Governing Bodies

8. (1) The views of the governing bodies are contained in Appendix 16.

(2) A written response has been received from the Chairman of the Interim Executive Board of Minster College confirming the Board's agreement to the proposals (Appendix 18).

Views of the Learning and Skills Council

9. (1) The LSC has commented as follows:

"I wrote, in response to the original consultation, saying that the LSC supported the move to a two-tier system. We believed that the proposals, together with the prospective Academy, gave the best opportunity for delivering an innovative and comprehensive 14-19 curriculum meeting the needs of all young people on the island. We also recognised that further work might be needed in order to explain the benefits of the proposed change to people on the island.

(2) We therefore welcome the further opportunity that re-publication of the proposals gives to explain and discuss publicly KCC's proposals.

(3) I can confirm that the LSC still holds the views expressed in my previous letter, namely that the proposed reorganisation of the Sheppey schools is the best solution for the infrastructure to give all young people on the island the opportunities that they are entitled to. We do, however, believe that as far as implementing 14-19 reform is concerned, the schools, prospective Academy and Sheppey college – with training providers as appropriate – will need to work ever closer in collaboration to be able to deliver that entitlement."

Views of the Diocesan Authorities

10. (1) Mr Rupert Bristow, Diocesan Director of Education attended some of the meetings and spoke in favour of a two-tier system and an Academy. The Church of England is an Academy sponsor.

(2) No response has been received from the Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark.

Views of the Urban Swale Cluster Board

11. The Cluster Board has responded as follows:

"After consulting widely and examining the data, the Urban Swale Cluster Management Board supports the proposal to change from a three-tier to two tier system on the Isle of Sheppey."

Views of the Area Education Officer

12. This latest round of consultation is the culmination of four years of discussion and debate over the future of the island's education system. It is probably the longest and largest consultation process undertaken by Kent County Council. It has been

subject to many twists and turns of opinion and misinformation and has been hotly debated in the press and elsewhere throughout the four years. As a result of the extensive attempt to engage all those interested we can now confidently conclude that there is significant support for change. It is almost universally accepted that a two-tier system would better meet the needs of pupils. The shape of the secondary sector has been contentious but there is growing recognition that the provision of an Academy on two sites will bring enormous benefits to the island, and I therefore recommend that elected members agree the proposals as follows:

- i. to change the system to a two-tier system
- ii. to change first schools and St George's CE Middle School to primary schools
- iii. to agree the preferred secondary solution of an Academy.

Transport, Admissions and Community Impact

Transport

13. (1) The proposed system of primary schools offers schools of the right size for local communities. Pupils who now travel some distance to a middle school would remain in a local primary school until age 11. This will reduce travel for many children.

(2) The proposed additional provision for Eastchurch CE School at Warden Bay will bring benefits to that community including removing the necessity for children from age 4 upwards having to travel by bus to school.

(3) The proposed Academy would be on two sites, the Minster College site and The Cheyne Middle School site. Whilst allowing for parental preference, the two sites should mean that more students will be able to walk or cycle to school, thus reducing the number of car journeys.

(4) The opening of the new crossing enables much closer partnership with Sittingbourne schools. If a two-tier system came into being, this collaborative work would benefit all pupils and staff, both on and off the island.

Admissions

(5) The current three-tier system means that pupil transfer occurs at different times from the rest of Kent. Some parents do, however, apply to grammar or high schools in Sittingbourne or elsewhere for age 11 and 13 transfer. A two-tier system on Sheppey will enable admission to primary school at 4+ and to secondary school at 11+. One change of school instead of two will be of great advantage to island pupils.

(6) Admission to the proposed Academy is set out in Appendix 8.

Community

(7) Reorganisation into a two-tier system would take into account the individual needs of pupils. There would be an opportunity to increase community use of school buildings, and to ensure that extended school provision was available locally. It is proposed that a Children's Centre is established alongside Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School. The site currently under negotiation for the proposed additional provision for Eastchurch CE School located at Warden Bay would be adjacent to the proposed Children's Centre.

(8) The Academy sponsors will ensure that the Academy plays a full part in the local community and operates as an extended school serving local needs (see Appendix 8).

Resource Implications

Capital

14. (1) Reorganisation into a two-tier system would carry significant capital costs. In the approved Capital Medium Term Plan provision exists for a £5m investment in the essential permanent building works required for the primary phase. There would also be a need for temporary accommodation in the short term which has been costed at £570k.

(2) The proposed additional provision for Eastchurch CE School to be located at Warden Bay will require a capital cost of approximately £3.5m.

(3) Adaptations at St George's CE (Aided) Middle School include provision of appropriate early years setting for Year R, and the Canterbury Diocese will be involved in funding decisions on this work.

(4) Upon the grant of Funding Agreement the proposed Academy will attract a total capital grant of £46m from the Department for Children, Schools and Families. This grant will be supplemented by additional KCC sponsorship, which will be the minimum capital sum of £4m. The Local Authority will also manage the procurement process for the construction of new Academy buildings including all associated procurement risk.

(5) If an Academy is not agreed for the secondary phase, then the property requirements will be addressed when the appropriate Building Schools for the Future phase reaches Swale.

Revenue

(6) Each school within a two-tier system would receive a budget according to the agreed formula, depending on the new size of the school.

(7) If a two-tier system were introduced, there may be access to one-off funding through the Reorganisation Fund to assist schools with the costs of transition. This would depend on the changes made to individual schools.

Human

(8) There are approximately 360 teaching staff and 330 support staff employed in Sheppey schools. Kent County Council would ensure that support for all staff through a period of uncertainty and change was a priority. Informal staff meetings have been held and will continue to take place, with the involvement of professional associations and trades unions. The Local Authority has already sought co-operation from governing bodies to ensure that transition arrangements operated smoothly. The Schools Personnel Service has drawn up a code of practice for recruitment of staff. Professional development needs have been identified and training and development days have been offered to staff. Staff could benefit from the career development opportunities arising from change. Any redundancy costs arising from reorganisation would be borne by Kent County Council.

(9) The Academy Project Group has set up meetings at the middle schools and Minster College, with the agreement of the headteachers, so that they can have the opportunity to meet and consult the staff.

Equality Issues

15. (1) The social and economic context within which education operates on Sheppey is one of substantial disadvantage. Table 2 shows the absence figures for the school year 2006-2007.

Table 2.

	Primary	Secondary
Sheppey schools	7.3%	12.4%
Urban Swale	6.1%	9.2%
Shepway 1	5.2%	6.8%
Kent	5.1%	8.0%

The Urban Swale cluster figures include the Sheppey schools. Shepway 1 is the closest statistical comparator to Sheppey.

(2) Sheppey schools have 82 children with statements of Special Educational Needs (1.5% of the Sheppey schools population). There is no special school on the Island and therefore the number shown with statements appears as a low percentage because children with statements attend a special school off the Island. There are 601 (11.2%) of pupils who are on the Special Needs register without statements. There are 67 Looked After Children (1.2%) on roll in Sheppey schools, more than half of whom are attending Minster College.

(3) The proposed reorganisation is intended to offer Island pupils a better educational experience, improved learning opportunities for all and address the issues of underachievement and disadvantage.

School Improvement Implications

16. (1) The educational experience of pupils on Sheppey from 4 to 18 is currently disadvantageous. The three-tier system does not fit with National Curriculum Key Stages and pupils move in the middle of a Key Stage. There is evidence that pupils make better progress when they have fewer changes of school.

(2) A two-tier system offers many benefits, particularly in the expectation of improved educational outcomes.

(3) The proposed Academy will offer very significant educational opportunities, probably unparalleled in Kent.

(4) The recruitment, retention and development of staff should be enhanced by offering the same education system as the rest of Kent.

(5) There would be undoubted disruption during the implementation phase, and considerable Local Authority resources would need to be deployed to support such large-scale change.

Proposed Timetable

17. (1) If it is decided that a public notice should be issued in respect of these proposals for the primary and secondary phases of the two-tier system, the following timetable could apply.

Cabinet Member decision	20 March 2008
Issue Public Notice	28 March 2008
End of representation period	9 May 2008
Decision by Local Authority	May 2008

Four week period for statutory appeals

June 2008

Proposed implementation:

Primary Phase - from September 2008

Secondary Phase - from September 2009

(2) Should the Public Notices not be determined by the Local Authority or if there are statutory appeals to a decision to implement the Public Notices, the outcome would be determined by the Schools Adjudicator.

18. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on:

- (a) the issuing of linked public notices to establish the primary and secondary phases of education on the Isle of Sheppey-
- The change of age range for the first schools and St George's CE Middle School
 - The addition of provision for Eastchurch CE Primary School to be located at Warden Bay
 - The closure of Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School to be replaced by an Academy on the Minster College and Cheyne Middle School sites, subject to the funding agreement.
- (b) subject to approval of the proposals following the end of the representation period, the resources necessary to implement the scheme being provided on the basis identified in this report.

Alison Osborne
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(Canterbury & Swale)
Tel: (01227) 284461

The Local Members are Mr Adrian Crowther and Mrs Angela Harrison

Background Documents:

None.

Previous Committee Reports:

Reports to the School Organisation Advisory Board – 24 July 2006
13 December 2006
16 May 2007
17 October 2007
14 November 2007

By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 24 July 2006

Subject: EDUCATION PROVISION ON THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Proposal to re-organise education provision from a three-tier system to a two-tier system, with transfer at 11+

Introduction

1. (1) The current education provision on the Isle of Sheppey is a three-tier comprehensive system. The remainder of Kent (with the exception of one school) operates a two-tier system with pupil transfer from the primary to the secondary phase at 11+. The system in Sheppey is therefore out of phase with the rest of Kent. The majority of Local Authorities with three-tier systems have undertaken reorganisation into two-tier systems following the introduction of the National Curriculum with its Key Stages. Other three-tier systems in Kent re-organised into a two-tier model some years ago.

(2) At a meeting on 9 February 2004 Cabinet requested that discussion take place on the principle of moving to a two-tier system, to inform their decision about a formal consultation with detailed proposals. Discussions took place between February and August 2004.

(3) During these discussions it became clear that the education community felt strongly that very significant capital investment was an essential component of any proposed change in the organisation of education on the Island. An Expression of Interest in an Academy was therefore submitted to the Department for Education and Skills. This has now reached the feasibility stage and is the subject of separate consultation by the sponsors.

(4) It is now therefore possible to consider the principle of change to a two-tier system, within the context of possible extensive funding for the secondary phase. This meets the demands of the education community, made during the first round of discussions (2004), in relation to the secondary system of education.

(5) In February 2006, Cabinet agreed the Primary Strategy. Recommendation 16 states

"the three-tier system of education (first, middle and upper school) is both incompatible with current national strategies, and impedes continuity"

and this proposal is therefore consistent with the strategic statement contained in the Strategy.

Background

2. (1) Swale lies at the eastern end of the Thames Gateway and is a priority area for investment. There is commitment to improve road infrastructure, increase housing development and realise economic growth in the District. On the Isle of Sheppey there are sites identified for employment development and a significant number of new houses. The second bridge crossing is now open. This will double capacity on A249 to improve access to and from the Island and is expected to have a major impact on all aspects of life on Sheppey.

(2) The Isle of Sheppey contains six wards and 25 Super Output Areas (SOAs) within these wards. Deprivation indices are attached to these SOAs. The following information gives a clear indication of the extent of deprivation on the island (IMD 2004)

- 17 of the 25 SOAs are in the lower half of deprivation rankings compared with Swale as a whole District.
- 22 of the 25 SOAs are in the lower half of deprivation rankings compared with Kent.
- 17 of the 25 SOAs are in the lower half of deprivation rankings compared with England.
- 10 of the 25 SOAs are in the bottom 10% of the deprivation rankings.

(3) The context within which education operates on the Island is therefore one of significant disadvantage. Table 1 gives contextual information on the current cohort of Island pupils in comparison with Kent.

Table 1.

	No. with State-ments	% with State-ments	No. SEN no State-ment	% with SEN no State-ment	No. Eligible FSM	% Eligible FSM	No with EAL	% with EAL	No. LAC	% LAC
Kent Total	6138	2.9%	44249	20.9%	21099	9.9%	7200	3.4%	1193	0.6%
Sheppey Schools Total	93	1.6%	2035	34.3%	923	15.5%	56	0.9%	61	1.0%

There is no special school on the Island and therefore the number shown with statements appears as a low percentage because children with statements attend a special school off the Island.

(4) The organisation of schools in Sheppey is as follows:-

- Seven first schools (Years R - 4)
- One Roman Catholic primary school (Years R - 6)
- Three middle schools (Years 5 - 8)
- One upper school (Years 9 - 13)

(5) Appendix 1 shows the geographic position of each of these schools and an indication of the distances between them. In particular the distances (by road) between the three middle schools and Minster College are as follows:-

Cheyne 2 miles
 Danley 0.6 miles
 St George's 1.4 miles

(6) Appendix 2 lists all schools on the Island, indicating type, location and roll. Appendices 3 (a) to 3(l) shows the pupil distribution for each of the schools.

(7) The vast majority of pupils on the island are required to move school twice, within a system which breaks across National Curriculum Key Stages 2 and 3. Teaching in the first school stage stops before pupils complete Key Stage 2. In the middle schools the break occurs before the end of Key Stage 3.

(8) The middle schools enter some pupils for Key Stage 3 tests a year early.

(9) 9.9% of children living on the Isle of Sheppey travel off the island for their education. The numbers (January 2006) are as follows:

PRIMARY	SECONDARY (Years 7 - 11)	POST 16
65	427 (of which 173 are attending high schools)	140

These include island pupils attending Meadowfield Special School in Sittingbourne (25 primary age, 24 secondary and 10 post 16). Pupils travelling off the Island to Medway schools are 5 primary, 64 secondary and 3 special schools giving a total of 72.

(10) The total number of pupils on school rolls on Sheppey is given in Table 2 together with a forecast roll including adjustment for new housing. This data includes potential pupil product from the first 200 houses proposed for Rushenden. The bulk of the development will take place beyond the next 5 years. In the long term the entire development is expected to produce around 500 pupils at all key stages. If the profile of the development changes, this will affect the pupil forecast.

Table 2.

FIRST SCHOOLS (Includes St Edward's Catholic Primary School)

	School Net Capacity	2006 Roll (Jan PLASC)	FORECAST ROLLS			
			2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Current position	2731	2238	2148	2115	2098	2110
Surplus capacity		493	583	616	633	621

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

	School Net Capacity		2006 Roll (Jan PLASC)					
Current position	1906		1902					
Surplus capacity			4					
FORECAST ROLLS & SURPLUS PLACES								
2006/07	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
1917	1823	1802	1745	1686	1690	1656	1658	1674
-11	83	104	161	220	216	250	248	232

UPPER SCHOOL (Years 9 - 13)

	School Net Capacity		2006 Roll (Jan PLASC)					
Current position	1611		1591					
Surplus capacity			20					
FORECAST ROLLS & SURPLUS PLACES								
2006/07	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
1568	1580	1568	1581	1576	1536	1509	1472	1451
43	31	43	30	35	75	102	139	160

These forecasts indicate a growing surplus capacity as first school rolls fall, and a consequent impact in future years on the middle and upper school phases.

(11) Table 3 shows the historic rolls on the Island.

Table 3

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total Roll	6011	6088	6019	5907	5829	5731

Standards

3. (1) The following information uses the latest available data and is included to give an indication of the progress made by pupils within the current education system.

(2) **First Schools**

Key Stage 1

The 2005 results at Key Stage 1 SATs are as follows.

AVERAGES	K1 READ %L2+	K1 MATHS %L2+	% ACHIEVING L2B+ IN READ WRITE & MATHS	% ABSENCE RATE
Sheppey Schools	75.8	68.5	40.7	7.5
Swale Urban	78.8	70.5	48.2	6.5
Swale Urban Excluding Sheppey	80.5	71.7	52.4	5.9
Shepway 1 (nearest comparison)	80.4	72.8	46.9	5.7

Overall Sheppey first schools achieve less well than schools in the rest of Swale, and less well than schools in a similar locality (Shepway).

- On admission children are generally below average standards of attainment.
- In most first schools areas of the Foundation Stage highlighted as requiring most development are: Communication, language and literacy; specifically language for communication and thinking and linking sounds and letters; personal, social and emotional development.
- Attainment in reading in Sheppey schools at level 2+ is below that of other schools in Swale, and well below both Kent and national performance.
- In mathematics at level 2+ performance in Sheppey schools mirrors that in writing in that achievement is below that of other Swale schools, and well below Kent and national achievement.

(3) **Middle Schools**

Key Stage 2

Background information – national

OfSTED report "Changing Schools" (HMI 550) published in June 2002, observed that:

"After pupils transferred to their next school they often worked at an inappropriate level in the first few months, or even throughout the first year. This left pupils either marking time or floundering, with consequent loss of interest or motivation.

Problems similar to those reported by Ofsted still exist at the interface between first or lower and middle schools. The data for 2001 on pupils' attainment in Key Stage 2 suggest that middle school pupils in Year 6 might still be affected slightly in English

and significantly in mathematics by their change in school two or three years previously”.

The national picture from DfES research is as follows:

Subject	Middle schools			All schools with Y6 pupils		
	Boys	Girls	All pupils	Boys	Girls	All pupils
English	69%	79%	74%	70%	80%	75%
Mathematics	67%	65%	66%	71%	80%	75%
Science	87%	88%	87%	87%	88%	87%

(Raising Standards in Middle Schools DfES 2003)

Sheppey Middle Schools - Key Stage 2

- The 2005 results at Key Stage 2 SATs are as follows (national floor targets English 65% Maths 65%)
-

AVERAGES	ENGLISH L4+	MATHS L4+	% ABSENCE RATE
Sheppey Schools	63.3%	58.4%	8.2%
Swale Urban	67.5%	61.9%	6.6%
Swale Urban Excluding Sheppey	70.3%	64.3%	5.5%
Kent	76%	71%	5.65% (04/5)
National	79%	75%	5.43% (04/5)

- The 2005 contextual value added overall scores are significantly lower than average for all three schools. The same is true in English and mathematics. Science results are in line with the average with the exception of one school where they are significantly higher than average. A suggested reason for the success in science is that pupils in Year 6 in middle schools have access to subject specialists and equipment that is not always available in primary schools.
- The 2005 results for English at level 4+ are below the floor targets in two schools and just above in one. A common area of weakness in all three schools is writing. In all three schools the percentage of pupils attaining level 4+ in writing, is approximately half that of reading. The gap between reading and writing nationally and in Kent is much narrower, where the percentage of pupils attaining level 4+ in writing is three quarters of the percentage of pupils achieving level 4+ in reading. The gap between pupils attaining level 5 in writing and level 5 in reading is even wider and, again, the percentages of pupils attaining level 5 in writing are much lower than Kent and national figures.
- The 2005 mathematics results were also below floor targets at level 4+ and the percentage of pupils attaining level 5 was also below the Kent and national figures.

Key Stage 3

Background information - national

“Early analysis of the attainment and progress made by pupils following a condensed curriculum suggests that it may be more successful in increasing the pace of learning in some subjects than others.

Ofsted judged that on the basis of lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils’ work, whilst some groups of pupils had progressed faster than they

would have done on a conventional three-year programme, most would not reach their expected end-of-key-stage level by the end of Year 8.

Care must be taken in interpreting the results of pupils who took the National Curriculum tests in Year 8 in 2005 due to the varied range of pupils that different schools entered for the tests"

(A condensed Key Stage 3: Designing a flexible curriculum 2006 Update)

Sheppey Middle Schools - Key Stage 3

- The schools' CVA for 2005 is above average. However, it should be noted none of the schools entered the whole cohort early for their Key Stage 3 tests. The majority of children entered were those of predicted higher attainment. The 'above average' CVA is therefore only a partial picture of the middle school cohort. The proportions of pupils entered varied from school to school.
- Progress in English is not as high as in the other core subjects: the CVA for English in two schools is significantly lower than average, with a downward trend, and in one school it is in line with the average but with an upward trend.
- It would appear that the effect of the disruption of transfer in Key Stage 2 on pupils' skills in English persists in Key Stage 3. The CVA for mathematics, on the other hand, is significantly higher than average in all three schools.

Key Stage 4 and post 16

Upper Wide Ability School

This is an improving school but standards remain low and value added, even in the context of relatively high deprivation, is low. The school has given cause for concern over several years. Following an Ofsted inspection in October 2003 the school was placed in special measures in January 2004. A further full inspection in March 2006 recognised progress over two years and the school was given a Notice to Improve.

Standards in the school are low, compared with secondary schools in Kent.

- GCSE results 5A*-C showed a slight decline from 25% in 2004 to 22.5%. 5A*-G at 78.6% was very similar to the year before.
- Results at KS3 are difficult to accredit or to analyse as a percentage of the cohort complete KS3 assessment in Year 8, before joining Minster College. This has caused major difficulties both for the school and for individual learners. The higher ability pupils are entered for SATs in year 8 at the Middle School and have been able to begin GCSE study a year early on entry to Minster in year 9.
- However lower attaining pupils who are not expected to achieve Level 5 in core subject SATs tests in year 8, move to Minster College part way through their Key stage 3 programme of study and have to adapt to new surroundings, groupings and teachers
- in the middle of a programme designed to be completed over three years in one school. These pupils have also moved from First to Middle school part way through Key stage 2.
- Minster College has needed to design a curriculum and timetable for 480 pupils, some of whom have taken SATS in all subjects, some in one or two subjects and some in none. This is a major timetabling and setting difficulty which has impacted on pupil progress.

- Post 16 results were slightly improved in 2005 with APS per entry up by 10.6 to 65.5 and APS per student up by 3.9 to 150.3. However this is still a relatively low APS per student for a wide ability school, although there are 17 schools in Kent with lower APS per student.
- Attendance continues to be a major issue at the upper school. The percentage of pupils taking unauthorised absence or absence condoned by parents is very high. A variety of measures are in place and a multi agency approach to tackle the problem is beginning to have some impact. However there remain a large number of pupils who are unable to achieve, because of irregular attendance.

ABSENCE 2004-5	
Upper School	19.00%
Kent	8.22%
National	7.81%

- There is some evidence that transition from Middle to Upper school at age 13 has a greater impact on attendance than is the case in year 9 and 10 for pupils who change schools at 11 years old. Generating a positive ethos, attitude to learning and engagement with study is more difficult for a newly established group of 13 and 14 year olds than for those who have been learning together since age 11.

Outcomes of Discussions in 2004

4. (1) From February 2004 discussion took place on the principle of changing the organisation of education on the Isle of Sheppey. Appendix 4 lists the groups consulted. In total approximately 500 people were involved in group or individual discussions.

(2) The discussions involved:

- explaining the reasons for proposing change
- exploring the possible impact of change
- listening to views on the principle
- hearing ideas about the possible models
- describing the next stages including formal consultation.

(3) There was widespread but not unanimous support for the principle of moving from a three-tier to a two-tier system. In general terms, change was welcomed, since many participants viewed the current system as unsatisfactory, and saw a move to a two-tier structure as having long term benefits. Many also recognised that disruption during any change was inevitable, and sought reassurance that this would be minimised.

(4) The main points in favour of change were:

- all-through primary schools will do better than schools in a system where education is split at primary level
- many pupils would benefit from the security of remaining in primary schools for longer
- reorganisation would be an opportunity to end mixed age classes
- children would have only one necessary move between ages 4 and 16. The move would occur when children were more mature and able to deal with it more positively
- at present some children have to travel quite a distance at a young age because they do not gain admission to their nearest middle school
- it would be sensible for the island to be in line with the rest of Kent
- the "emotional disruption" in Years 4 and 5 would be reduced

- the present system cuts across Key Stages and disadvantages children. A two-tier system is better for delivering the National Curriculum
- the current system limits promotion opportunities for staff, leads to recycling of staff within the island, thus adding to insularity
- the current system is part of the reason for parents sending their children to school off the island
- a change would help to bring into being an integrated approach to education in Sheppey
- a two-tier system that gives access to a primary school close to home is welcome

(5) The main points against a change were:

- teachers in the current system have become age specialists
- middle schools are strong and yet they may lose out in any reorganisation thus becoming weaker
- children in Years 5 and 6 have facilities that most primary schools do not possess
- years 7 and 8 children do not have the negative influences of older children
- weaker schools may not be able to cope with two more year groups
- in the current system accommodation is used to capacity and is thus cost effective
- the change from a three-tier to two-tier system in the Hoo peninsula was not successful
- the issue is Minster College. That problem should be solved without changing the other schools
- there are massive buildings issues to make schools suitable for their new designation
- considerable re-training of staff would be needed.

Admissions and Transport

5. (1) Because pupils living on the Island are served by first, middle and comprehensive upper schools, transfer to middle schools and the upper school occurs at different times in a pupil's education from the rest of Kent. Some parents do however apply to grammar schools or high schools in Sittingbourne or elsewhere for age 11 and 13 transfer.

Transfer at age 11

(2) The majority remain in middle schools. This year 102 applications were received from Sheppey parents. 82 of these were for pupils at middle schools; the remainder were for pupils at the Roman Catholic primary school or Elliott Park, an independent primary school. 53 pupils were offered places in Sittingbourne schools. Others will have decided to remain in middle schools, or transfer to Medway.

Transfer at age 13

(3) This year 459 students took part in the process, of whom 436 were offered places at the upper school and 23 gained admission to Sittingbourne schools with vacant places in that year group.

Transport

(4) The local authority provides assisted transport for pupils who live over the statutory distance and who attend 'the nearest appropriate school'. For pupils on

Sheppey this is a middle or upper school. Pupils are not entitled to assisted transport to Sittingbourne schools.

Options for change

6. (1) Continuation of the current three-tier system

- If the existing pattern of provision continues, the first and middle schools will continue to share Key Stage 2 teaching.
- The middle and upper schools will continue to share Key Stage 3 teaching.
- Pupils will continue to change schools twice.
- The upper school will continue to work in a context which impedes pupil progress.
- Parents will continue to seek education for their children off the Island.
- The attainment of pupils attending Sheppey schools may continue to compare unfavourably with other schools.
- Action to reduce school surplus places will need to be taken.

(2) Change from a three-tier to a two-tier system

- Alignment with the rest of Kent, and most education nationally, would offer schools the opportunity to deliver whole Key Stages in one phase of education. (Key Stages 1 and 2 in the primary phase; Key Stages 3 and 4 in the secondary).
- This coherence would ensure secure pupil assessment and tracking.
- Transition from one school to another can slow pupil progress while adjustment to the new school is made. A two-tier system will remove one transition and should improve learning and attainment.
- Recruitment retention and development of staff would be enhanced by offering the same education system as the rest of the county.
- The current provision would change to primary and secondary schools. The primary schools would operate with intakes which enable single age classes in one or two form entry schools (intakes of 30 or 60). The first school rolls are at present showing a decline, and the reorganisation would include removal of surplus capacity. The secondary sector would be reorganised to ensure that the current barriers to learning are removed.
- Pupils would remain in their primary schools until transfer at 11, avoiding the travel at eight years old which parents have raised as a concern.
- Parents who choose to educate their children at secondary schools off the Island because of the current system could exercise a preference for local schooling.
- Collaboration with schools in Sittingbourne would improve because the shape of provision would be the same.

Resources

Capital

7. (1) The costs of re-organisation will be identified through feasibility work at individual schools to produce firm costs for each aspect of the reorganisation.

Human

(2) Re-organisation on this scale will incur recruitment, training, redundancy and retirement costs. An estimate of these would be possible once detailed proposals were made.

Views of the Diocesan Authorities

8. (1) Preliminary discussions with the Church of England Canterbury Diocese and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark took place in 2004.

(2) Recently the principle of re-organisation has been raised again with both Dioceses.

(3) The Canterbury Church of England Diocese is in favour of a consultation on the principle of moving from a three-tier to a two-tier organisation. The Diocese will make a more detailed response once detailed proposals are available.

(4) The Archdiocese of Southwark will comment on proposals which affect St Edwards RC Primary School upon publication of these details.

Views of Swale Borough Council

9. Mark Bilsborough, Chief Executive and Councillor Andrew Bowles, Leader of the Council have made the following comment:

“We understand the reasons for Kent County Council’s proposal to move from a three tier education system to two tiers and confirm our support in principle.”

Conclusion

10. (1) There would be significant advantage in changing to a two-tier system on the Isle of Sheppey, to improve the education experience of its pupils, and in line with the Primary Strategy. The principles which underpin the discussion on change are:

- the need to raise attendance, attainment and achievement
- the need to provide schools of the right size and type to improve education on the Island, and to be coherent within the organisation of the National Curriculum
- the need to enhance staff recruitment and retention
- the need to ensure that all views are heard

(2) Attainment overall compares unfavourably with similar areas, with the rest of Swale, with Kent as a whole, and against the national picture. It is vital to improve the system offered to Sheppey pupils, as part of a regeneration of the Island's economy.

(3) Despite a variety of initiatives over the years, the three-tier education system has not provided a coherent educational experience for pupils. Arrangements to ensure smooth transition from first to middle, and from middle to upper, have had limited impact. There are currently renewed efforts to make the process more effective.

(4) The earlier discussions in 2004 gave a clear indication that the majority of those who engaged in the debate would welcome change.

(5) The opportunity for very substantial capital investment is available for the secondary sector.

(6) Support is therefore sought for a consultation on the principle of changing to a two-tier system. To allow pupils, parents, governors and staff to offer their views, together with any other interested groups or individuals, meetings would be held in schools across the Island in the autumn of 2006.

(7) These views would inform later consultation on detailed proposals for each school. The outcome of consultation on the proposed Academy is necessary before detailed proposals can be brought forward for the primary phase. Once decisions are reached on the secondary sector, and the sites to be used, plans for each primary school can be drawn up. Consultation with each school can then take place early in 2007.

Timetable

11. Should public consultation be agreed, the following timetable is proposed:

Consultation Document published	W/C 11 September 2006
Public meetings in schools across Sheppey	25 September 2006 onwards
Consultation period closes	7 November 2006
Report Back to School Organisation Advisory Board	13 December 2006
Cabinet Member decision	Early January 2007
Individual school detailed consultations	Spring 2007

Recommendation

12. Members are asked to agree consultation on the principle of re-organisation of education provision on the Isle of Sheppey from a three-tier system to a two-tier system, with transfer at 11+.

Alison Osborne
Area Education Officer
(Canterbury & Swale)
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Background Documents:

None

Appendix 2

List of existing Isle of Sheppey schools, location and roll

Name	Type	Location	Roll (Jan 06)
Eastchurch CE	First	Eastchurch	273
Halfway Houses	First	Halfway	409
Minster-in-Sheppey	First	Minster	504
Queenborough	First	Queenborough	220
Richmond	First	Sheerness	264
Rose Street	First	Sheerness	162
West Minster	First	Sheerness	242
St Edward's RC	Primary	Sheerness	164
Cheyne	Middle	Sheerness	750
Danley	Middle	Halfway	694
St George's	Middle	Minster	458
Minster College	Upper	Minster	1591

Appendix 4

List of groups and individuals undertaking discussion on the principle of moving from three-tier to two-tier education

1. Headteachers of each Isle of Sheppey school as individuals
2. Governing Body of each school
3. Parents through a series of school meetings
4. Medway Unitary Authority
5. The Learning and Skills Council
6. Social Services
7. Swale Borough Council
8. Health Authority
9. Sheppey Parish Councils
10. Kent Adult Education Service
11. Urban Swale Cluster headteachers including Sittingbourne Secondary heads
12. Sheppey College
13. Diocesan authorities
14. Cluster boards of Urban and Rural Swale
15. Local Members
16. Member of Parliament
17. Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
18. Employers groups
19. Chief Executive of Swale Borough Council
20. Minster College Interim Executive Board

By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 13 December 2006

Subject: EDUCATION PROVISION ON THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY –
OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the results of public consultation on the proposal to reorganise education provision from a three-tier system to a two-tier system, with transfer at 11+.

Introduction

1. (1) The current education provision on the Isle of Sheppey is a three-tier comprehensive system. The remainder of Kent (with the exception of one school) operates a two-tier system with pupil transfer from the primary to the secondary phase at 11+. The system in Sheppey is therefore out of phase with the rest of Kent. The majority of Local Authorities with three-tier systems have undertaken reorganisation into two-tier systems following the introduction of the National Curriculum with its Key Stages. Other three-tier systems in Kent reorganised into a two-tier model some years ago.

(2) At its meeting on 24 July 2006 the School Organisation Advisory Board supported the proposal to consult on the principle of reorganisation from a three-tier system to a two-tier system with transfer at 11+. This followed early discussions in 2004. This report sets out the results of the public consultation which was carried out between September and November 2006.

(3) A consultation document was distributed in accordance with County policy. The document is attached at Appendix 1.

(4) During the period of this consultation a separate consultation exercise has been undertaken by Mouchel Parkman on the feasibility of an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey. The outcome of their consultation is expected at the beginning of 2007, and will inform future implementation of any change in education organisation on the island.

Background

2. (1) Swale lies at the eastern end of the Thames Gateway, and is a priority area for investment. On the Isle of Sheppey there are sites identified for employment development and a significant number of new houses. The second bridge crossing is now open and is expected to have a major impact on all aspects of life on the island.

(2) Although the island has benefited from considerable investment over the last few years there remain pockets of high deprivation. Based on the score of the National Index of Multiple Deprivation (2004) there are 10 out of 25 super output areas

on the Isle of Sheppey that are in the bottom 10% of all Kent's super output areas, in terms of deprivation scores.

(3) The context within which education operates on the island is therefore one of substantial disadvantage. Table 1 gives contextual information on the 2005/06 cohort of island pupils in comparison with Kent.

Table 1.

	Number of state-mented pupils	% with State-ments	Number of SEN pupils without State-ments	% SEN (without State-ments)	Pupils Eligible for FSM	% Eligible FSM	Pupils with EAL	% with EAL	No. of LAC	% LAC
Kent Total	6138	2.89	44245	20.9%	21099	9.9%	7200	3.4%	1193	0.6%
Sheppey Schools Total	93	1.57*	2035	34.4%	923	15.5%	56	0.9%	61	1.0%

* The Swale Special School is located in Sittingbourne. Pupils from the island attend this school, and are not taken into account in the above table, resulting in a lower percentage.

(4) The organisation of schools in Sheppey is as follows:-

- 7 first schools (Years R-4). Two of these are federated.
- 1 Roman Catholic primary school (years R-6).
- 3 middle schools (Years 5-8).
- 1 upper school (Years 9-13).

The distances (by road) between the three middle schools and Minster College are:

Danley	-	0.6 mile
St George's	-	1.4 miles
Cheyne	-	2 miles

Appendix 2 lists all the schools on the island, indicating type, location and roll.

(5) The vast majority of pupils on the island are required to move school twice, within a system which breaks across National Curriculum Key Stages 2 and 3. Teaching in the first schools stops before pupils complete Key Stage 2. In the middle schools the break occurs before the end of Key Stage 3. The middle schools enter some pupils for Key Stage 3 tests a year early.

School Rolls

3. (1) The total number of pupils on school rolls in Sheppey is given in Table 2. Roll forecasts indicate a growing number of surplus places as first school rolls fall. This will have a consequent impact in future years on the middle and upper school phases.

Table 2.**First Schools (includes St Edward's Catholic Primary School)**

	School Net Capacity	Sept 2006 Roll	Forecast Rolls			
			2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Current position	2731	2127	2063	2009	2018	2053
Surplus places		604	668	722	713	678

Middle Schools (years 5-8)

	Schools Net Capacity		Sept 2006 Roll					
Current position	1906		1872					
Surplus places			34					
Forecast Rolls – and surplus places								
2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
1805	1755	1680	1615	1574	1546	1506	1539	1544
101	151	226	291	332	360	400	367	362

Upper Schools (years 9-13)

	School Net Capacity		Sept 2006 Roll					
Current position	1570		1512					
Surplus places			58					
Forecast Rolls – and surplus places								
2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
1545	1497	1496	1467	1416	1353	1299	1259	1213
25	73	74	103	154	217	271	311	357

(2) 9.9% of children living on Sheppey travel off the island for their education. The details are as follows: -

Primary	Secondary (Years 7-11)	Post 16
65	427 (173 high and 254 grammar)	140

In addition 58 island pupils attend Meadowfield Special School in Sittingbourne and 43 pupils travel off the island to Medway schools.

(3) The historic decline in total rolls across all phases is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. (January PLASC figures)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total Roll	6011	6088	6019	5907	5829	5731

Implementation of any proposal to reorganise from a three-tier to two-tier system will need to take into account the removal of surplus capacity, in line with the Primary Strategy. Reconfiguration of the phases of education can include the adoption of surplus school accommodation to meet community and extended school needs.

Standards

4. (1) The following information uses the latest available data, and is included to give an indication of educational outcomes for pupils across the island, within the current educational system.

Key Stage 2

Results for 2006 (provisional) are:

	% Level 4+ English	% Level 4+ Maths	% Level 4+ Science
Isle of Sheppey	64.6	58.8	82.7
Swale Urban	68.5	64.7	81.6
Shepway *	70.3	68.2	78.8
Kent	76.4	71.6	83.6

* Statistical comparater to Sheppey

English

- Between 2005 and 2006 results for Sheppey schools improved by 1% compared to a Kent improvement of 0.4%. Shepway results fell by 3% but still exceed Sheppey by 5.7%. Sheppey results are 11.8% below Kent figures. One school is below floor target of 65%. Results range from 53.9% to 85.7%.
- At level 5 Sheppey performance improved by 10.2% to 20%. However this is 11.2% below Kent figures, and 4.2% below Shepway and Swale excluding Sheppey.

Maths

- At level 4 improvement in performance in Sheppey (0.3%) did not improve as much as Swale excluding Sheppey (4.3%). Results remain well below (12.8%) Kent figures and 9.4% below Shepway results. All schools achieve below floor targets of 65%.
- Level 5 results are 16.9% below Kent figures and 10.8% below Shepway.

Science

- Results are marginally lower than the Kent average.

Key Stage 3

Results for 2006 (provisional) are:

	% Level 5+ English	% Level 5+ Maths	% Level 5+ Science
Isle of Sheppey	43.1	56.6	42.7
Swale Urban	61.5	68.4	56.6
Shepway *	70.8	79.8	77.6
Kent	71.7	76.4	72.1

* Statistical comparater to Sheppey

- The results for the whole cohort of students, some of whom entered SATs tests at age 13 in the middle schools and some at age 14 at Minster College, are well below the averages for the county and below national floor targets in English and Science (50%).
- The combined KS 3 results for the middle schools and Minster College in 2005 and 2006 are English 43.1%, Maths 56.6% and Science 42.7%. (Note: the 2006 element of the results has yet to be validated at the time of going to print).

Key Stage 4 and Post 16

- In 2006 GCSE results 5 A*-C rose slightly from 23% in 2005 to 26.1%. If students had achieved in line with similar students in similar schools across the country, results would have been in the range of 31-36%. The average for the whole of Kent was 62%.
- Contextual Value Added, taking into account social and other contextual factors, puts these results at GCSE on the 88th percentile. Sheppey students made less progress between KS2 and KS4, than those in 88% of other schools.
- Point scores for the best 8 GCSEs for each student put Minster College on the 94th percentile for Contextual Value Added from KS2 - 4. Students made less progress between the ages of 11 and 16 than students in 94% of schools.
- Statutory schooling is completed at the end of KS4 and many students transfer to work, college or other schools. Those who remain at school take a variety of qualifications. In 2006 102 students took 'A' level at Minster College, up from 33 in 2005. However the 2006 points score per entry fell to 37.2 from 59.6 in 2005 and the points score per student fell to 102 from 170.9. These were the lowest scores in Kent. National averages for modern/high schools were 66.7 per entry and 206 per student.

Attendance

- Absence rates on the island continue to present challenges for schools. A variety of measures are in place, and a multi-agency approach is beginning to have some impact. However, there remains a large number of pupils unable to achieve, because of irregular attendance.

% Absence 2005-06		
	Primary	Secondary
Sheppey Schools	7.4	Middle 7.8 – Upper 21.5
Urban Swale	6.41	9.94
Kent	5.74	8.06
National	5.76	7.92
Shepway *	5.37	7.23

* Statistical comparater to Sheppey

- There is some evidence that transition can have a detrimental impact on attendance, especially for older pupils. Generating a positive ethos, attitude to learning and engagement with study is more difficult for a newly established group of 13 and 14 year olds than for those who have been learning together since age 11.

Admissions

5. (1) In Sheppey pupil transfer occurs at different times from the rest of Kent. Some parents do, however, apply to grammar or high schools in Sittingbourne or elsewhere for age 11 and 13 transfer.

Transfer at Age 11

(2) The majority of pupils remain in middle schools. This year 102 applications for transfer were received from Sheppey parents. 82 of these were for middle school pupils; the remainder were for pupils at the Roman Catholic primary school, or Elliott Park, an independent primary school. 53 pupils were offered places in Sittingbourne schools. Others will have decided to remain in middle schools, or transfer to Medway.

Transfer at Age 13

(3) 459 students took part in the process, of whom 436 were offered places at the Upper School, and 23 gained admission to Sittingbourne schools with vacant places in the relevant year group.

Transport

(4) Kent County Council provides assisted transport for pupils who live over the statutory distance, and who, attend 'the nearest appropriate school'. For pupils on Sheppey this is a middle or upper school. Pupils are not entitled to assisted transport to Sittingbourne schools.

The Proposal

6. (1) The proposal is to reorganise education provision on the Isle of Sheppey from a three-tier to a two-tier system, with transfer at 11+.

(2) To enable appropriate capital expenditure on the secondary phase, a separate consultation is taking place on establishing an Academy. This will attract funding of £40m. The outcome of this consultation is expected in January 2007.

(3) The proposal is made on the basis of earlier discussions undertaken in 2004. At that time there was widespread but not unanimous support for the principle of changing the system.

(4) Kent's Primary Strategy supports change from the current system to one of primary and secondary schools (Recommendation 16). A two-tier system would be in line with the rest of Kent, and with most of the national education system.

(5) The current three-tier system has been in place for 35 years and is incompatible with the National Curriculum Key Stages.

(6) There is a need to improve the overall education experience, and the outcomes, for pupils on the island, and to respond to the changing economy of Sheppey and Swale.

Consultation Process

7. (1) The consultation document attached as Appendix 1 was distributed to staff, governors and parents at the schools, County Councillors, Members of Parliament, Parish Councils, the Diocesan Authorities, local libraries, the District Council and others in accordance with the agreed County policy. The document was also posted on the KCC website.

(2) Approximately 7500 copies of the document were circulated, and a separate form was included for written responses.

(3) Ten public meetings were held at Sheppey schools according to the schedule as shown in Appendix 3.

(4) Separate meetings are also being held with all staff of all Sheppey schools. Professional associations and trade unions are invited to these meetings, where employment issues can be discussed, outside the framework of public meetings.

(5) A number of briefing meetings were held with interested groups including professionals working with pupils and schools on the Isle of Sheppey, the Health Authority, Social Services Children and Families Team, Swale Borough Council, Adult Education, Medway Unitary Authority, Sheppey College, the Learning and Skills Council, Swale Clusters, Swale Secondary Headteachers and the Local Strategic Partnership. In addition some schools used the consultation document in School Councils as part of the Citizenship curriculum.

Responses to the Public Consultation

Written Responses

8. (1) There were 968 written responses of which 172 were in favour, 792 against and 4 undecided. The written responses included approximately 620 collected by Sheppey Parents Action Group.

(2) A summary of written responses received is attached as Appendix 4.

(3) A digest of written comments received from parents is attached as Appendix 5.

(4) A summary of written comments received from professionals working with pupils, parents and schools on the Isle of Sheppey is attached as Appendix 6.

(5) A summary of views submitted in writing from members of the education community is attached as Appendix 7.

(6) A letter addressed to Mr John Simmonds and signed by 698 people was received, opposing the establishment of an Academy and any change to the structure of education in Sheppey. Many of those who signed also submitted individual responses and are included in Appendix 4.

Public Meeting Responses

(7) A summary of the main points made at the meetings is attached as Appendix 8.

(8) A summary of the views of the headteachers recorded at the public meetings is attached as Appendix 9.

Views of Local Members

9. The local Members are Mr A Crowther and Mrs A Harrison. Both Members agree in principle with the proposal to change to a two-tier system of education on the Isle of Sheppey with transfer at age 11+. Mrs Harrison said:

“Having listened to a large number of views from my constituents, both those with children currently at school and those who have had children at school on the island over the last 10 years, as well as talking to children themselves, I have come to the view that it would be in the best interests of the future education of the children on the island if we were to revert to a two-tier system of education.”

Views of Swale Borough Council

10. (1) Mr Mark Bilsborough, Chief Executive and Councillor Andrew Bowles, Leader of the Council have made the following comment.

“We understand the reasons for Kent County Council’s proposal to move from a three tier education system to two tiers and confirm our support in principle”.

(2) Mr Roger Truelove sent a written response on behalf of the Sittingbourne and Sheppey Labour Party giving their view that change was needed to the future provision of education on the Isle of Sheppey and part of that change should be to reduce the three-tier system to two-tiers. A full copy of the response is attached as Appendix 10.

(3) Ms Christine Coles, Borough Councillor for Sheppey Central Ward, sent a written response agreeing with the proposal and stating that a two-tier system of education should allow much better links with the grammar school system operating within Sittingbourne and Faversham and that pupils from the island have been disadvantaged by the three-tier system. Parents want and should have choice.

Views of Eastchurch Parish Council

11. A written response was received from the Clerk to the Parish Council commenting that although the Parish Council agrees in principle with the proposal, there were concerns regarding the ability to provide primary education locally for children living within the current catchment area of Eastchurch CE Primary School.

Views of Minster-on-Sea Parish Council

12. A written response was received from the Clerk to the Parish Council commenting that the Parish Council is of the opinion that the consultation document is flawed as Kent County Council does not state how the outcomes of the proposal will be achieved. Members of the Parish Council have serious concerns that this exercise could be funded by plundering school sites. Until the definitive views of Kent Council are known, informed decisions cannot be made.

Views of the Governing Bodies

13. (1) Eight of the eleven governing bodies of the schools on the island gave a view at the public meeting held at their school. Appendix 11 shows that 6 agreed with the proposal. Additionally Eastchurch governing body sent a written response supporting the proposal and indicating the wish for a 2 FE primary school.

(2) A written response has been received from the Chairman of the Interim Executive Board of Minster College confirming the Board's agreement to the proposal (Appendix 12).

Views of the Local Member of Parliament

14. Mr Derek Wyatt, the local Member of Parliament has commented as follows:

"I fully support the proposal of moving from a three-tier to a two-tier system of education on the Isle of Sheppey and the sooner the better".

Views of the Diocesan Authorities

15. (1) The Canterbury Church of England Diocese agrees in principle to the reorganisation of education provision on the Isle of Sheppey from a three-tier to a two-tier system, with transfer at 11+. However, that support is dependent on the detailed proposals that would be forthcoming if the decision was taken to move to the next stage.

(2) The Archdiocese of Southwark will comment on proposals which affect St Edward's RC Primary School if the decision to move to a two-tier system of education is agreed.

Views of the Urban Swale Cluster Board

16. The Cluster Board has responded as follows:

"After consulting widely and examining the data, the Urban Swale Cluster Management Board supports the proposal to change from a three-tier to a two-tier system on the Isle of Sheppey. This is to enable the improvement and enhancement of the provision for all children in Urban Swale. The Board would seek assurances that appropriate resources will be available to support the transitional arrangements in order to minimise any detrimental effects in the short term."

Views of the Area Education Officer

17. (1) There is significant numerical opposition to this proposal. Of 968 written responses, 792 are against the idea of change to a two-tier system. At the public meetings, opinion was more balanced, but there was still a substantial view opposing change.

(2) The consultation on a change from three to two-tier has been dogged by misunderstanding and misinformation. It has also been distracted by strongly expressed opinion against an Academy. It has been difficult to discuss the pros and cons of two and three tier systems without reference to the separate idea of an Academy. Despite careful presentation, many are unwilling to consider a change of system because they believe that by doing so, they are agreeing to an Academy, which they believe they know little about.

(3) A large number of written responses against the proposal gave no reason for that preference. Many of these were collated by Sheppey Parents Action Group. Of those who gave reasons, dislike of any change, or hostility to the idea of an Academy, were the most common. There was also a strong perception that Minster College needed to change, but the other two phases should remain.

(4) Among the much smaller group in favour of a two-tier system, there were letters giving reasons for their preference. These are attached as Appendices 10 and 12. There were no letters of this kind opposing the proposal.

(5) A recurring request in public meetings was for smaller organisation units and more choice in the secondary phase. It is widely believed that Minster College is too large and that students would have a better educational experience in smaller groupings.

(6) The first and middle schools were highly regarded by those attending meetings in individual schools. It was made clear that the proposal was not critical of any school, but of a system which had been in place for over 30 years and which may no longer meet the needs of pupils and parents.

(7) It is clear that two changes of school might have an adverse impact on pupil progress, and that Sheppey pupils could therefore be at a disadvantage. It is also clear that, overall, and taking into account relative social disadvantage, the results at the Key Stages of the National Curriculum compare unfavourably. While each school works tirelessly for its pupils, the overarching system may work against them. In particular, many attending meetings in the first schools could see the advantages of completing Key Stage 2 in the primary phase.

(8) The meetings in the middle schools, and the written responses, indicate resistance to the principle of change. This was expressed mainly through repetition of the many excellent features of education in the middle schools, and did not address the wider question of education outcomes across the three phases. There was a tendency to blame other phases and an unwillingness to consider the wider context.

(9) At the upper school meeting it was readily acknowledged that students should have a much improved secondary experience. The extreme difficulties under which Minster College labours are an outcome of the system, as well as the size of the school, and its history. The split in Key Stage 3 is a real impediment, and the lack of time to embed an ethos produces disaffection and disengagement. There is a strong preference for a two-tier system from the Interim Executive Board.

(10) After 35 years of a three-tier system there is little current evidence of the necessary planning for successful pupil transition. A three-tier system is dependent for its success on close co-operation between the different phases.

(11) Projections of future rolls on the island suggest that it will be necessary to remove surplus capacity, as lower numbers of pupils move from first schools. Reorganisation into a two-tier system would give the opportunity to plan schools of the right size to meet local need in the primary phase, and to organise the secondary section in smaller units. The yearly intake into Minster College is currently 450 pupils, and the consultation process has clearly demonstrated the need to plan for a different organisational model.

(12) The current model tends to exclude schools on the island from education planning for the future in Swale, because the system on Sheppey is different. Schools in Sittingbourne have indicated a strong wish to work more closely with Sheppey schools, and believe that a two-tier system will bring benefit to all pupils and staff in Swale.

(13) Continuation of the current system is an option which many who responded to the consultation would prefer, though there is agreement that the upper school is too large. If that option were chosen, the following would apply:

- If the existing pattern of provision continues, the first and middle schools will continue to share Key Stage 2 teaching.
- The middle and upper schools will continue to share Key Stage 3 teaching.
- Pupils will continue to change schools twice.
- The upper school will continue to work in a context which impedes pupil progress.
- Parents will continue to seek education for their children off the island.
- The attainment of pupils attending Sheppey schools may continue to compare unfavourably with other schools.
- Action to reduce school surplus places will need to be taken.

(14) If change to a two-tier system was preferred the following outcomes could be expected:

- Alignment with the rest of Kent, and most education nationally, would offer schools the opportunity to deliver whole Key Stages in one phase of education. (Key Stages 1 and 2 in the primary phase; Key Stages 3 and 4 in the secondary).
- This coherence would ensure secure pupil assessment and tracking.
- Transition from one school to another can slow pupil progress while adjustment to the new school is made. A two-tier system will remove one transition and should improve learning and attainment.
- Recruitment, retention and development of staff would be enhanced by offering the same education system as the rest of the county.
- The current provision would change to primary and secondary schools. The primary schools would operate with intakes which enable single age classes in one or two form entry schools (intakes of 30 or 60). The first school rolls are at present showing a decline, and the reorganisation would include removal of surplus capacity. The secondary sector would be reorganised to ensure that the current barriers to learning are removed.
- Pupils would remain in their primary schools until transfer at 11, avoiding the travel at eight years old which parents have raised as a concern.
- Parents who choose to educate their children at secondary schools off the island because of the current system could exercise a preference for local schooling.
- Collaboration with schools in Sittingbourne would improve because the shape of provision would be the same.

Resource Implications

Capital

18. (1) Reorganisation into a two-tier system would carry significant capital costs. Initial feasibility work has been undertaken on likely costs for the primary phase, but until the outcome of the Academy consultation is known it is not possible to identify the cost of each primary school. If the Academy proposal moves forward, a decision will be taken on which middle school sites are to be used. It will then be possible to identify the size and location of schools in the primary phase, and therefore the cost of transformation. In the approved Capital Medium Term Plan provision exists for a £5m investment in the primary school estate.

(2) The building stock on the island is very mixed. Schools have premises that vary from Victorian buildings to very recent classroom extensions. The building maintenance backlog is similar to that found elsewhere in Kent and there has been considerable investment in recent years to tackle this, but further expenditure is needed to continue this work. Some schools have temporary accommodation and although some has been replaced by the Modernisation Programme, detailed proposals will need to include replacing mobiles and huts with permanent buildings. If some schools are to have reduced capacity, it may be possible to remove some temporary accommodation but if schools are enlarged new building works will be needed. Most schools sites are large enough to allow expansion if necessary but several are landlocked and do not have this flexibility.

Revenue

(3) Each school within a two-tier system would receive a budget according to the agreed formula, depending on the new size of the school.

(4) If a two-tier system were introduced, there may be access to one-off funding through the Reorganisation Fund to assist schools with the costs of transition. This would depend on the changes made to individual schools.

Human

(5) There are approximately 355 teaching staff and 328 support staff employed in Sheppey schools. If a two-tier system were introduced, Kent County Council would ensure that support for all staff through a period of uncertainty and change was a priority. Informal staff meetings are taking place, with professional associations and trades unions invited. The Local Authority would seek close co-operation from governing bodies to ensure that transition arrangements operated smoothly. Professional development needs would be identified so that staff could benefit from the career development opportunities arising from change. Any redundancy costs arising from reorganisation would be borne by Kent County Council.

Equality Issues

19. Reorganisation into a two-tier system would take into account the individual needs of pupils. There would be an opportunity to increase community use of school buildings, and to ensure that extended school provision was available locally. The aspiration for more Children's Centres on the island could be helped by refurbishment of surplus capacity in schools.

Transport and Environmental Impact including Community Implications

20. (1) Provision of a two-tier system would offer the opportunity to plan for primary schools of the right size for each local community. Pupils who now travel some distance to a middle school could remain in a local school until age 11.

(2) The sites for secondary provision will depend on the outcome of the Academy consultation. It will be necessary to ensure that large numbers of secondary pupils are not travelling simultaneously to and from one location.

(3) The opening of the new crossing will enable much closer partnership with Sittingbourne schools. If a two-tier system came into being, this collaborative work would benefit all pupils and staff, both on and off the island.

School Improvement Implications

21. (1) Despite the weight of opposition to change, the educational experience of pupils on Sheppey from 4 to 18 is currently disadvantageous.

(2) A two-tier system offers many benefits, particularly in the expectation of improved educational outcomes. Implementation of the National Secondary Strategy would be more effective within a two-tier system.

(3) There would be undoubted disruption during the implementation phase, and considerable Local Authority resources would need to be deployed to support such large-scale change.

Primary Strategy Recommendations

22. The Local Authority is required to ensure that schools are delivering a good standard of education, and meeting the educational needs of pupils. The Primary Strategy 2006 is designed to help inform the strategic planning process, and makes specific reference to the school system operating in Sheppey.

“The three-tier system of education (first, middle and upper school) is both incompatible with current national strategies, and impedes continuity”.

(Recommendation 16)

This proposal is therefore consistent with the statement of principle contained in the Strategy.

Proposed Timetable

23. If it is agreed to move from a three-tier to a two-tier system and permission to consult on specific changes is given, it will not be possible to form specific proposals for each school until the preferred option for the Academy is known. However, feasibilities are being carried out on each school in preparation. A decision on the preferred option for the Academy is expected early 2007.

Cabinet Member decision on proposal for two tier system	January 2007
Decision on preferred option for the academy	January 2007
Consultation with individual schools on detailed changes	Spring 2007
Outcome of consultations reported to the School Organisation Advisory Board	Summer 2007
Cabinet decision and issue of public notices	Autumn 2007
Implementation	2008 onwards

21. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on:

- (a) reorganisation of education on the Isle of Sheppey from a three-tier system to a two-tier system

(b) drawing up detailed proposals for each school for further consultation, following the outcome of the Academy consultation.

Alison Osborne
Area Education Officer
(Canterbury & Swale)
Tel: (01227) 284461

The Local Members are Mr A Crowther and Mrs A Harrison

Background Documents:

None

Other Sources of Information

Kent Primary Strategy 2006

Previous Committee Reports:

Report to School Organisation Advisory Board 24 July 2006

Planning Sheppey schools for the future

Public Consultation Document



Photograph supplied by Carillion

Kent County Council would like to hear your views on a change from first, middle and upper schools to primary and secondary schools, with transfer at 11 years old



How schools could be organised on the Isle of Sheppey

Present system													
Age	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16+
Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Sixth Form
National Curriculum	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2			Key Stage 3			Key Stage 4			
(3 tier)	First Schools				Middle Schools				Upper School				

Proposed system													
Age	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16+
Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Sixth Form
National Curriculum	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2			Key Stage 3			Key Stage 4			
(2 tier)	Primary Schools							Secondary Schools					



Introduction

Kent County Council is beginning a review of schools on the Isle of Sheppey. We would like to hear your opinions on the future pattern of schools, particularly regarding the age of transfer. As part of its primary strategy, the County Council is currently considering the organisation of schools in areas where there is a decline in the number of children. It also wishes to consider reorganisation where transfer to secondary school is other than at the age of 11. If changes are agreed the County Council will make a substantial investment in school buildings.

Please take time to read this important document and let us know what you think of these proposals. Your views will help shape the future of your child's education on the Island. On pages 10 and 11 you will see how you can let us know what you think.

I can assure you that all comments received will be carefully considered and will be used to develop detailed proposals for each school. We will then consult you again with these proposals.



John Simmonds
Cabinet Member for Education & School Improvement

Why are we considering changes?

- The current system of three types of schools (first, middle and upper) on the Isle of Sheppey is different from the rest of Kent, (except for one school) and from most of the country. The system cuts across the key stages of the National Curriculum. (See page 2).
- In 2004 we discussed the idea of change with approximately 500 people. These preliminary discussions, with the island community, indicated that a system of primary and secondary schools would be welcomed by many people on the island.
- Many of those we talked to viewed the present system as unsatisfactory.
- They saw a move to a structure of primary and secondary schools as having long term benefits and stressed the need to minimise disruption while the changes took place.
- During these discussions it became clear that considerable investment would be needed to achieve quality school buildings to meet the changed conditions. Kent County Council has applied for extensive funding through the Academies programme, and the Department for Education and Skills has agreed to a feasibility exercise for the secondary stage of education. This will have its own consultation during the Autumn of 2006.
- Kent's Primary Strategy supports change from the current system to one of primary and secondary schools. (Recommendation 16).

Reasons for change

- Kent County Council believes that there are many advantages in changing to a system of primary and secondary schools on the Island.
- A "two-tier" system would improve the education experience of pupils because they would make one change of school at 11 years instead of two changes.
- There is evidence that pupils make better progress when they have fewer changes of school.
- The present system does not fit with the Key Stages of the National Curriculum - children move schools in the middle of Key Stage 2 and again part way through Key Stage 3. Some pupils complete Key Stage 3 in the middle schools and others do not.
- A system of primary and secondary schools will be simpler and clearer for pupils and parents and will remove disadvantages like travel to middle schools at a young age.
- The opening of the new bridge offers easier links with schools in Sittingbourne. This will enable wider opportunities for pupils and staff and help to bring an integrated approach to education in Swale.
- It will be easier to recruit and retain school staff if the system is the same as the rest of Kent.
- Parents who send their children to school off the Island, because of the system operating now, will have the option of local schooling. (At present 632 leave the Island every day).
- It is an opportunity to provide schools of the right size and type to improve education on the Island, and to deal with falling rolls.
- It could help to improve school attendance and pupil progress.
- The barriers to learning which the present system imposes could be removed.

Organisation of schools

- The present arrangements are:

First Schools	Eastchurch Church of England (Vol Controlled) Halfway Houses (Foundation) Minster-in-Sheppey (Community) Queenborough (Community) Richmond (Community) Rose Street (Community) West Minster (Community)
Primary School	St Edward's Roman Catholic (Vol Aided)
Middle Schools	Cheyne (Foundation) Danley (Community) St George's Church of England (Vol Aided)
Upper School	Minster College (Foundation)

Across the Island there are 17 forms of entry (30 pupils - 1 form).

First schools	17 forms of entry
Middle schools	17 forms of entry
Upper school	15 forms of entry

- If changes were made to the organisation of schools, there would be

Primary schools	16 forms of entry
Secondary schools	16 forms of entry

- This pattern of provision would take into account
 - falling numbers in the first schools
 - possible extra pupils from new housing

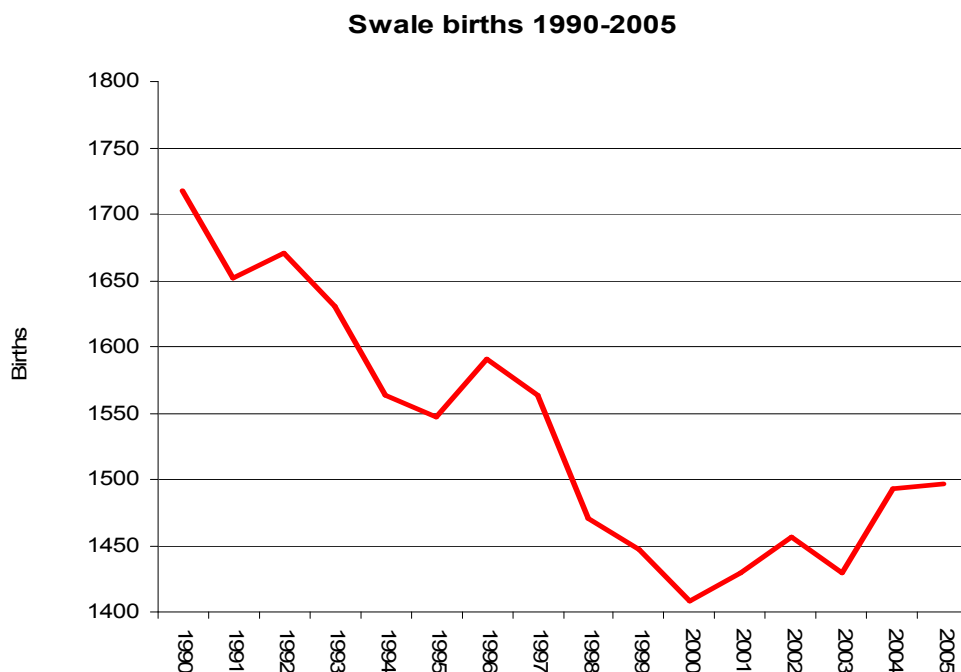
School capacities and rolls
January 2006

School	Net CAP	Surplus/ Deficit	% Surp/Def	Total Roll
Eastchurch CE School	300	27	9.00%	273
Halfway Houses School	480	71	14.79%	409
Minster in Sheppey School	600	96	16.00%	504
Queenborough School	300	80	26.67%	220
Richmond School	300	36	12.00%	264
Rose Street School	250	88	35.20%	162
St Edward's RC School	201	37	18.41%	164
West Minster School	300	58	19.33%	242
Cheyne School	872	122	13.99%	750
Danley School	636	-58	-9.12%	694
St Georges CE School	398	-60	-15.08%	458
Minster College	1611	20	1.24%	1591

Note: Net Cap is the physical capacity of each school

Current and future pupil numbers

As with other areas in Kent and the UK, the numbers of births for Swale Borough fell considerably over the 1990s, with a drop of around 20% between 1990 and 2000.



Although the birth rate started to rise from 2000 it is unlikely that it will reach previous levels.

This has prompted Kent County Council to take action in all areas of the county, reorganising the provision of primary school places. The effect on secondary places will be felt in the coming years as the lower numbers feed through the system.

The table below shows the current and forecast number of pupils to be educated in the island's schools. These numbers include estimates of pupils from new housing developments, such as at Thistle Hill and Rushenden/Queenborough Creek:

Phase of education	Total net capacity	Total roll (Jan 2006)	Current surplus capacity	Forecast roll (2014-15) ^{***}	Forecast surplus capacity (2014-15) [*]
First ^{**}	2,731	2,238	493	2,110	621
Middle	1,906	1,902	4	1,674	232
Upper	1,611	1,591	20	1,451	160
Total	6,248	5,731	517	5,235	1,013

* Based on net capacity at 2006 levels

** Including pupil forecasts for St. Edward's Catholic Primary School

*** First school forecasts only extend to 2009-10

In preparing pupil forecasts, it should be noted that recent parental preferences are assumed to continue (for example, the proportion of Island children being educated off the Island at Sittingbourne schools).

These forecasts show that we need to plan for the removal of a large number of spare school places. We can achieve this as part of a move to a "two-tier" system. Otherwise, further discussions will be necessary.

School staffing

Reorganisation can bring uncertainty for staff, and Kent County Council will ensure that supporting staff through change is a priority. We will work closely with governors, professional associations, and trade unions to enable teachers and support staff to benefit from the career development opportunities that change will bring.

Timescales

Timescale	Action
11 September -7 November 2006	Consultation period on principle of change.
13 December 2006	Report to Kent County Council School Organisation Advisory Board
Early January 2007	Cabinet Decision
Early Spring 2007 onwards	Consultations with individual school communities about detailed proposals for each school
September 2008 onwards	Changes could take place

How to give your views

If you would like to comment on the principle of change to a system of primary and secondary schools on the Island, there are several opportunities to do so.

- **Come to a public meeting. These will be held at:**

School	Date	Time
West Minster School Rose Street School St Edward's RC School	2 October 2006 to be held at West Minster	7.00 p.m.
Eastchurch CE School	5 October 2006	4.00 p.m.
Minster-in-Sheppey School	5 October 2006	7.00 p.m.
Richmond School	16 October 2006	4.00 p.m.
Cheyne School	16 October 2006	7.00 p.m.
Queenborough School	17 October 2006	4.00 p.m.
Minster College	19 October 2006	7.00 p.m.
Halfway Houses School	30 October 2006	7.00 p.m.
Danley School	31 October 2006	7.00 p.m.
St George's CE School	2 November 2006	7.00 p.m.

- **Complete and return the response form printed on pages 11 and 12**

Public Consultation Response Form

Proposal to re-organise education provision on the Isle of Sheppey from a three-tier system to a two-tier system, with transfer at 11+

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 7 NOVEMBER 2006

To: Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer (Canterbury & Swale)
East Kent Office, Clover House, John Wilson Business Park,
Thanet Way, Whitstable CT5 3QZ
Fax: 01227 772290

Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes

No

The parent of a child at
a Sheppey school

If you are a parent, how old
are your children?

A member of staff at
a Sheppey school

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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A governor of a Sheppey school

Other interested party

Name of other organisation:

Name: _____

Address: _____

My comments are as follows:

This document is available on:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>
Responses can be emailed to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

Appendix 2

List of existing Isle of Sheppey schools, location and roll

Name	Type	Location	Roll (Sept 06)
Eastchurch CE	First	Eastchurch	278
Halfway Houses	First	Halfway	300
Minster-in-Sheppey	First	Minster	465
Queenborough	First	Queenborough	220
Richmond	First	Sheerness	269
Rose Street	First	Sheerness	151
West Minster	First	Sheerness	225
		Federation	
St Edward's RC	Primary	Sheerness	156
Cheyne	Middle	Sheerness	728
Danley	Middle	Halfway	683
St George's CE	Middle	Minster	459
Minster College	Upper	Minster	1522

Appendix 3**Schedule of Public Meetings and approximate number of people attending**

School	Date of Public Meeting	Approximate number
Eastchurch CE Primary School	5 October 2006	50
Halfway Houses Primary School	30 October 2006	30
Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School	5 October 2006	30
Queenborough First School	17 October 2006	40
Richmond First School	16 October 2006	60
West Minster Primary School Rose Street School St Edward's RC Primary School	2 October 2006	25
Cheyne Middle School	16 October 2006	60
Danley Middle School	31 October 2006	90
Minster College	19 October 2006	20
St George's CE Middle School	2 November 2006	70

Appendix 4

Proposed Change of the System of Education on the Isle of Sheppey

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: **7500**
Responses received **968**

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school	98	408	3	509
Member of staff	70	68	0	138
Governor	17	15	2	34
Pupil attending a Sheppey school	0	67	1	68
Other	21	255	0	276
TOTAL	172	792	4	968

* Please note: The totals on the bottom line refer to the number of individual responses received. Some of these responses fitted into more than one category and are counted in each category but only once in the total.

- A letter addressed to Mr John Simmonds and signed by 698 people was received, opposing the establishment of an Academy and any change to the structure of education in Sheppey.
- Although most of the parents who are opposed to a change of system are those with children attending one of the middle schools, there was a sizeable number who had children attending one of the first schools or Minster College.
 - Of 137 parents who had children in first schools 47 were in favour and 90 against.
 - Of 267 parents who had children in the middle schools 37 were in favour and 230 opposed.
 - Of 106 parents who had children in Minster College 16 were in favour and 90 opposed.

(Please note some parents had children on roll in more than one type of school)

- The responses from pupils were exclusively from those who are currently on roll at either a middle school or Minster College.
- Most of those classified as “other” were returns collected by Sheppey Parents Action Group and subsequently submitted en bloc. 178 of those responses did not include a comment.

Appendix 5

Views of the Parents

A digest of the written comments included with response forms

Agreeing with the proposal	Disagreeing with the proposal
I would prefer my children to remain at primary school until the end of Year 6 so that they can complete Key Stage 2 in one school.	We have had the three-tier education system on the Isle of Sheppey for many years and I see no reason for changing it.
Whilst the middle schools on the island are doing a good job, I feel that the children moving schools at age 13 is very difficult for them and probably too late.	The first and middle schools are not failing, why should we change the system just because the upper school is failing.
I agree with the proposal but would want to see more than one secondary school on the island and would not want to see the creation of one very large secondary school.	A change in the system would cause a lot of disruption and have a detrimental effect on the children's education.
The school system should be 2 tier in line with the rest of Kent and the National Curriculum.	The system works as it is and any money should be spent on improving the schools we already have.
Changing school only once at age 11+ would be less stressful for children who currently have to travel at age 9 to middle schools.	Middle schools provide teachers who specialise in certain subjects and have better facilities than primary schools.
	We do not want a change in the system but want the upper school improved and a choice of upper schools.

- 509 parents sent in a response form of which 252 did not include a comment. Of those who did not comment 27 agreed with the proposal and 225 did not agree with the proposal.
- 33 parents said that although they agreed with the proposal to change from a three-tier to a two-tier system of education, they did not agree with the proposal for an academy on the Isle of Sheppey.

Appendix 6

A summary of written comments received from professionals working with pupils, parents and schools on the Isle of Sheppey

<p>Swale Social Services Children and Families Team Agree with the proposal</p>	<p>From a child development point of view it makes sense to have fewer changes of school. We know that changing schools can be a challenging and worrying time for many children and their social networks get disrupted. This can lead to attendance problems, behaviour and exclusion problems and must have a detrimental effect on their learning. The idea of one change at age 11 fits much better with children's overall developmental needs and makes for just one transition point, not two.</p> <p>In addition reorganising may have the effect of cutting down on many of the children's travelling times and distance to school. This must surely be a good outcome if indeed it can be achieved. If children are attending schools within or close to their home community, the social networks they develop are more likely to be continued after school. There is more community ownership developed if the school is seen to serve the local children.</p>
<p>Attendance and Behaviour Service Agree with the proposal</p>	<p>Reorganisation of education provision on the Isle of Sheppey would align schools and pupils with the National Curriculum Key Stages, preventing the impact of transitional changes at crucial and critical phases of young peoples' lives.</p> <p>Data suggests Year 9 cohorts are vulnerable to under-achievement, irregular/poor attendance at a time in their development of physical, psychological and emotional change.</p> <p>Ensuring secondary education stability at Year 7 (commencement of Key Stage 3) is crucial to prevention of disaffection and under achievement at the on-set of teenage years.</p>
<p>Kent Youth Service Agree with the proposal</p>	<p>The island should come into line with the rest of Kent and move to a 2-tier system. The 3-tier system cuts across the Key Stages and is disruptive to the children. It takes time for a child to settle into the school systems and one change would be better than 2.</p>
<p>SureStart Sheerness Agree with the proposal</p>	<p>The two issues of the change to a 2-tier system and the academy proposal are inextricably linked. Parents of pre-school children are frequently expressing the view that although they would rather have less change (i.e. a 2-tier system) they are worried about exposing their children to Minster College with its attendant well known problems. So they would rather have a "buffer" of the very competent "middle schools" to keep their children away from Minster College for as</p>

	long as possible in the hope that Minster College will be sorted out by the time their children get there.
Department for Community Child Health Agree with the proposal	The 2-tier system will be of greater benefit to the children with AEN/SEN that we deal with as they do not cope well with change of schools.
Community Schools Development Agree with the proposal	The benefits would be one transition instead of two and improved resources/buildings.
Minority Communities Achievement Service Agree with the proposal	This change will bring education on the Isle of Sheppey into line with the rest of Kent. It will help to open up the island to new ideas and widen the experience of the children there.
Advisory Service Kent Agree with the proposal	The 2-tier structure would enable and facilitate more effective planning and delivery of teaching and learning for secondary age pupils in Key Stage 3, 11-14. It would encourage personalisation of learning, higher achievement and greater levels of engagement in education.
Learning and Skills Council Agree with the proposal	The LSC believes that the change from first, middle and upper schools to primary and secondary schools, with transfer at age 11 would give a unique opportunity to improve significantly the education and training available for young people on the island.

Appendix 7

A summary of views submitted in writing from members of the education community

<p><u>The Urban Swale Cluster Management Board</u> After consulting widely and examining the data, the Urban Swale Cluster Management Board supports the proposal to change from a 3-tier to a 2-tier system on the Isle of Sheppey. This is to enable the improvement and enhancement of the provision for all children in Urban Swale. The Board would seek assurances that appropriate resources will be available to support the transitional arrangements in order to minimise any detrimental effects in the short term.</p>
<p><u>Executive Headteacher, Minster College</u> An excellent proposal that will enhance all levels of performance.</p>
<p><u>Executive Headteacher, Sheerness West Federation</u> This proposal should have happened 10 years ago and is vital to the development of Sheppey as a whole.</p>
<p><u>Headteacher, Minster College</u> The statistical data at all 3 Key Stages reveals that the young people on the Isle of Sheppey are under-achieving. It is possible that the explanation for this lies partly in the way the system is organised with 2 points of transfer rather than 1. The outcomes at 16 are significantly below that reasonably expected. If the system is partly or wholly failing students on the Isle of Sheppey then it must be changed.</p>
<p><u>Headteacher, St Edward's RC Primary School</u> The National Curriculum is divided into Key Stages so how can they be taught effectively if children transfer schools halfway through. They are not called Key Stages for nothing. Changing schools is disruptive to a child's education – often they stand still or even go backwards. Year 5 is an important time – just before SATs so any disruption should be avoided. 3-tier means at least 2 changes - some experience 3 changes because they opt for the Kent Test at age 11. 9 years is too young to enter a secondary system, a much larger environment, and mix with adolescents of 13. Sheppey needs to enter the 21st Century and look forward not back. The 3-tier system is an anachronism. Change can be frightening, and not all change is good, but we should be thinking about the children and what is best for them, not for the adults involved.</p>
<p><u>Headteacher, Milton Court Primary School, Sittingbourne</u> A two-tier system would provide continuity and consistency across Swale. Perhaps smoother for recruitment between Sittingbourne and Sheppey.</p>
<p><u>Executive Headteacher of a Federation of two schools in Rural Swale</u> I wholeheartedly support this very logical step.</p>
<p><u>Headteacher, Highsted Grammar School, Sittingbourne</u> It would benefit the needs of children across Swale if the island changed to a system in which transfer occurs at the end of Key Stage 2. This would remove any perceived disadvantage parents may feel regarding their choices for education off the island and</p>

sets in place the opportunity for communities in the Kemsley/Iwade areas to consider realistically options for schooling on the island.

In my experience of a 2-tier system, children are ready for a change in their schools at 11, they relish the challenges of secondary education and the opportunities that affords. I can only support the proposal to move to a 2-tier system.

Headteacher, The Westlands School, Sittingbourne

The 3-tier system inhibits the opportunity of the upper school to develop a nurtured and positive ethos in pupils from the age of 11 and build upon it as pupils progress. Whilst there appears to be aspects of the middle school system that work, this is disproportionately outweighed by the significant problems generated by their existence with respect to necessitating a 14-19 tier on Sheppey. I believe that a proven two tier system is the most logical and effective way to seek the long term development of standards necessary.

Professional Association of Teachers

It seems natural to transfer children from one Key Stage to another at the time of school transfer so we are content that the proposed changes should go ahead.

Appendix 8

A summary of the main points made and questions raised at the public meetings

Comments	
Agreeing with the proposal	Disagreeing with the proposal
A 2-tier system in principle is right. It offers choice for parents at age 11 and allows children to remain with the teachers they know until the end of KS 2 assessments.	The middle schools are excellent and the only change that is required is to the upper school, which is failing our children.
At our parents evening 75% said they would like to have a 2-tier system of education on the island.	The middle schools had very good Ofsted reports and going to a 2-tier system would mean closing 3 very good schools.
It is recognised that changing schools causes disruption to education and so a 2-tier system will benefit our children.	A whole generation of children will be disadvantaged educationally because of the upheaval of any change in the system.
Travel arrangements bring anxiety for parents whose children attend middle schools and want to attend after school clubs.	Travelling to one large secondary school would be more of a problem.
Children going into Year 9 means that Minster College has to battle with issues of children going into a short educational span and how it impacts on attendance and behaviour. It would be difficult to enable a 14-19 curriculum if choices had to be made when starting at Minster College, and would be much easier if starting at age 11.	A change would bring disruption to pupils and teachers, and the island would lose a lot of good teachers.
	The rest of Kent should move to a 3-tier system.
General Comments	
The parents of Sheppey want choice for their children which means 2 or 3 small secondary schools and not the creation of one large unmanageable secondary school.	
People are not against change but would want to know that it would be adequately funded and that the strengths of the good schools that exist would be built upon.	
People are concerned that if they say yes to a 2-tier system they are saying yes to an academy.	
I want to see how this is going to be transformed, and how it will effect my children over the next 5 years, to help me make a decision.	
You say there are falling numbers of children on the island but the birth rate is rising and there are a considerable number of houses being built and people coming to live on the island.	
We should keep the 3 middle schools and develop their secondary potential.	
It is the high proportion of pupils with SEN that leads to poor standards on the island.	
Questions	
Will there be a choice of secondary school in a 2-tier system?	
What provision will there be for pupils with SEN in a 2-tier system?	
How will the change be managed? Will children in years 5 and 6 in middle schools have to return to a primary school?	
If the academy proposal does not go ahead how will the secondary phase of a 2-tier system be funded?	
How certain can you be that change will improve standards?	
Will staff have to reapply for their jobs or will they just be moved to other schools?	
At present Years 5 and 6 have the advantage of specialist facilities in the middle schools, i.e. science labs. Will these be provided if the changes go ahead?	

Appendix 9

A summary of the views of the Headteachers recorded at the public meetings

Agree with the proposal

<u>Queenborough First School</u> Ms Barbara Conroy, Headteacher	I am passionate about children's education and I think an all through primary school would provide the best education.
<u>St Edward's Catholic Primary School</u> Mrs Mary Melton, Headteacher	As a professional I think 2 changes in school is disruptive. Teaching to the end of Key Stage 2 gives continuity and allows staff to continually track children's progress to the end of the Key Stage.
<u>West Minster Primary School</u> <u>Rose Street School</u> Mr Alan Bayford, Executive Headteacher Sheerness West Federation	I personally and professionally agree with the proposal to change to a 2-tier system. First school staff would prefer to keep their pupils until the end of Key Stage 2. Moving a child at the end of Year 4 can be very traumatic for both the child and family.
<u>Minster College</u> Mr Alan Klee, Headteacher	Agree with the proposal and reasons given included the impossible situation that the current system places the school in, some of the pupils having completed Key Stage 3 and others having not, making the management of Year 9 very difficult.

Disagree with the proposal

<u>Cheyne Middle School</u> Mr Peter Woollacott, Headteacher	Disagree with the proposal and reasons given included the success of the middle schools as evidenced by Key Stage 3 top score value added results and the positive comments taken from their Ofsted reports.
<u>Danley Middle School</u> Mr Mike Meredith, Headteacher	Disagree with the proposal and reasons given included the advantage of the 3-tier system mirroring the stages of child development and that when changing schools it is better for the children to have 2 small steps rather than 1 large step.
<u>St George's CE Middle School</u> Mr David Dyson, Acting Headteacher	Disagree with the proposal and reasons given included his belief that the middle schools best serve the needs of the community and that parents prefer their children to stay in the middle schools.

No view given

<p><u>Eastchurch CE Primary School</u> Mrs Pauline Shipley, Headteacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Eastchurch pupils do not always get their preferred middle school. They therefore have to travel further and the safety of the children on buses is an issue.▪ A 2-tier system would be an advantage for the staff in terms of professional development.▪ The children must be the first priority in any decision.
<p><u>Halfway Houses Primary School</u> Mr Gerry Wetherell, Headteacher</p>	<p>The 2-tier system in principle is right. It will allow children to remain with teachers they know until the end of Key Stage 2. At the moment we are not accountable for the delivery of Key Stage 2. There are however issues to delivering a 2-tier system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ We could not deliver the facilities for Years 5 and 6 that the middle schools have▪ I understand that parents would worry about sending their children to the current upper school at age 11.
<p><u>Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School</u> Mrs Sue Seager, Headteacher</p>	<p>No view given at the meeting</p>
<p><u>Richmond First School</u> Mrs Jean Ratcliff, Headteacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No personal opinions▪ It is for the public to make a decision▪ The children must come first

Appendix 10

Sittingbourne and Sheppey Labour Party

Education Provision on the Isle of Sheppey

Consultation on changing to a two-tier system

As far as the local Labour party is concerned there are four key issues facing the future provision of education on the Isle of Sheppey

1. The need to radically close the gap in performance levels between those young people who go through the current system from ages 5 to 16 and 18 and those on the Mainland of Swale and the rest of Kent
2. The importance of investing in and modernising the buildings, structure and learning environments of schools on the Island
3. The need to invest in and develop the vocational and prevocational options of young people on the Island
4. And the need to attract more teachers with specialist subject experience to better prepare Island youngsters for public examinations at, 16, 17 and 18+ .

All these demand change and part of that change should be to reduce the three-tier system to two- tiers.

Having said that, we are very conscious of the need to be sensitive to people who have given much of their life's work to the three tier system and so there needs to be an emphasis on future progress not past failure.

In support of a two tier as opposed to a three-tier system we believe

- It will aid the learning, pastoral development and community development of Primary age children to continue their education from 5-11 in one, rather than 2, schools.
- That in a National system of Education built around Key Stages at ages, 7,11,14 and 16, that it must be a disadvantage to Sheppey children to break those stages with school transfers at the ages of 9 and 13.
- School transfers by their nature lead to a slowing down of progress through a transition point. It is therefore very likely that Sheppey children suffer by making two transfers at 9 and 13, rather than one at the age of 11.
- In particular, the transfer to an Upper School at thirteen is a disadvantage to Sheppey youngsters. The Year 9 at the Upper School presents obvious problems in terms of continuity from three Middle Schools, and many youngsters slow down or go backwards.
- The challenge to continuity from Middle to Upper School has never really been solved since the system was set up in the 1970s. We believe that from a Pastoral point of view, whether in learning support, or social development or essentially in attendance standards, students would do much better if they were in the same school from 11-16.
- Equally in curriculum development terms students would do better across most subjects if they were in the same schools from 11-16, enjoying the support of some of the same teachers from 11-16, being monitored for progress by the same departments across the whole age range and being taught in the Lower Secondary age ranges by some of the teachers with the expertise to prepare them for examinations at 16+ and beyond.
- There are many reasons why Sheppey has found it difficult to attract teachers with appropriate expertise across the whole curriculum and for the whole Secondary age range. However, a factor has been the anomalous system on the Island, which for Middle School teachers has meant no opportunity to teach at Public Examination level, and for Upper School teachers has meant limited experience at Key Stage 3. Sheppey is currently not an attractive career move for teachers.

The question of exactly what should replace the three-tier system is the subject of a separate consultation and the local Labour Party will give its views at the appropriate time. However, at this stage we can say that we would want the successor system to be comprehensive, offer choice to young people and their parents, involve an extension of the curriculum to meet the wider skills needs of the Island and will be heralded in with new appropriate buildings.

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

Roger Truelove

Appendix 11

A summary of the views of the Governing Bodies recorded at the public meetings

<u>Eastchurch CE Primary School</u>	Parents, staff and governors are very proud of this school and the majority of governors are in favour of the change to a 2-tier system.
<u>Halfway Houses Primary School</u> The Headteacher reported on behalf of the governing body	Most of the governors are in favour of a 2-tier system but have concerns about the problems of the practicalities of delivering a 2-tier system.
<u>Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School</u>	Going to a 2-tier system is a much better idea from an educational view. It would be beneficial for the children to stay in school until year 6 so that they can complete KS2.
<u>Queenborough First School</u>	The governors have debated the proposal on 2 occasions. The first time the governors were, in general, in favour of the proposal. At the start of this consultation there was unanimous agreement by the governing body to change from a 3-tier to a 2-tier system.
<u>Richmond First School</u>	Members of the governing body have differing views but regardless of the outcome the governing body will support the high standards at Richmond School.
<u>St Edward's Catholic Primary School</u>	In favour of 4-11 all through education and can see the benefits for the children.
<u>Sheerness West Federation (West Minster / Rose Street)</u>	There is a fall back in progress when children move to the middle schools. Travelling arrangements cause a lot of disruption and anxiety for parents for children attending after school clubs. There is the problem of having to buy more uniforms and the cost involved in a deprived area. A deprived area should not mean a deprived education and I think the 3-tier system is a deprived system.
<u>Cheyne Middle School</u>	No view given at the meeting.
<u>Danley Middle School</u>	The governing body is keen and non-political and would want to know that any changes were in the best interests of pupils and schools. We find it hard to accept this without knowing what will happen and the way forward. We need to know the methodology. Parents, pupils and staff feel uncertain about the future and teachers are worried that everything they have achieved will stop. Please tell us the details so that we can get a better deal for the children of Sheppey.
<u>Minster College</u>	No view given at the meeting.

	A written response has been received from the IEB. (Appendix 14)
<u>St George's CE Middle School</u>	No view given at the meeting.

ISLE OF SHEPPEY
CONSULTATION ON THE CONSOLIDATION OF
THREE TO TWO EDUCATIONAL TIERS

SUBMISSION BY THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARD OF MINSTER COLLEGE

The Interim Executive Board was appointed by the Secretary of State to provide governance for Minster College following the resignation of the Board of Governors in early 2004. We have considered the implications of the restructuring of the educational system on the Isle of Sheppey from a three tier system to a two tier structure and submit the following as our considered views.

We believe it is fundamentally unhelpful for the Isle of Sheppey to have a different educational system from the rest of Kent. Not only does the difference in system encourage a sense of being “left behind” on the Isle of Sheppey, but it also renders difficult certain educational choices because they occur at the different ages and stages relative to the rest of Kent. This can be particularly trying for individual pupils and their families.

Accordingly, we feel that it is in the best interests of both parents and students to have one standard system across the educational boundaries of the County. There is also more use of school clusters and grouping arrangements and with the opening of the new Sheppey Bridge there should be much more exchange and interaction between the Island and the rest of Swale. Social differences and perception of disadvantage would be ameliorated by introducing a standard 2-tier system.

As the governing body for Minster College, we note that it is particularly difficult to take pupils in Year 9 when their characters, relationships and patterns of learning are already well developed. We feel strongly that joining together in Year 7 as is standard across the County would help the ethos of the school and facilitate a better approach to learning. Being students for a longer period in the senior school will allow the staff to track more closely their individual progress and allow more time for any remedial action required. It is noticeable that achievement levels at Key Stage 3 and GCSEs are lower than the Kent average on the Isle of Sheppey. This might be a reflection of the way education is organised there and we are sure that less inter-school transfers would be beneficial to all.

The change of school in Year 9 also seems to encourage a sense of disruption in behaviour and attendance. We believe that the poor attendance at Minster College is caused by many factors; one of them being the disruption in education at Year 9. It allows patterns of poor behaviour and poor attendance to be encouraged without the peer group restraints that would normally have developed were the students together from Year 7.

The three tier system disproportionately shifts certain financial burdens to the senior school in funding and examination requirements. It focuses staff on the difficult exam years sometimes to the detriment of many other important aspects of secondary education.

We believe the existing three tier system creates extraordinary pressure on senior school teachers; with a consequent impact on recruiting and retention.

We believe that pastoral care and children with special, educational needs would benefit from a continuity of learning from Year 7 onwards in the same institution. A familiar

environment and the opportunity to assess progress through this continuity in teaching would benefit those children at risk of slipping through the system.

In conclusion, the Interim Executive Board strongly supports the transition to a two tier system on the Isle of Sheppey for the benefit of the pupils of current and future generations and feel confident that this will result in the raising of teaching standards, learning and student behaviour.

Trevor Minter OBE DL
Interim Chairman

Anne-Marie Nelson CBE DL

Geoffrey Dearing

Roger de Fougerolles

By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 16 May 2007

Subject: PLANNING SHEPPEY SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE – PRIMARY PHASE - OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the results of the public consultations on detailed proposals for each First School and for St George's CE Middle School. It seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on the issuing of a public notice to establish the primary phase of education on the Isle of Sheppey.

Introduction

1. (1) The current education provision on the Isle of Sheppey is a three-tier comprehensive system. The remainder of Kent (with the exception of one school) operates a two-tier system with pupil transfer from the primary to the secondary phase at 11+. The system in Sheppey is therefore out of phase with the rest of Kent. The majority of Local Authorities with three-tier systems have undertaken reorganisation into two-tier systems following the introduction of the National Curriculum with its Key Stages. Other three-tier systems in Kent were re-organised into a two-tier model some years ago.

(2) At its meeting on 24 July 2006 the School Organisation Advisory Board supported the proposal to consult on the principle of reorganisation from a three-tier system to a two-tier system with transfer at 11+. This followed early discussion in 2004.

(3) At its meeting on 13 December 2006 the School Organisation Advisory Board supported the proposal to change the system of education on the Isle of Sheppey from three-tier to two-tier and agreed that detailed proposals for the primary phase should come forward for further consultation. This report sets out the results of these public consultations, on detailed proposals, which were undertaken in March and April 2007.

(4) Consultation on the secondary phase of education is ongoing. An independent review has been set up by Lord Adonis, Minister for Education, to examine the Academy options. The report is expected in May 2007 and will inform detailed decisions on the primary phase.

Background

2. (1) There are at present 7 first schools on the island. These schools cater for pupils aged 4 – 8 years. The schools are:

Eastchurch Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) School
Halfway Houses (Foundation) School

Minster-in-Sheppey School (Community) School
 Queenborough (Community) School
 Richmond (Community) School
 Rose Street (Community) School } Federated
 West Minster (Community) School }

(2) In addition there is already one all-through primary school catering for pupils aged 4 – 11 years. This school is:

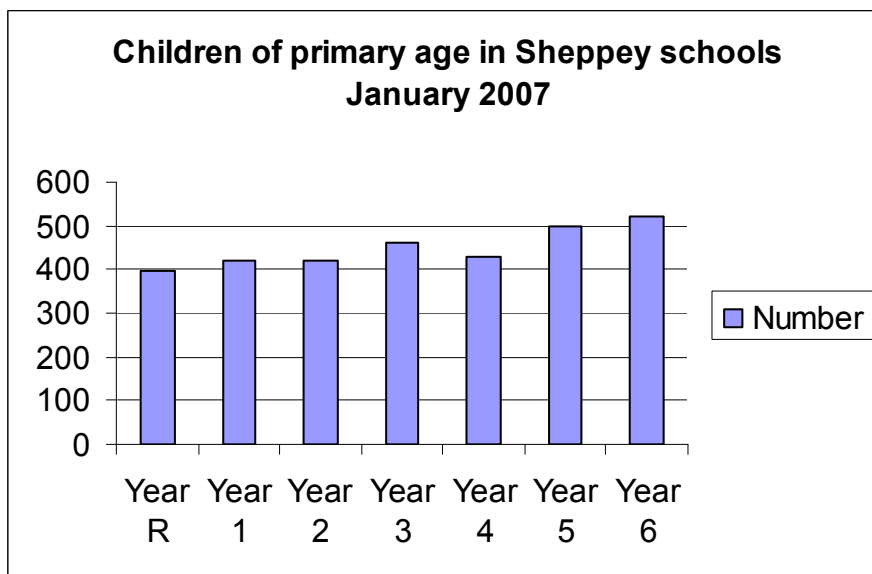
St Edward’s Roman Catholic (Voluntary Aided) School

(3) There are 3 middle schools catering for pupils aged 9 – 12 years. In the change to a two-tier system these schools could become part of the primary phase or the secondary phase.

(4) There is at present no primary provision at the eastern end of the island (Warden Bay/Leysdown area). Children from these localities must be transported to first schools at least 3 miles away. The nearest first school is Eastchurch CE School.

(5) In January 2007 there were 2,164 pupils on roll in the first schools and St Edward’s RC Primary School. This was 90 fewer pupils than 12 months previously and shows that the school rolls on Sheppey continue to decline. Graph 1 shows the numbers in each year group.

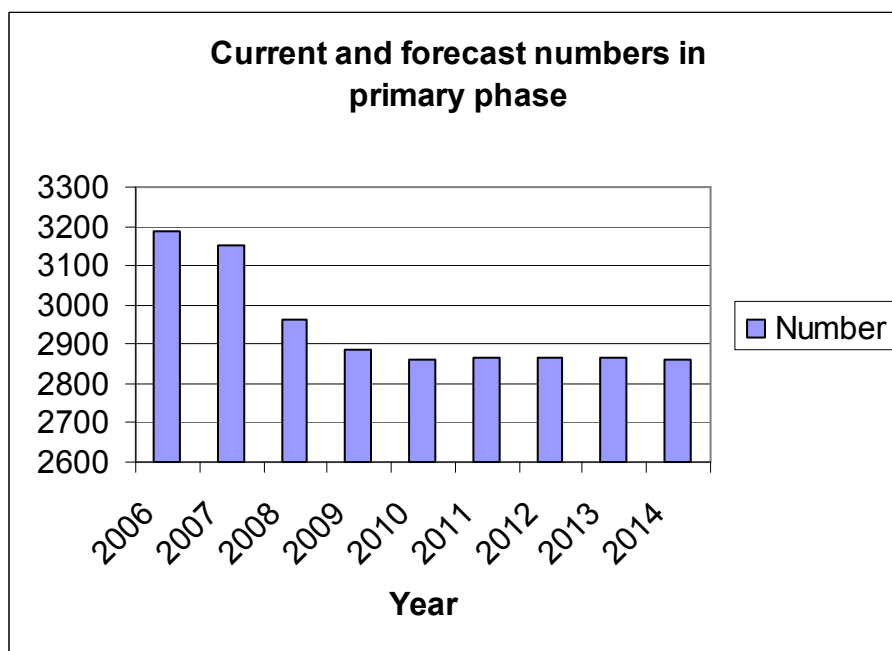
GRAPH 1



(6) The numbers of Sheppey primary aged pupils (Years R – 6) in the future are forecast in Graph 2. These estimates have been arrived at by using information on

- current school rolls projected forward
- numbers of pre-school children (0 – 4 years)
- potential additional pupils from new housing.

GRAPH 2



(7) The data indicates that there will be a decline in numbers until 2009 as the larger rolls currently in Years 5 and 6 move on to be replaced by the lower numbers currently in the first schools. From 2009 school roll numbers are expected to stabilise.

(8) The home locations of all current primary aged pupils on the island have been identified. Appendices 4 and 5 show pupils in the East and West of the island, with schools marked. Currently 71 primary aged children leave the island to be educated in other Kent schools. Of these 46 go to primary schools and 25 to special schools.

(9) The proposals aim to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of each local community, and to rationalise primary school provision so that the right number of school places in the right locations are available for pupils.

(10) The organisation of primary schools proposed for the island has been drawn up with several principles in mind. These are:

- local schools so that children do not have excessive travel
- each primary school offering education from age 4 – 11 years
- each school completing the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum
- class organisation which avoids mixed age groups wherever possible
- no school planned at above 2 forms of entry (60 pupils per year group)
- schools offering an extended range of services to their community wherever possible
- the opportunity for early years experience through a Children's Centre, education nursery or voluntary provision.

(11) The detailed proposals for each school have been drawn up in consultation with the headteachers. All governing bodies have discussed the proposals for their school.

The Proposals

3. (1) The overarching proposal is to establish all-through primary schools located in appropriate centres of population, of the right size to meet their community's needs.

(2) Each first school would be subject to some change. St George's CE Middle School would change from middle to primary. Table 1 shows the detailed alteration suggested for each school:

TABLE 1

Schools	Current Intake Number	New Intake Number	Current Number of Year Groups	New Number of Year Groups	Current Net Capacity	New Net Capacity
Eastchurch CE	60	60 or 30	5	7	300	210 or 420
New school at Warden Bay/ Leysdown	0	0 or 30	0	7	0	0 or 210
Halfway Houses	90	60	5	7	480	420
Minster in Sheppey	120 *	60	5	7	600	420
St George's CE	120	60	4	7	480	420
Queenborough	60	45	5	7	300	315
Richmond	60	60	5	7	300	420
Rose Street	50	30	5	7	300	210
West Minster	60	60	5	7	300	420
St Edward's RC	30	30	7	7	210	210

* This reduces to 90 in 2007 to accommodate a Children's Centre

(3) This will offer 15.5 forms of entry across 9 or 10 primary schools as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

School	Forms of Entry
Eastchurch CE	1 or 2 FE
Warden Bay/Leysdown	0 or 1 FE
Halfway Houses	2 FE
Minster-in-Sheppey	2 FE
St George's CE	2 FE
Queenborough	1.5 FE
Richmond	2 FE
Rose Street	1 FE
West Minster	2 FE
St Edward's RC	1 FE
Total	15.5 FE

This will enable each locality on Sheppey to have sufficient primary education places as follows:

Sheerness	6 forms of entry	180 in each year group
Queenborough	1.5 forms of entry	45 in each year group
Halfway	2 forms of entry	60 in each year group
Minster	4 forms of entry	120 in each year group
Eastchurch	1 or 2 forms of entry	30 or 60 in each year group

Warden Bay/Leysdown 0 or 1 form of entry 0 or 30 in each year group

(4) Extended community provision is already available in many schools on the island. There are five education nurseries in Sheppey which is the highest concentration in Kent. There are plans for four Children's Centres including the established Seashells Children and Family Centre at Rose Street School in Sheerness. The proposals for the primary phase take account of the need for extended school provision as part of primary education.

(5) In order to change first schools into primary schools it will be necessary to accommodate two more year groups in each school. For some schools the intake into Year R would also change. The transformation would take place over time, beginning in September 2008 for the majority of schools. Appendices 7 and 8 show how the change impacts on pupils. The attached consultation documents describe how the change would occur for each individual school. For St George's CE Middle School and Minster-in-Sheppey First School, new arrangements would not take effect until September 2009.

Consultation Process

4. (1) Individual consultation documents for each school, copies of which are attached as Appendix 1, were distributed to staff, governors and parents at the schools, County Councillors, Members of Parliament, Parish Councils, the Diocesan Authorities, local libraries, the District Council and others in accordance with the agreed County policy. The documents were also posted on Clusterweb.

(2) Approximately 4,560 copies of the documents were circulated.

(3) The documents included separate forms on which respondents could express their views.

(4) Public meetings were held in Sheppey schools as detailed in Appendix 6.

Responses to the Public Consultations

Written Responses

5. (1) In total, for all the individual school proposals, 107 responses were received, of which 86 were in favour, 20 opposed and 1 undecided.

(2) A summary of written responses is attached as Appendix 2. A large number of the responses contained comments about the academy consultation which were outside the scope of these proposals.

Public Meeting Responses

(3) Summaries of points, comments, questions and responses made at the public consultation meetings are attached as Appendix 3.

Accommodation Issues

6. (1) Reorganisation into a two-tier system would carry significant capital costs. Initial feasibility work has been undertaken on likely costs for the primary phase, but until the outcome of the Academy consultation is known it is not possible to identify the cost overall of implementing the primary reorganisation. If the Academy proposal moves forward, a decision will be taken on which middle school sites are to be used. It will then

be possible to identify the size and location of schools in the primary phase, and therefore the cost of transformation. In the approved Capital Medium Term Plan provision exists for a £5m investment in the primary school estate.

(2) The building stock on the island is very mixed. Schools have premises that vary from Victorian buildings to very recent classroom extensions. The building maintenance backlog is similar to that found elsewhere in Kent and there has been considerable investment in recent years to tackle this, but further expenditure is needed to continue this work. Some schools have temporary accommodation and although some has been replaced by the Modernisation Programme, detailed proposals will need to include replacing mobiles and huts with permanent buildings. If some schools are to have reduced capacity, it may be possible to remove some temporary accommodation but if schools are enlarged new building works will be needed. Most schools sites are large enough to allow expansion if necessary but several are landlocked and do not have this flexibility.

(3) Table 3 details the likely accommodation developments needed.

TABLE 3

School	Permanent	Temporary
Eastchurch CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 permanent classrooms at Eastchurch CE School OR • New school at Warden Bay/Leysdown 	4 temporary classrooms
Halfway Houses	3 permanent classrooms to replace existing temporary accommodation.	No additional temporary accommodation required.
Minster-in-Sheppey	Hall	2 temporary classrooms
St George's CE	Accommodation for Early Years Foundation Stage teaching and outside learning area.	None
Queenborough	1 classroom	2 temporary classrooms
Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 classrooms • Hall • Staffroom 	4 temporary classrooms
Rose Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 classroom • Remodelling work 	None
West Minster	3 classrooms	3 temporary classrooms

This outline does not include modernisation work which falls outside the scope of this reorganisation and which will be considered within the Primary Building Schools for the Future programme in Swale.

Resource Issues

Capital

7. (1) The essential permanent building works should be contained at £5m. There is also a need for temporary accommodation in the short term which has been costed at £570k (up to 15 mobiles). There will also be a capital cost for the possible acquisition of a site and the building of a 1 FE primary school at Warden Bay/Leysdown (approximately £3.5m). Alternatively there will be an additional cost of land acquisition and enlargement at Eastchurch CE First School if that option is chosen (approximately £3.5m). This high cost reflects the constraints of the Eastchurch site and the need to demolish existing accommodation and possibly enlarge the school on two storeys (subject to planning consent). Adaptations at St George's CE (Aided) Middle School include provision of an appropriate early years setting for Year R, and the Canterbury Diocese will be involved in funding decisions on this work.

Revenue

(2) Each primary school would receive a budget according to the agreed formula, depending on the new size of the school.

(3) Schools will have access to funding through the Reorganisation Fund to assist with the costs of transition. If current merger conditions are applied this will be a lump sum of £6,728 for each school plus an amount of £2,691 per class.

Human

(4) There are approximately 123 teaching staff and 165 support staff employed in the first schools. At St George's CE Middle School there are 29 teachers and 25 support staff. Support for staff retraining and development would be a priority. Governing bodies in Urban Swale Cluster schools would be asked to agree that Sheppey staff are given prior consideration for any vacancies. Any redundancy cost arising from the reorganisation in the primary phase would be borne by Kent County Council.

Transport and Environmental Impact including Community Implications

8. (1) The proposals to change from first to primary schools will allow pupils to remain in their local schools until age 11, instead of travelling to one of the three middle schools at age 9. This will reduce travel for many children.

(2) Any local transport issues will be addressed by individual school Travel Plans.

(3) If the option to provide a school at Warden Bay/Leysdown were chosen the benefits to that community would include:

- removing the necessity for children from age 4 upwards to travel by bus to school over three miles away
- avoidance of a hazardous daily route (Jenkins Hill).
- Increased attendance at school. At present if a child misses the bus there are no means of getting to school that day.
- Extended accessible community facilities adjacent to the new school through the proposed Children's Centre.

(4) Pupils who currently travel to middle schools at some distance from their homes will have improved access to after school activities in local primary schools.

School Improvement Implications

9. (1) The rationale for change to all-through primary schools is based on the belief that this will offer a better education experience for Sheppey pupils, will improve standards, and will enable primary schools to plan, deliver and be accountable for the whole of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum.

(2) The break in education and the transition from first to middle school can impede pupil progress. All-through primary schools will ensure secure pupil tracking and assessment throughout Key Stage 2. Removal of one transition should improve learning and attainment.

(3) The recruitment retention and development of staff in the primary phase should be enhanced by offering the same education system as the rest of Kent.

(4) The opportunity to provide single age classes in most primary schools will also enhance learning opportunities.

Equality Issues

10. (1) The social and economic context within which education operates on Sheppey is one of substantial disadvantage. Primary absence rates are above 7% (Kent average is 5.7%). Over 15% Sheppey pupils are eligible for free school meals (9.9% is Kent average). 1% of pupils are Looked After Children against a Kent figure of 0.6%. The proportion of pupils with special education needs is high (35% against 20.9% in Kent as a whole).

(2) Provision of local primary schools until age 11, which offer a consistent and coherent educational experience for pupils, will be of particular benefit to vulnerable pupils.

Primary Strategy

11. The detailed proposals are in line with Kent County Council's Primary Strategy 2006.

"The three tier system of education (first, middle and upper school) is both incompatible with current national strategies, and impedes continuity."
(Recommendation 16)

"Wherever possible schools should be helped to organise in whole year groups (i.e. 1 FE with seven classes, 2 FE with fourteen classes). Wherever possible 2 FE is preferable in terms of effective deployment of resources." (Recommendation 18)

"Wherever surplus primary capacity is projected to rise above 7% in any cluster area, proposals should be brought forward to reduce it to 5%." (Recommendation 27)

"Where excess space is generated by falling rolls, provision of extended schools, community and/or early years and childcare facilities should be given priority consideration." (Recommendation 30)

Views of the Local Members

12. (1) The Local Members are Angela Harrison and Adrian Crowther.

(2) Miss Harrison attended a number of the public meetings and formed the view from comments made at these meetings together with views from her constituents, that one change of school rather than two would be of education benefit to the children of Sheppey. Miss Harrison considers that the schools within the Sheerness constituency will comfortably make the change to all-through primary schools having considered extremely carefully the additional space that will be required in the short and long term. Miss Harrison supports the proposal to establish a new primary school in the Warden Bay/Leysdown area – federated with Eastchurch CE School and believes that it would make a really positive impact on the area.

(3) Mr Crowther confirmed his whole hearted support for a two tier system of education on Sheppey and felt it was unfortunate that the system had not been changed a number of years ago. Mr Crowther believes that the plans for the primary phase have been well thought out and will minimise the current transfer problems experienced by young people.

Views of the Governing Bodies

13. (1) Governing bodies have been consulted and their views sought on the proposal for each school.

(2) Chairs of governing bodies were invited to comment at each public meeting and their views are included in Appendix 3. Generally the governing bodies were in favour of the individual proposal for their school.

Views of the Church Authority

14. The Church of England Canterbury Diocese broadly supports the proposals for Eastchurch CE School and St George's CE Middle School. A copy of their response is attached as Appendix 9.

Views of the Local Member of Parliament

15. Mr Wyatt agreed to the principle of reorganising the education system on the Isle of Sheppey from three-tier to two-tier but has not commented on the detailed proposals for each of the first schools and St George's CE Middle School.

Views of the Parish Councils

16. Parish Councillors attended some public meetings and their views are included in Appendix 3. These views favoured the individual proposals. In particular, the Warden Parish Council has collected information from residents in the form of a petition which supports the option of a new school at Warden Bay. A copy of the letter from the Chair of Warden Parish Council enclosing the petition is attached as Appendix 10. Details of the petition are given in Appendix 2f.

Views of Swale Borough Council

17. Swale Borough Council supports the detailed proposals. A copy of their response is given at Appendix 11.

Views of the Local Cluster Board

18. The Cluster Board has been briefed and consulted on this proposal, and supports the detailed plans for the change to primary schools.

Views of Professional Associations

19. A letter received from the Professional Association of Teachers is attached as Appendix 12. The Association wrote to its members in the schools involved in the consultation, but no particular concerns have been raised.

Views of the Area Education Officer

20. (1) Current numbers and future projections of primary school rolls on Sheppey suggest that there is a need for 15.5 forms of entry across the island, in several areas of population. The particular proposals aim to meet local community demand for school places, remove the need for excessive travel, and remove surplus capacity.

(2) The education community is largely in favour of the proposal. Headteachers have supported the suggested changes and made constructive comments about the benefits the change could bring in teaching and learning. At Eastchurch CE School there are two options and the headteacher sees both as presenting opportunities for the school. At St George's CE Middle School, while regretting the move away from middle schools, the headteacher acknowledges the logic of the proposal and is committed to support whatever eventual decision is made for the school. Governors have also spoken helpfully about the details of proposals for individual schools.

(3) At some consultation meetings concern was expressed that no decisions had yet been reached on the secondary phase. Some parents, while in favour of the primary proposals, felt that the continued lack of clarity about the secondary sector prevented their wholehearted approval for the reorganisation.

(4) The proposals for the change to each first school, and to St George's CE Middle School, are inter-dependent. In particular a decision has not yet been taken on whether St George's CE Middle School is to form part of the primary or the secondary phase. If St George's were not available as a primary school further proposals would be needed.

(5) There are two options for the east of the island. A significant proportion of the intake to Eastchurch CE School lives at least three miles away. There was support for the provision of a primary school at Warden Bay to meet this need and also support for the alternative of enlargement of Eastchurch CE School. At present both options are under consideration in terms of viability and cost.

- Enlargement of Eastchurch CE School will require acquisition of land from Swale Borough Council, currently used as a community cricket ground.
- This option would mean continuance of travel for a large number of pupils.
- Provision of a new school at Warden Bay will require acquisition of land. It will better meet community needs.
- There is a strong preference from the community for federation of any new school with Eastchurch CE School to ensure that the high quality of teaching, learning ethos is maintained in any new setting.
- Cost of these options are estimated as :-

- A new school at Warden Bay	£3.5 m
- Enlargement of Eastchurch CE School	£3.0 m

Proposed Timetable

21. (1) Because decisions on the secondary provision have not yet been reached it may be necessary to amend the timetable suggested in this paper.

(2) It will be necessary to revisit these proposals should St Georges CE Middle School become unavailable for the primary sector.

(3) If it is decided that a public notice should be issued in respect of the proposals, the following timetable could apply:

Cabinet Member Decision	June 2007
Issue public notice	8 June 2007
End of representation period	20 July 2007
Decision by Local Authority	September 2007
Adjudication (if required)	November 2007
Implementation	September 2008

22. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on:

- (a) the issuing of a public notice to establish the primary phase of education on the Isle of Sheppey.
- (b) subject to approval of the proposal following the end of the objection period, the resources necessary to implement the scheme being provided on the basis identified in this report.

Alison Osborne
Area Education Officer
(Canterbury/Swale)
Tel: (01227) 772992

The Local Members are Angela Harrison and Adrian Crowther

Background Documents:

None

Other Sources of Information:

Kent Primary Strategy 2006

Previous Committee Reports:

Report to School Organisation Advisory Board 13 December 2006

Appendix 2

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT QUEENBOROUGH SCHOOL

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 500

Responses received : 15

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	8	1	0	9
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	3	0	0	3
School governors	1	0	0	1
Interested party	2	0	0	2
TOTAL	14	1	0	15

- A response from the Queenborough & Rushenden Regeneration Community & Skills Group welcomed the positive recognition of Queenborough First School as providing a good education and noted the high regard that the Queenborough and Rushenden community has for it. The Group noted the recognition within the consultation paper of the Queenborough and Rushenden Regeneration scheme, and the additional primary school pupils that the development is likely to yield and welcomed the identification of a school site within the new development.
- Children do not benefit from changing schools in the middle of their learning. It would be less disruptive to stay in the one school until the age of 11.
- Queenborough becoming a primary school will result in a more settled education for pupils and raise standards.
- A 2 form entry primary school would be preferred. In the future parents may not be given their first choice of school.
- An increase in the average class size from 22 to 30 and the need for mixed age classes would not be a positive change for the school.
- The concept of temporary classrooms is a retrograde step.
- KCC Highways should take a closer look at improving access to the school.

**PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT HALFWAY HOUSES
SCHOOL**

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 680

Responses received : 12

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	9	1	0	10
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	0	1	0	1
School governors				
Interested party	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	10	2	0	12

- Children are too young at nine years of age to change to a bigger school.
- The proposals will be beneficial if there is more than one option for Year 6 children when they leave primary school, on the island.
- Change from a first school to a primary school is welcomed.
- Disruption to the education of the children will not be beneficial. Another secondary school should be built on the island.

**PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT SHEERNESS WEST
FEDERATION**

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 900

Responses received: 11

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	3	0	0	3
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	5	0	0	5
School governors	1	0	0	1
Interested party	2	0	0	2
TOTAL	11	0	0	11

- The changes are necessary to benefit the children to enable them to access the full National Curriculum which is geared around the two-tier system
- This seems an entirely logical and sensible way forward. The education of the children will be less disrupted.
- Sheppey needs to be in harmony with the rest of the county.
- Allowing primary teaching staff to see the job through to 11 leads to greater staff motivation and much more bonding with the children.
- This change is vital to improve the standard of provision of children's services on the island.
- Children of age 9 are not mature enough to go to a big middle school.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT RICHMOND SCHOOL

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 500

Responses received : 20

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	9	0	0	9
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	9	0	0	9
School governors	2	0	0	2
Interested party				
TOTAL	20	0	0	20

- Richmond will become a great primary school for 4 to 11 year olds.
- Appropriate funds must be made available for all building work to be completed so that crowding will not happen. Mobile classrooms are not effective learning environments.
- It will be beneficial for the children to continue at the school for an extra two years in a stable environment where they are known as individuals and their progress can be maintained.
- Extra green space will be needed to accommodate the larger numbers in the school.
- Changing schools is stressful for children, so changing twice is better than changing three times.

**PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT MINSTER IN SHEPPEY
SCHOOL**

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 800

Responses received : 10

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	6	1	1	8
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	1	0	0	1
School governors				
Interested party	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	8	1	1	10

- General support for the principle of change which will enable children to complete their primary education in one school.
- Concerned that the school will have temporary classrooms during the period of change.
- Agrees with the proposal to change the first schools into primary schools, but not with the idea of an academy.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT EASTCHURCH SCHOOL

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 500

Responses received : 28

OPTION 1 – Eastchurch CE School to become a one form entry primary school and a new one form entry primary school to be built at Warden Bay/Leysdown

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	7	1	0	8
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	0	4	0	4
School governors	0	1	0	1
Interested party	3	1	0	4
TOTAL	10	7	0	17

OPTION 2 – Eastchurch CE School to become a two form entry primary school to serve the Eastchurch, Warden Bay and Leysdown communities.

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	3	0	0	3
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	4	0	0	4
School governors	1	0	0	1
Interested party	1	2	0	3
TOTAL	9	2	0	11

- Three parents responded that they agreed with both options
- Responses from four members of staff and a governor indicated they did not agree with Option 1 but agreed that Eastchurch CE School should become a two form entry primary school.
- Two parents commented that they welcomed the change to the two-tier system.

Option 1

- There are problems of transporting children from the Warden Bay/Leysdown locality.
- Some of the parents do not drive.
- Problems are experienced with buses.
- I feel detached from my child's education because he has to travel on the bus to school.

Option 2

- Concerns that there would not be enough children for 2 schools and that Eastchurch CE School numbers would diminish.
- Eastchurch CE School is considered to be an excellent school and people do not want to lose the ethos but to build on the excellent qualities of the school by it becoming a two form entry primary school.
- There are concerns as to how this option could be managed as the school site is already stretched to the limit.
- The staff and children would benefit if Eastchurch CE School became a two form entry primary school.

- A petition supporting the proposal for a new school at Warden Bay/Leysdown was submitted by Warden Parish Council containing 42 signatures of residents, mainly mothers with young children. Comments taken from the petition :-
 - Desperately needed and would put an end to travelling for 4 year olds.
 - A new school in Warden Bay is really needed and would make a big difference and benefit both the children and parents.
 - We do not like leaving our little ones on buses.
 - Not all parents drive so a school at Warden Bay/Leysdown would be a great improvement.
 - A new school will bring employment to this part of the Island.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: 680

Responses received: 11

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers of pupils	1	6	0	7
Pupils at school				
Members of staff	0	1	0	1
School governors	1	0	0	1
Interested party	2	0	0	2
TOTAL	4	7	0	11

- Primary schools are an extension of family values and extend the caring as well. Children are not ready to leave this at the age of 9. They need the stability of the close knit community in the primary schools.
- Opposed to change because the system works well keeping infants separate to juniors. Senior schools should be single sex.
- There is nothing wrong with the present system.
- The high standards at St George's could be lost through changing the system of education.
- One enormous secondary school could become a ghetto.

Appendix 3

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT QUEENBOROUGH SCHOOL

Summary of the Public Meeting held on 12 March 2007 at Queenborough School

Headteacher

- Supports the proposal and is committed to what is best for the children, which is an all-through primary school.

Parent

An explanation of an intake of 45 and mixed year groups was requested.

- The school currently has 2 classes per year group with 21-22 children per class. This will be reviewed as the year groups move through the school.
- The law says no more than 30 in an infant class, therefore an intake of 45 means a class and a half. The headteacher may wish to organise a class with half from Year R and half from Year 1.
- Some headteachers like split years.
- Mixing Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 should be avoided.

Parent

Will this proposal happen or could it change?

- Kent County Council needs to hear the views of parents, staff, governors and everyone with an interest.
- The School Organisation Advisory Board will make a recommendation to Cabinet.
- Some proposals may be dropped or varied if a valued argument is presented.
- A public notice will be issued if it is agreed to take the proposal forward and if there are no objections, the proposal will be implemented in September 2008.

Parent

Your chart shows 57 pre-school children in the Queenborough area. How will these children fit into a school with an intake of 45?

- 45 is the minimum number and if more children come forward then flexibility is allowed.
- We want local schools for local children.
- Major development may cause sudden demand and we would need to reconsider.

Local Member

Are there grounds for a new school and are plans being prepared?

- Land has been earmarked for a new school at Rushenden if and when the numbers of children come forward.
- The Queenborough & Rushenden Regeneration Community and Skills group has completed two years of work.

Interested Party

If temporary accommodation will be needed – how temporary is temporary?

- It is intended that one permanent classroom will be required with temporary accommodation for the 'bulge' if necessary. Permanent accommodation will not be built if only needed for 1 or 2 years.

Danley Middle School has good facilities. Will these facilities be replicated at Queenborough?

- Primary facilities vary enormously.
- Building Schools for the Future primary phase is proposed and hopefully will enhance facilities for some of the Sheppey schools.

The report back to SOAB – will it look at schools individually or en masse?

- The proposals are linked as the size of each school is dependent on the size of the other schools.
- The paper will cover the whole island, focussing on individual schools.
- If one individual school proposal is not agreed, this will impact on the proposal for the whole primary phase.

Parent

Will parents be able to bring their children back from the middle school to the primary school?

- It is not proposed to move children back to a school as it would not be in the child's best interest.

Governor

Has a full analysis been undertaken?

- We believe this is a strong plan.
- The headteacher is the lead professional who will meet the challenge.
- This is a good school with good standards.

What are the financial implications for the school?

- Funding is attached to each pupil and this school handles the budget well.

Queenborough Town Council

Is it likely that there will be a Children's Centre in Rushenden?

- We are currently looking for a site to accommodate one and are hopeful that there will be a Children's Centre in Rushenden.

Parent

Will the school have facilities to provide the full curriculum?

- The school will make sure it has the correct facilities for the full Key Stage 2 curriculum.

Will the school have enough classrooms?

- We will need short term temporary accommodation and this will not be a problem for the school.

How is the primary phase linked to the secondary phase?

- Children will stay in the primary school until Year 6 when they will transfer direct to the secondary phase.

Chair of Governors

- The school has a very good headteacher and staff who are capable of managing the transition to become a primary school.
- The governors have consistently wanted a two tier system of education.
- Confident that the school can deal with whatever is in the future.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT HALFWAY HOUSES SCHOOL

Summary of the Public Meeting held on 15 March 2007 at Halfway Houses School

Headteacher

This is the biggest change proposed for the school since 1971 and there are positive and negative points.

Negative:

- The current Year 4 will still have to change school.
- Building works will cause some disruption but will be managed well and safely.
- We will not have the specialist facilities like the middle schools for the upper end of Key Stage 2.
- Reducing to an admission number of 60 may mean that some children will have to be turned away, although currently we are only expecting 59 for September 2007.

Positive:

- This is a good school, well supported by families and most parents would prefer that their children stay for another two years.
- There will be continuity in Key Stage 2.
- There will be accountability for Key Stage 2 – at present we are not measured by what happens at the end of Key Stage 2.
- There will be certainty for planning for the school in the future.
- The management of the school believe that this is the right step for Halfway school.

Parent

Will the school be provided with the specialist facilities that middle school children have the advantage of at the end of Key Stage 2 assessments?

- Most of the schools in Kent are all through primary schools. Middle schools are deemed secondary schools. Children currently begin Key Stage 2 in the first schools and complete it in the middle schools. Results here do not compare well with other areas despite good teaching and facilities. We believe it is the break that causes the problem.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT WEST MINSTER AND ROSE STREET SCHOOLS

Summary of the Public Meeting held on 14 March at West Minster School

Executive Headteacher, Sheerness West Federation

- The current system is not meeting the needs of the children and welcomes change.
- Children will achieve more by staying at the primary schools until the age of 11.
- We can accommodate the extra year groups at both schools but upgrading of accommodation will be needed.
- School systems may need to be changed such as managing school meals.
- The federation enables expertise to be shared between both schools.

Chair of Governors, Sheerness West Federation

- Agrees with the proposal for a 1 FE primary school at Rose Street and a 2 FE primary school at West Minster.
- Children will be better served by age 4-11 primary schools.
- The proposal is right for the schools and the community.

Director – Operations

- Dr Craig clarified that the pre-school numbers were not necessarily the number of children who will enter primary schools, as some will leave the island. The number of pupils will reduce compared with cohorts at the top end of the current schools.

Local Member

- Previously a governor at both Rose Street and West Minster schools. Has been impressed by what has been achieved by the headteacher for the federation and feels sure that transition to a primary school will be smooth.
- Hopes that there is a will to improve the buildings at Rose Street School.

Area Education Officer

- Schools must be made fit for purpose and attention will be given to condition issues such as the rebuilding of the canteen at Rose Street.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT RICHMOND SCHOOL

Summary of the Public Meeting held on 29 March 2007 at Richmond School

Headteacher

- Supports the proposal and acknowledges the benefits for the children.
- The children would stay in a caring ethos and environment.
- Completing both Key Stages would result in high standards.
- The school would be able to track and monitor pupil progress.
- There would no longer be disruption to schooling.
- The children would not have to form new friendship groups at a young age.
- The school has the capacity to develop into an all-through primary school.

Chair of Governors

- The proposal will be good for the school and the pupils.

Questions from Parents

If we are changing to a two tier system regardless, why are you consulting us now? KCC should have waited until it was clearer as to what will happen with the Academy.

- The consultation on the principle to change to the two tier system was completed and Kent County Council agreed to the change. This consultation is about the specific proposal for this school.
- There will be no final decision about the primary phase until the consultation on the secondary phase has been completed. This has currently been held up because Lord Adonis has requested an independent review. We sought DfES advice and they agreed that we should go ahead with the primary consultation.

It is a good idea for this school to become a primary school. People do not understand about the Academy and if this is a foregone conclusion they are concerned that the Academy is also definite.

- The only decision made by KCC is to move to a two tier system of education.
- The DfES will make the decision as to whether there is an Academy or not.

Will there be enough space for the new buildings that will be needed and how long will the school have temporary accommodation?

- The school may require additional land and the boundary will have to be redrawn to have additional classrooms and play area. Money has been set aside in the KCC budget to change the first schools to primary schools. The temporary accommodation will be an insurance policy as we cannot be certain about any delay in the secondary phase.
- Building Schools for the Future is coming for primary schools and the priority order will be to dispose of mobiles and replacing SEAC buildings.

Comments from a Governor

Raised concerns about how the decision has been reached regarding the size of each school and the spread of pupils.

Raised concerns about having nursery aged children at the school and older children.

- We know the number of primary aged pupils and the number of pre-school aged children currently living in the Sheerness locality. Research points to 2 forms of entry to be the appropriate size for a primary school as proposed for Richmond School.

- The school will work to its utmost to make sure that Year R pupils are not overwhelmed by 10 year olds.

A query was raised by a member of Sheppey Parents Action Group regarding the number of pupils proposed for each school in the primary phase taking into consideration new housing.

- We have factored in what is known about future housing. A new school at Rushenden may have to be considered if new housing comes forward in the next 15 years.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT MINSTER IN SHEPPEY SCHOOL

Summary of the Public Meeting held on 27 March 2007 at Minster-in-Sheppey School

Headteacher

- There will be a period of disruption and change but it will be for the better.
- Falling rolls have impacted on the school and changes would have had to take place anyway.
- There will be a benefit for the children in being able to complete Key Stage 2 at this school.

Chair of Governors

- Sought assurance for sufficient funds to bring facilities up to standard.

Questions and comments from parents regarding school places in the Minster locality

St George's will admit Years R to 6, how will KCC decide which children move schools?

- No child currently attending this school will have to move out.

If we want to move our children to St George's how will the over-subscription criteria affect us if we already have children at Minster school?

Will my son get priority to go to St George's? I will want all my children to go to the same school.

I have 4 children and will want to them to go to the same school but what shall I do, St George's is nearer to my home but I like this school and all their friends are here.

My son is in Year 2, will he have to move to St George's?

My child is in Year 3, if Minster school becomes a 2 FE school what guarantee will I have that she will not have to move to St George's.

Have you got your figures right and will there be enough school places in the locality?

What will be the catchment for both schools and the criteria for St George's?

Parents will want their children to go to St George's and local children may not get a place in Minster.

- Government removed catchments and parents may apply for a place for their child at any school of their preference and if a place is available the child is admitted. If there is not a place available then over-subscription criteria is used. For community schools this is
 1. siblings already attending the school
 2. location to the school
- There will be enough places for all children in the locality. We decided to delay St George's becoming a primary school until September 2009 so that Yr R did not have to be accommodated with the older middle school aged children. We may have to consider Minster keeping an intake of 90 pupils until September 2009 to accommodate this delay.
- If parents choose to keep their children at Minster school they can, if they choose they can apply for a place at St George's. If St George's is a church school, families with a church background will get priority, as church schools are allowed to have another criterion.

Questions and comments from parents and governors regarding the impact of the proposal on the school accommodation and how this will be funded

Concern was raised about the health and safety issues for when the building work takes place at Minster school.

The issue of safety and parking at St George's if it becomes a primary school was raised. How will all the building work be managed bearing in mind that it will have to take place across the whole of the island for the primary phase, plus the secondary phase?

How temporary will the temporary accommodation for this school be?

How will this be accommodated on the school site if some of the buildings will be used for a Children's Centre and we will need mobiles? We do not want to lose any play area.

When will we know what facilities will be provided for Key Stage 2 and will they be the same facilities as are in the middle schools?

How can we make a decision about this proposal when you are not telling us what the school will look like as a primary school?

Where will the money come from to make the necessary alterations to the school.

- This school will need modernisation and a bigger hall to create a better learning environment.
- The headteacher has to be responsible for all safety aspects including child protection. Contractors have to ensure complete safety. I can assure you that the school will make sure your children are safe and will try to get work completed during the school holiday period.
- St George's will have to produce a travel plan to get children safely to school and will be obliged to provide a safe access point.
- Not all schools will require the building of permanent classrooms because they have spare classrooms already.
- Temporary accommodation will be required during the period in which the larger year groups move through the school and this school will require 3 temporary classrooms.
- We would not be able to build on the school site if it leaves outdoor space below the legal requirements.
- We have done as much preparation work as possible and feasibility studies for each school, but we cannot bring detailed plans until we have agreement to this proposal.
- Middle schools are deemed secondary. Primary schools will be equipped as primary schools with good facilities, but will not include specialist secondary facilities.
- We have been working on the proposals for the primary phase and have estimated the cost for each school. KCC has put aside £5m for the purpose of upgrading first schools to become primary schools.

Question from a parent regarding the Children's Centre

When the Children's Centre opens will this mean that some playgroups may have to close, as there is already space in the local playgroups?

- The criterion for a Children's Centre includes the number of places already available in the locality. Not all parents choose to take up those places.

Questions raised by parents and governors about the secondary phase

What will happen if St George's is not in the primary phase? Parent consultation on the primary phase will be over before the outcome of the review on the Academy options is known.

The current Year 4 will move to the middle schools. The secondary phase is unknown and it will be different for those attending St George's should it become a primary school in September 2009.

- If it is decided that St George's is needed to be part of the Academy, we will need to place mobiles on other school sites to accommodate the children and we will need to draw up new proposals. We will need to build a new school and this will likely be at Thistle Hill.

- Middle schools will not get a Year 5 intake in 2008 and in 2009 all year groups will move to the secondary phase, but I do not know yet what will happen about the secondary phase.
- KCC took the view that the St George's site and buildings were not suitable to be a secondary school.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT EASTCHURCH CE SCHOOL AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW SCHOOL IN THE WARDEN BAY AREA

Summary of the Public Meeting held on 27 March at Eastchurch CE School

Headteacher

- Torn between the two options
- A school at Warden Bay would mean less travelling and would help improve attendance.
- Would not want to lose the friendly, approachable ethos of Eastchurch CE School.
- A school in Warden Bay would be a focus for the community.
- Wants what is best for the children.

Governor

- The governors feel on balance that it would be best to keep the school together.
- Personally can see advantages for both options.
- There is the problem of acquiring additional land so that Eastchurch CE School can become a 2 form entry primary school.
- You say there is new build at Thistle Hill but there will be more housing at Kingsborough.

Diocesan Director of Education

A new school linked to and building on the ethos of Eastchurch CE School could be the way forward.

Question from Canterbury Diocese Representative

If the options are to extend Eastchurch CE School or to build a new school at Warden Bay, what about building an extension of Eastchurch CE School at Warden Bay?

- From May the government is bringing new legislation which calls for a 'competition' if a new school is proposed. This means that we would have to advertise the opportunity for proposers to come forward.
- The DfES would not support a split site school
- A federation between the two schools could be an option for the future but the new school would have to open first.
- A federation has one executive headteacher to be the strategic leader and one governing body. Both schools would have a head of school overseeing the day to day running of the school.

Question from the Nursery Manager

If you build a new school, would it have a nursery and would there be enough children for both the new nursery and the nursery already established at Eastchurch CE School.

- We would look at the number of pre-school children and the existing provision in the locality before making a decision. It is hoped that a Children's Centre will be located in the Warden Bay/Leysdown locality of which child care is a core component.

Questions and comments from parents about the two options

Will there be enough children for two schools? I would not want to see Eastchurch have to close because there were not enough children to justify keeping it open.

If a new school is built, will there be free transport for Warden Bay/Leysdown parents opting to keep their children at Eastchurch CE School?

I am confused by the fact that although I want my son to stay at Eastchurch CE School, there would not be enough room, as a new school would not have been built by then.

*Will you be looking at compulsory purchase of land to extend Eastchurch CE School?
If you build a new school at Warden Bay, I would want to see the Eastchurch CE School headteacher running both schools.*

I would prefer two schools if the headteacher at Eastchurch were to be in charge of both schools.

- There will be enough children for both schools. We have carefully looked at the need and although two thirds of the pupils attending Eastchurch CE School come from Warden Bay, we are convinced that Eastchurch would survive as a 1 FE school.
- The main priority for changing to a two tier system was to stop disruption. No child will be obliged to move. We will provide temporary accommodation to enable this.
- KCC members would have to consider any requests for free transport.
- The cricket club currently uses the land adjacent to the school but we still do not know who owns it. Both the school governors and KCC are trying to ascertain this.

Questions and Comments from the Warden Bay and Leysdown Parish Councils

Parents like Eastchurch CE School and many do not want a split. If the new school were to be part of Eastchurch CE School, this would be more acceptable.

Young children having to be at the bus stop at 8 a.m. to travel to Eastchurch shows a need for a school at Warden Bay.

The journey from Warden Bay and Leysdown is very hazardous with Jenkins Hill being very dangerous. Can KCC upgrade this road?

Warden Bay parish council had a private survey carried out on Jenkins Hill and the report indicates that there should be no more development until road improvements are made.

A new school will reduce having to travel on difficult roads.

- If as a consequence of building a new school the road needed upgrading then education would have to pay for this.
- Any issue with the roads will need to be looked at.

Questions from a member of staff

How will the school accommodate Years 5 and 6? Where will the temporary accommodation be put? The hall will be put under pressure.

Why not build up instead of out?

- All needs must be addressed. Outline surveys have been done for each school but until it is clear on which is the preferred option there will not be detailed plans.
- The cost of building up would need to be assessed together with feasibility and planning to see if it could be done.

A representative of Sheppey Parents Action Group asked for clarification about the competition for a new primary school at Warden Bay.

- KCC cannot control who competes.
- It is unlikely that many bodies will be interested in a small school at the east end of Sheppey.
- The adjudicator would decide.
- KCC as an 'excellent' authority can put forward a proposal.
- A competition would be open to all but most likely between the Church and the Local Authority.
- The Diocese would want to see the same as at Eastchurch CE School.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE AGE RANGE AT ST GEORGE'S CE SCHOOL

Summary of the Public Meeting held on 28 March at St George's CE School

Acting Headteacher

- Strongly believes in middle schools but accepts primary proposal.
- Three concerns :
 1. How the staffing is to be managed and staff retained. The need for training for teachers who wish to remain at St George's.
 2. The process of transfer to a primary school. How the budget can be managed as it could take 3 or 4 years to build up to a full primary school. It will be vital that there is some form of cushioning.
 3. What will happen when Years 6, 7 and 8 come to transfer to the secondary phase in advance of the other middle schools if the Academy is not ready?
- We will work to make the transfer seamless and to provide high quality education during this period.

Chair of Governors

- We want to support the staff who are loyal and committed.
- Governors have not made a decision due to the uncertainty over the Academy.
- If St George's becomes a primary school we will be pleased to keep the church identity.
- We welcome the support and funding offered by the Local Authority for staff training.

Questions from Parents

If my child cannot get into Minster-in-Sheppey School, would I be able to get a place for her here and will there be enough places in the locality.

- Parents may apply for a place for their child at any school of their preference and if a place is available the child is admitted. If there is not a place available then over-subscription criteria is used. For community schools this is
 - (i) siblings already attending the school
 - (ii) location to the school
- The aim is to provide sufficient places for the area.

My daughter does not attend church, will church criteria apply for getting a place at St George's?

- St George's CE School currently admits 25% of its pupils using the church criteria.

Can selection be introduced on the island now that there is to be a two tier system as currently children are disadvantaged by having to go off of the island to take the test?

- No child is prohibited from taking the Kent Test. The Isle of Sheppey is a comprehensive area and government legislation does not allow us to open a grammar school.
- Children currently at this school are able to take the Kent Test if parents request this.

Comments from Parents

It is irrelevant to change the primary schools when it is the Upper School that needs changing.

Concern was raised that the secondary phase has not been sorted out and that good staff will leave the island.

Our children will be disadvantaged because of the upheaval.

The two tier system should not be imposed until there is certainty about the Academy. Our wishes have been ignored.

The fear of what will come after the primary phase will result in many parents choosing to have their children educated on the mainland.

Several questions were asked and comments made relating to the Academy.

What would happen if St George's CE School was included in the Academy?

What will happen to the pupils leaving St George's if the Academy is not ready? Could they go on to other middle schools?

- The lack of an Academy decision is difficult for all. This meeting needs to focus on the primary phase of the two tier system. The Local Authority believes that St George's would make a first class primary school and is therefore putting this proposal before you.
- If St George's is included in the Academy, new proposals for the primary phase would need to be brought forward.
- It was decided not to mix pupils aged 4 with the older middle school year groups and that is why we are proposing that St George's becomes a primary school in September 2009.
- It not the intention to move children to other schools. Please let us have your views and suggestions.

Appendix 6

Schedule of Public Meetings and approximate number of people attending

School	Date of Public Meeting	Approximate number
Queenborough First School	12 March 2007	28
West Minster School } Rose Street School } Sheerness West Federation	14 March 2007	10
Halfway Houses Primary School	15 March 2007	20
Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School	27 March 2007	40
Eastchurch CE Primary School	27 March 2007	45
St George's CE Middle School	28 March 2007	80
Richmond First School	29 March 2007	35

Ms Alison Osborne
Area Education Officer
East Kent Education Office
Clover House
John Wilson Business Park
Thanet Way
WHITSTABLE CT5 3QZ

10 April 2007

AO10A

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Education in response to the following consultation in relation to the move from three tier to two tier education on Sheppey:

- 1 The proposal to change Eastchurch Church of England Voluntary Controlled School to a Primary School

The Board is broadly supportive of this proposal. On the question of whether Eastchurch Church of England Primary School should be expanded on the existing site or a new school built in the Warden Bay/Leysdown area, it has been clear from the consultation meeting and from soundings taken that whichever solution is chosen should build on the excellence of what is currently provided at Eastchurch. We understand that practically and politically there is a case for provision in the Warden Bay/Leysdown area, while an enlarged, rather than reduced, pupil roll at Eastchurch would perhaps provide a more secure educational foundation on which to build.

In either case, we would suggest that the best way to safeguard a unified or split provision in that part of the Island would be for the school or schools to have the same character and ethos and we would be very supportive of a second primary school to be a Church of England voluntary controlled school. This would enable Eastchurch Primary School and the new school to federate and work together easily through having the same character. We would be concerned if a second school had a different character from Eastchurch, which could dissipate and dilute the strongly supported ethos provided by Eastchurch Primary School at present.

2

Ms Alison Osborne

10 April 2007

- 2 The proposal to change the age range of pupils admitted to St George's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) School from 9-13 Years to 4-11 Years:

As a sponsor of the proposed Academy on Sheppey, the Diocese must take account of any decisions arising about the review of the Academy proposal set in train by Lord Adonis and to be completed by the end of May. Nevertheless, it is the Board's view that St George's would lend itself very well to becoming an all through primary school provided that appropriate arrangements are finalised over transition to the new academy (or second tier alternative) and provided resources are forthcoming to upgrade and adapt the school for delivering the whole primary curriculum, including early years. Buildings were due to be upgraded and enhanced before the proposal to move to a two tier system on the Island. Now that the decision has been made to move to a two tier system, the need for injection of investment in the buildings is redoubled.

Even without the uncertainty that remains over the academy, the proposed changes at St George's are perhaps the most complex and far ranging of any of the proposals for changes at the primary level. For pupils, staff and parents alike the transition years will be difficult. Maximum efforts will have to be made by all parties, including the local authority and the diocese, to inform, support and offer retraining opportunities to ease that process. However, given that investment and ongoing commitment, St George's can and should be up to the task of transforming itself into an excellent all through primary school, working closely with the secondary provision that emerges from the current review, in which the diocese will have a stake.

The Board reserves the right to rethink this broad support if the review of the academy proposal holds out the prospect of secondary provision on the St George's site after all.

With all good wishes

Yours sincerely

Mr Rupert Bristow
Director of Education

12 APR 2007
12 APR 2007

WARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Village Hall
Warden Bay Road
Warden ME12 4NB

Alison Osborne
East Kent Office
Clover House
John Wilson Business Park
Thanet Way
Whitstable CT5 3QZ

10th April 2007

Dear Ms Osborne

Re Consultation on New School at Warden Bay/Leysdown

As I explained when I telephoned your office two weeks ago, I was very much afraid that the newer Mums had been missed in your survey. Consequently I went to our mother and toddler group and the playgroup held in our village hall and showed them your leaflet, I explained the two options and also answered their questions on the impact on Eastchurch school if a school went ahead at this end of the Island.

There has been a lot of misinformation coming to parents ie Eastchurch school would have to close if a new one was built here which is not what was wanted. I was able to relay what was discussed at the meeting at Eastchurch School, and Parents were happy to sign .

I have only scratched the surface with this effort but I hope you can take into account our petition when going to your members and making your final decisions. After all it is the future we are planning for.

I was asked by many Mums at the bus stop if their children would be able to transfer to the new school if Built. It is appreciated that however much you try you cannot reach everyone.

I am faxing this over to you because of your deadline and will put the hard copies in the post.

I hope this is helpful

Yours sincerely



Pat Sandle
Chair Warden Parish Council

Swale House, East Street,
Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT
DX59900 Sittingbourne 2
☎: (01795) 424341
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Mrs A Osborne
Area Education Officer
East Kent Office
Clover House
John Wilson Business Park
Thanet Way
Whitstable
Kent CT5 3QZ

Please ask for: Mr P Speakman
Direct Line: 01795 417251
Our Ref: PS/AVN
Your Ref:
Date: 5 April 2007

Dear Alison,

Planning Sheppey Schools for the future (Primary Phase)

Generally we welcome the plans to provide a new Primary School system on Sheppey with the overall aim of improving the relatively poor overall levels of attainment on Sheppey. Clearly the most important outcome is that it does not unnecessarily disrupt childrens' education and actually improves it as soon as possible.

Furthermore, we would wish to see local community confidence boosted and encouraged by investment through the whole Island schooling system. Consequently investment in the revised secondary school system must be put in place at the same time either through Academy or other funding means.

There are no doubt challenges, not least in capital investment, where for example we would not wish to see mobile/temporary classrooms used and we would wish to see the IT and Sciences based equipment and suites that children currently have access to in middle schools provided within the new Primary Schools.

We welcome the fact that KCC is looking to provide local schools for local children, minimising transport times and helping to strengthen communities. We are also supportive of integral early years/children's centre provision and that no school is above a two form entry size. We wish to work closely with KCC on the provision of Children's Centres, in particular where we may be able to assist the siting and construction process.

It would be helpful to see more information when available on each of extended services to the community that schools may offer as part of the "extended schools" programme and what that may consist of.

We note that the total places fall from 3270 to 3255 places. This we think should be treated with caution given the number of new houses planned for Sheppey and it would be wise that that is kept under constant review with the appropriate physical flexibility provided within any renovated/new schools near the major development areas.

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Serving The Isle of Sheppey, Faversham, Sittingbourne and surrounding rural areas
CHIEF EXECUTIVE J. C. Edwards. DIRECTORS M. Radford, Director of Corporate Services, Governance & Scrutiny I. Russell, Director of Community, Development, Environmental & Technical Services.

Printed on Recycled Paper

On specific schools:

a. St Georges is shown to be part of a two form entry Primary School whilst we also understand it is still part of the Academy option process. Is this so? If it is then it is another good reason to support the investment in Primary and Secondary tiers happening at the same time.

b. Halfway will also be reduced to a two form entry so we wonder where the current third form will be accommodated?

c. Providing a new single form of entry Primary School at Warden Bay/Leysdown is a development we would encourage. There are particular benefits to be had from a transport perspective, increased local accessibility and to address current highway difficulties for visiting parents at Eastchurch School.

In conclusion, therefore, we support the proposals provided that they are backed by sufficient investment and the minimum of disruption to children's education. Swale Borough Council would wish to be closely involved in the rollout of these changes and in the monitoring of the improvement in standards.

Yours sincerely

Councillor J Wright

Executive Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Education

PAT

Professional Association of Teachers

5 - APR 2007

General Secretary: Philip Parkin
2 St. James' Court
Friar Gate
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tel: 01332 372337
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Janet Martin
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Alison Osborne
Area Eductaion officer (Canterbury and Swale)
East Kent Office
Clover House
John Wilson Business Park
Thanet Way
Whitstable
CT5 3QZ

2nd April 2007



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Dear Ms Osborne

Re Sheppey Schools Consultation



Thank you for sending the documentation about the various schools involved in this proposal. We have members in some of these schools but not all. I have written to them all seeking their views on the proposals but none has raised any particular concerns.

It seems that Kent is taking a rational view of the needs of local children and the viability of individual schools within their catchment areas.



In general we do not wish to raise any particular issues about the proposal to change the age range of schools by bringing them into line with accepted categories already in existence across the country. For infant schools to become primary seems quite reasonable as does the proposal to match pupil admission numbers to local need and making multiples of 30 wherever possible.



It is clear that one driver for these proposals is falling rolls. Many schools are being required to reduce their PAN and this could lead to a surplus of staff. I assume the authority will consult separately on the need to make staffing reductions but urge that every effort be made to achieve the level of staffing needed by natural changes or voluntary action. Should this not be the case I would be grateful for early notification.



The one school where there will clearly be larger issues particularly for staff is the change of St George's C E Middle School to primary. This could well leave members of staff feeling dispossessed of the area of expertise they have been using with the older group of students. The closure of the higher end of the age range at this school will obviously create a need for more space in local secondary schools. We would therefore request that any staff who wish to move to secondary be afforded training and support to prepare them for the new environment and they should be supported in finding suitable alternative posts, if at all possible by redeployment rather than open competition for vacancies.



We trust that, where schools are taking on larger numbers and needing different facilities to meet the needs of a change in age range, that Kent will facilitate building alterations and



additions as needed. They should also provide suitable areas for the activities of a changed clientele.

Provided these arrangements are made and members of staff finding they have particular needs for the advancement of their careers are supported sensitively, we feel this process should be achievable. If, however, any of our members raise concerns about the process I will be in touch with you again.

It should not be forgotten that change is one of the drivers of stress so it is imperative that staff are treated with sensitivity at all times.

Yours sincerely

Janet Martin
Janet Martin

By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 17 October 2007

Subject: Proposed closure of Minster College and Cheyne Middle School and their replacement with an Academy, conditional upon a Funding Agreement forthcoming from the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report informs the School Organisation Advisory Board of the steps necessary to achieve the secondary phase of education within the two-tier system on the Isle of Sheppey.

FOR INFORMATION

Introduction

1. (1) At its meeting on 24 July 2006 the School Organisation Advisory Board supported the proposal to consult on the principle of reorganisation from a three-tier system to a two-tier system with transfer at 11+. Public consultation was carried out between September and November 2006.

(2) The results of this consultation were reported back to the School Organisation Advisory Board at its meeting on 13 December 2006 who recommended implementation. A Cabinet Member decision to implement this proposal was recorded on 10 January 2007.

(3) Public consultation on the primary phase of the two-tier system was carried out through proposals for each individual school involved, and the results were reported back to the School Organisation Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 May 2007. Permission to implement the proposal for the primary phase was given on 24 July 2007 by the Cabinet Member.

(4) Public consultation on the proposal for the secondary phase of education through establishment of an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey has been carried out by consultants (Mouchel Parkman) as required by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Kent County Council is now required to publish a Public Notice to close Minster College and Cheyne Middle School and to replace them with an Academy conditional upon a Funding Agreement forthcoming from the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Until the Public Notice is determined the Funding Agreement to build the Academy cannot be obtained. It is a legal requirement for Minster College and Cheyne Middle School to formally close before the new Academy can be opened. It must be stressed that the proposed closures are dependent upon a final Ministerial decision to grant funding for the establishment of a new Academy. If this agreement is not forthcoming, this proposal will be withdrawn and new proposals for the secondary phase of education on the Isle of Sheppey will be brought forward.

The Isle of Sheppey Academy

2. (1) It is proposed that the Academy opens in existing premises in September 2008. There will be one Academy Principal with overall responsibility for both the Academy sites. The whole Academy will have the dual specialisms of Business & Enterprise and Sport.

(2) Following a report commissioned by the Minister, the advice from Lord Adonis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners, on 23 July 2007 gave clear guidance as to the shape of the Academy, with the allocation of additional funding making it possible to adopt the two-site option for the Academy, using the existing sites of Minster College (to be known as the Academy East Site) and Cheyne Middle School (to be known as the Academy West Site). Copies of the letters dated 26 July from Lord Adonis to the Leader of Kent County Council and from the Leader to Lord Adonis are attached as Appendix 1.

Admission to the Academy

3. (1) Both locations will offer over time, education to students aged 11-18. Within the overarching Academy there will be small schools on each site. Admission to the Academy will be phased over a 2 year period as indicated in Table 1. Pupils attending St George's CE Middle School and Danley Middle School during the academic year 2008-09 can remain as pupils of those schools. In September 2008 Year 6 pupils from Cheyne Middle School will remain in the middle school phase. All pupils aged 11-16 will transfer into the Academy in September 2009.

Table 1

School	Sept 08	Sept 09	Sept 10
St George's CE Middle School	Yr 6	Primary Yrs R-6	Primary Yrs R-6
	Yr 7	PAN 60	PAN 60
	Yr 8		
Danley Middle School	Yr 6	Closed	Closed
	Yr 7		
	Yr 8		
Academy West Site (Cheyne)	Yr 6 *		
	Yr 7	Yr 7	Yr 7
	Yr 8	Yr 8	Yr 8
	Yr 9	Yr 9	Yr 9
		Yr 10	Yr 10
			Yr 11
Academy East Site (Minster)		Yr 7	Yr 7
		Yr 8	Yr 8
	Yr 9	Yr 9	Yr 9
	Yr 10	Yr 10	Yr 10
	Yr 11	Yr 11	Yr 11
	Yr 12	Yr 12	Yr 12
	Yr 13	Yr 13	Yr 13

* not pupils of the Academy

(2) The Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the statutory Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools.

(3) The Academy will in time have sufficient accommodation for all pupils (11-18) on the Island. The overall size will be 2100 (11-16 year olds) with 500 in the sixth form (17 and 18 year olds). Each school within the Academy will be of equal size, with an overall intake of 420 in each year group across the Academy.

Conclusion

4. Members are asked to note that issue of a Public Notice is now necessary. The Notice will propose the closure of Minster College and Cheyne Middle School to replace these schools with an Academy in September 2008 subject to the Department for Children, Schools and Families Funding Agreement.

Alison Osborne
Area Education Officer
(Canterbury & Swale)
Tel: (01227) 284461

The Local Members are Mr Adrian Crowther and Mrs Angela Harrison

Background Papers:

Reports to School Organisation Advisory Board on:
24 July 2006
13 December 2006
16 May 2007



Andrew Adonis

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0870 0012345 dcsf.ministers@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

Cllr Paul Carter
Leader
Kent County Council
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XQ

26 July 2007

Dear Paul,

Sheppey Academy

Following our request to Maurice Smith to conduct an independent review of the proposals for the Isle of Sheppey Academy, I intend to publish his report on 26 July under cover of this letter outlining the Government's response. I am grateful to you and to Graham Badman and his team for KCC's support throughout this inevitably complex process.

I have noted Maurice's recommendations and, subject to the conditions set out below, the Government is willing to implement his key recommendations for an Academy on two sites at Minster and Cheyne. There will be a single governance structure and an integrated 11-18 curriculum, but parents should be able to express a site preference at the age of 11 and 16, with appropriate flexibility also (reflecting the different specialisms and pupil curriculum choices) for pupils to transfer between sites for Key Stage 4 programmes. Decisions on the specialisms and the precise admission arrangements will need further consideration, and I look forward to advice from the project team, in consultation with you and the local community.

It is vital in my view that we provide the local community with a clear plan to move the project forward; one that will deliver an exciting and effective two-site Academy to serve the whole Sheppey community, adequately funded and delivered to a firm timetable. I believe this new plan, if properly implemented, will accomplish this. I have also spoken to Derek Wyatt MP who is fully supportive of the proposed way forward.

The Government's approval for this Academy plan to proceed to feasibility stage is subject to the following conditions:

1. Capital costs. In order to support this vision, I am increasing the Government's capped capital investment to £46m, and I welcome KCC's commitment to provide a further £3m, raising its contribution to £4m. This will provide a total capital budget of £50m. I am also asking KCC to confirm that it will underwrite any significant cost above and beyond that figure, and to fully apply the capital assets at its disposal that this proposal makes available. I should stress that the Government cannot increase its funding beyond £46m in any circumstances.

department for
children, schools and families



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

2. Sponsorship and project leadership. It is important that there be a credible non-local authority lead sponsor to take responsibility for driving the academy project forward, and I am delighted that Dulwich College has agreed to your proposal that they become the lead sponsor and accordingly be responsible for the appointment of the academy's governing body. Dulwich College has made a significant contribution to the project – particularly in the work of Ralph Mainard – and I believe they have the capacity to make a real success of this academy in partnership with the local community. I am grateful to the De Haan Charitable Trust for its £1m donation to the Academy to establish its endowment. I also welcome the continued engagement of the Church of England and local stakeholders as partners in the new Academy.

Subject to receiving your formal agreement to the terms of this letter, the project will now resume its feasibility phase so that the timeline to reach Funding Agreement to identify a definite opening date can be reviewed and agreed with the Government and the County Council in September.

I am copying this letter to Lord George at Dulwich College, to the Bishop of Dover, to Roger de Haan, to Derek Wyatt MP, and to Ronnie Norman, Chair of the Academy Project Steering Group.

Yours ever,

Andrew

ANDREW ADONIS

Paul Carter Leader of the Council



Andrew Adonis
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools
Department for Children, Schools and Families
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
Westminster
LONDON
SW1P 3BT

County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ
Fax: (01622) 694085
Tel: (01622) 694310
e-mail: paul.carter@kent.gov.uk

26 July 2007

Dear *Andrew,*

Thank you for your letter. I am delighted that it would appear we now have a way forward to build a new secondary education system for the Isle of Sheppey and resume the feasibility stage.

I see little point in a detailed critique of former HMI Maurice Smith's report. Like you, I accept that with the additional capital you have made available, a two site option is now possible. In that regard, I am pleased to confirm that KCC will increase its sponsorship to £4m, making a total capital amount of £50m. As sponsor, on behalf of Kent County Council, I accept the responsibility to value engineer the project, control capital expenditure and therefore take financial responsibility for cost over-runs above that amount.

We shall, of course, seek to maximise the benefits of current assets not required for the academy project either to defray such expenditure or add to the total value of the project.

I am pleased that Dulwich College is assuming a more prominent role and agree the need to offer the Sheppey community greater surety about the development of this project and the enormous opportunity offered by the creation of the academy.

Finally, may I in turn thank you both for your own personal interest and the exemplary work of your officers within the Department.

Yours sincerely

Paul Carter

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Yours ever,

Andrew

ANDREW ADONIS

Andrew Adonis
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools
Department for Children, Schools and Families
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26 July 2007

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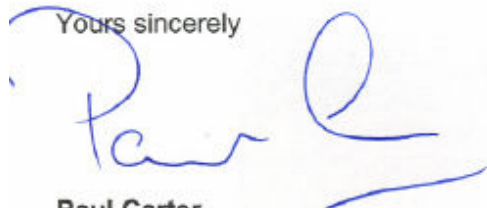
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Finally, may I in turn thank you both for your own personal interest and the exemplary work of your officers within the Department.

Yours sincerely



Paul Carter

By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 14 November 2007

Subject: THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF DANLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL AS AN ADDITION TO THE PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED PROPOSED CLOSURES OF MINSTER COLLEGE AND CHEYNE MIDDLE SCHOOL, TO BE REPLACED WITH AN ACADEMY ON THE MINSTER COLLEGE AND CHEYNE MIDDLE SCHOOLS SITES, CONDITIONAL UPON A FUNDING AGREEMENT FORTHCOMING FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report informs the School Organisation Advisory Board of a necessary revision to steps, as set out in the report to the School Organisation Advisory Board at its meeting on 17 October 2007, to achieve the secondary phase of education within the two-tier system on the Isle of Sheppey

FOR INFORMATION

Introduction

1. (1) At its meeting on 17 October 2007 the School Organisation Advisory Board noted the need to issue a Public Notice proposing the closure of Minster College and Cheyne Middle School to replace these schools with an Academy in September 2008 subject to the Department for Children, Schools and Families Funding Agreement.

(2) Consequent upon the decision by the Sponsors, the Local Authority and the Department for Children, Schools and Families to open the academy in September 2009 rather than 2008 it is now necessary to bring forward a revised schedule to the Public Notice.

(3) The decision to defer the opening of the Academy until September 2009 was a response to representations from islanders and educators.

Revised Schedule

2. (1) It is proposed that in September 2009 pupils aged 11-18 in Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School will transfer into the new Academy.

(2) In September 2009 it is proposed that pupils aged 11+ at St George's CE Middle School will transfer into the new Academy. From September 2009 the age range will change at St George's CE Middle School from 9-13 to 4-11 as detailed in the Public Notice for the Primary Phase of education published on 6 September 2007 and determined on 1 November 2007.

Conclusion

3. Members are asked to note that issue of a Public Notice is now necessary. The Notice will propose the closure of Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School to be replaced by an Academy on the Minster College and Cheyne Middle School sites, subject to the Funding Agreement.

Alison Osborne
Area Education Officer
(Canterbury & Swale)
Tel: (01227) 284461

The Local Members are Mr Adrian Crowther and Mrs Angela Harrison

Background Papers:

None

Key Stage 2 Results 2007

School	English L4+	Maths L4+	Science L4+	Average Points Score
Cheyne	65%	47%	79%	25.5
Danley	58%	57%	81%	25.6
St George's CE	74%	75%	79%	27.0
LA Average	77%	73%	84%	27.4
National Average	80%	77%	88%	27.9

Key Stage 3 Results – 2007 Year 9 Pupil Cohort

The following results are for all students who were on roll in Middle schools in Year 8 in Jan 2006. The data is a summary of the results of those students regardless of whether they took the test in Year 8 in the Middle schools or elsewhere in Year 9.

		% Level 5+	Average Points Score
English	Sheppey	47.4	29.0
	Kent	73.2	33.8
	National	74.0	33.5
	Kent wide ability	70.3	32.7
Mathematics	Sheppey	61.8	33.0
	Kent	74.2	37.0
	National	76.0	36.8
	Kent wide ability	70.1	34.8
Science	Sheppey	53.3	30.2
	Kent	72.0	34.6
	National	73.0	34.3
	Kent wide ability	67.4	32.9

GCSE Results at Minster College

	5 A*-C (including English and Maths)	5 A*-C
2004	17%	25%
2005	17%	23%
2006	20%	25%
2007	25%	34%

Proposed Transition Model for Isle of Sheppey Education Reorganisation **Appendix 10**



My child is currently in:	September 2008	September 2009	September 2010	September 2011	September 2012	September 2013
Reception First School	Year 1 Primary School	Year 2 Primary School	Year 3 Primary School	Year 4 Primary School	Year 5 Primary School	Year 6 Primary School
Year 1 First School	Year 2 Primary School	Year 3 Primary School	Year 4 Primary School	Year 5 Primary School	Year 6 Primary School	Year 7 Academy
Year 2 First School	Year 3 Primary School	Year 4 Primary School	Year 5 Primary School	Year 6 Primary School	Year 7 Academy	Year 8 Academy
Year 3 First School	Year 4 Primary School	Year 5 Primary School	Year 6 Primary School	Year 7 Academy	Year 8 Academy	Year 9 Academy
Year 4 First School	Year 5 Primary School	Year 6 Primary School	Year 7 Academy	Year 8 Academy	Year 9 Academy	Year 10 Academy
Year 5 Middle School	Year 6 Middle School	Year 7 Academy	Year 8 Academy	Year 9 Academy	Year 10 Academy	Year 11 Academy
Year 6 Middle School	Year 7 Middle School	Year 8 Academy	Year 9 Academy	Year 10 Academy	Year 11 Academy	Year 12 Academy
Year 7 Middle School	Year 8 Middle School	Year 9 Academy	Year 10 Academy	Year 11 Academy	Year 12 (post 16) Academy	Year 13 (post 16) Academy
Year 8 Middle School	Year 9 Minster College	Year 10 Academy	Year 11 Academy	Year 12 (post 16) Academy	Year 13 (post 16) Academy	
Year 9 Minster College	Year 10 Minster College	Year 11 Academy	Year 12 (post 16) Academy	Year 13 (post 16) Academy		
Year 10 Minster College	Year 11 Minster College	Year 12 (post 16) Academy	Year 13 (post 16) Academy			
Year 11 Minster College	Year 12 (post 16) Minster College	Year 13 (post 16) Academy				

Page 153

First Schools – to become Primary Schools in September 2008

Schools

Minster College

Proposed Academy in existing, but refurbished Minster College and Cheyne Middle School buildings from September 2009 moving to a new build by September 2012

Note - St George's CE School accepting admissions into years R 1 2 3 4 5 6 from September 2009

Schedule of Public Meetings and approximate number of people attending

School	Date of Public Meeting	Approximate number
Eastchurch CE Primary School	28 February, 4.00 pm	35
Halfway Houses Primary School	4 March, 4.00 pm	35
Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School	4 March, 7.00 pm	48
Queenborough First School	3 March, 7.00 pm	50
Richmond First School	27 February, 7.00 pm	30
West Minster Primary School Rose Street School	14 February, 4.30 pm	59
Cheyne Middle School	12 March, 5.30 pm	
Danley Middle School	13 February, 7.00 pm	100
Minster College	28 February, 7.00 pm	30
St George's CE Middle School	5 March, 7.00 pm	35

PROPOSED CHANGE OF THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION ON THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY**Summary of written responses**

Consultation documents distributed: **7000**
 Responses received

Change to a two-tier system of education with one transfer at age 11.

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school				
Member of staff				
Governor				
Pupil attending a Sheppey school				
Other				
TOTAL				

The alteration of age range of the first schools and St George's CE Middle School
 The addition provision at Warden Bay for Eastchurch CE School

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school				
Member of staff				
Governor				
Pupil attending a Sheppey school				
Other				
TOTAL				

The closure of Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School and from September 2009 secondary education is provided by means of an Academy

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school				
Member of staff				
Governor				
Pupil attending a Sheppey school				
Other				
TOTAL				

Secondary provision to be provided by the establishment of two maintained schools (Minster College & Cheyne Middle School sites)

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school				
Member of staff				
Governor				
Pupil attending a Sheppey school				
Other				
TOTAL				

Secondary provision to be provided by the establishment of two secondary schools (Minster College and Danley Middle School sites).

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school				
Member of staff				
Governor				
Pupil attending a Sheppey school				
Other				
TOTAL				

Secondary provision to be provided by the establishment of three secondary schools (Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School sites)

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school				
Member of staff				
Governor				
Pupil attending a Sheppey school				
Other				
TOTAL				

Please note: The totals on the bottom line refer to the number of individual responses received. Some of these responses fitted into more than one category and are counted in each category but only once in the total.

Summary of points made in favour of a 2-tier system

- The 3 tier system has failed me somewhat and I 'm sure I would have had a better standard of education if the 2 tier system including an Academy were already in place
- The situation where all plans are on hold is intolerable. This has to be resolved so the plans can still go ahead for September 2008
- There is no need for three school stages
- Moving children halfway through Key Stage 2 does not help their education
- My son's education will suffer if he moves to a middle school
- The school system on Sheppey needs a radical shake up, timely decision making and adequate funding to ensure the best provision for our children
- I feel let down by Minster College with poor staff attendance and lack of resources
- 9 and 10 year olds are not ready for schooling beyond primary level
- My son has the same grades now at Minster College as he had before he went there.
- Having one move rather than two is more settling for children
- Special needs pupils will benefit with less moving about
- Changes of school cause unnecessary disruption educationally and psychologically
- I will not allow my daughter to enter into an already failing system
- Minster College has had an impossible task as they get the children at age 13 when they are set in their ways
- The plans must be implemented without further delay
- The change to a 2 tier system must happen with as little impact on Year 4 children as possible. The plans must not be postponed
- There is no reason why Sheppey should have a different system to the rest of the country. A 2-tier system cannot be implemented quickly enough
- I send my children to school in Sittingbourne and will continue to do so while the 3-tier system is in place
- A 2-tier system would be in line with the rest of the country
- The primary phase must happen in September 2008, irrespective of what happens in the secondary phase
- My children moved to middle school at 9. I found they were upset and made little progress at first
- The system should change to 2-tier to better accommodate the key stage system ensuring children are tested at the correct ages.
- The middles school system is outdated and particularly disruptive.
- Many of the middle school staff have encouraged a climate of fear amongst parents in order to safeguard an extremely cushy system with little accountability
- Children have been stigmatised with the 3-tier system. Now is the time to get it right

Summary of points made against a 2-tier system

- Most of the existing primary schools have no space for expansion
- We should not allow a good and proven system to be disrupted to make up for poor management and staffing at Minster College
- The only school that needs sorting out is Minster College
- The middle schools provide a good learning environment with excellent results

Summary of points made in favour of the establishment of an academy

- The academy will be beneficial to students of all age groups
- The island can not afford to turn down £50 million investment for our children
- The academy will give children more choice including vocational as well as academic subjects
- The academy can only improve what the island has now – Minster College
- An academy will bring much needed investment. It has got to be better than what we have now
- Decaying buildings and equipment must be replaced with something fit for this century. It would be a disaster for generations of island children if change did not happen
- The academy sounds like a brilliant idea

Summary of points made opposing the establishment of an academy and in favour of one of the alternatives

- There is room on the Minster College site to build a new secondary school and refurbish the old one so that 2 schools can compete against each other
- The Isle of Sheppey does not need an academy.
- Minster College is too large to cope with the amount of children
- Although Danley's premises are a bit tatty, the education and care is excellent
- Danley could become a secondary school
- Danley has excellent results. Why close it?
- The Minster College site could be used for playing parks or further education
- The Isle of Sheppey needs a choice of secondary schools
- Academies are vocational and the core subjects neglected
- Minster College must be shut
- Smaller schools tend to be a richer environment for the children to learn
- An academy on 2 sites would cause so many problems and only add to problems such as truancy
- Cheyne has a very bad reputation for learning, discipline and bullying. It would be a disaster if this school kept pupils on from 11-16.
- If there is money for an academy, then there is money for having 3 secondary schools
- Existing schools offer continuity and educational heritage and association for islanders
- 3 secondary schools on the Danley, Cheyne and Minster sites within a 2-tier system would be the best solution
- There is no value in building a bigger school on the same site

A summary of the main points made and questions raised at the public meetings

Comments – Primary Phase	
Everyone supports the proposal for primary provision to be established at Warden Bay.	
My granddaughter’s first school is ready for September to have a Year 5 and all the other schools should be too.	
Children’s opinions matter and Year 4 children want to stay on at their first schools.	
Comments – Secondary Phase/Academy	
Keep the three middle schools and turn them into secondary schools, including St George’s.	
The academy will not provide choice. Sittingbourne has choice but Sheppey does not.	
More parents now send their children off of the island for their secondary education because they do not want an academy, they want choice.	
It will be impossible to get 2,000 students through the entrances to the Minster College site and 1,500 through the entrance to the Cheyne site.	
I am in favour of an Academy. We must move forward to the 21 st century.	
I cannot see why there is opposition to an Academy.	
Comments – Change to a two-tier system	
It is time that the island changed to the system that is in the rest of Kent.	
Three changes of school disrupts children’s learning.	
A staged transfer to middle school and then on to Minster College when more mature is much better.	
Please be assured that the majority of parents are in favour of a two-tier system.	
Questions and Answers	
Why is the proposed size for the Academy less than the number of primary aged children?	The published entry number is a requirement of the DCSF and has been negotiated through Partnership for Schools. If more students want to come to the Academy they can.
What are the Academy sponsors doing to retain the good teachers that are in the middle schools?	We are very aware of the teachers on the island and discussions with staff have begun. Meetings will take place with the staff at all the middle schools.
Will the Academy facilities be available for use by other schools?	The Academy will be part of the Swale learning community. The Academy would work closely with the other schools and the community so that all children could be given the opportunity to experience the Academy facilities.
I am not in favour of a large Academy. Why can’t we have 3 secondary schools?	The size of school is irrelevant; it is how it is managed that is important. Large schools can be broken into smaller schools, where the students work for the majority of their time in ‘house units’ within one part of the school building.

<p>I am the parent of a Year 4 child who has been promised he can stay at his first school until Year 6. Will the school be ready in September?</p>	<p>Because of the legal challenge we cannot say that this will happen in September. But we have to have contingencies and if the two-tier system is confirmed, then the first schools will be ready in September to keep Year 4 children for Year 5.</p>
<p>Will Year 4 children have to move to a middle school in September for Year 5 and then have to move back to a primary school for Year 6 in September 2009?</p>	<p>KCC gave an undertaking in the past not to move the children to a middle school and then back to a primary school the following year. This has to be a two year process to ensure that children are not put in that position.</p>
<p>Could the secondary phase be delayed until 2010?</p>	<p>The Academy sponsors and the DCSF would view the delay with alarm.</p>
<p>Will the schools have the resources they need for Year 5?</p>	<p>Schools are allocated their budget according to the number of children and the staff and governors decide how much is spent on resources. In addition, reorganisation funding will be available.</p>
<p>Where are we going to find experienced teachers for Year 5 if the outcome will not be know until June?</p>	<p>The LA will support the schools. We need to do joined up working with other schools, including the middle schools, who will have teachers.</p>
<p>Why are the responses to this consultation not analysed by a body independent of KCC?</p>	<p>Public meetings are recorded and a written record is made. A summary of the responses will be made at the end of the consultation period. All the responses will be counted. This information will be presented to the School Organisation Advisory Board who will have the opportunity to listen to the recordings and read all the responses. The process is open to scrutiny at every stage.</p>

A summary of the views of the Headteachers recorded at the public meetings

<p><u>Queenborough First School</u> Ms Barbara Conroy, Headteacher</p>	<p>Fully supports the proposal. Some concerns have been expressed about the reduction of the intake number to 45. Headteacher supports the reduction as the school admits below the current PAN of 60.</p>
<p><u>West Minster Primary School</u> <u>Rose Street School</u> Mr Alan Bayford, Executive Headteacher Sheerness West Federation</p>	<p>This school is ready and eager to complete the job, starting in the nursery until the end of the primary phase. We will deliver the promise to provide successful children. The change is needed now, to give the children of Sheppey a chance of the success that they deserve.</p>
<p><u>Minster College</u> Mr Alan Klee, Headteacher</p>	<p>Mr Klee did not speak at the public meeting but submitted a written summary.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Last year our GCSE results went up from 25% A*-C to 34% A*-C. This represents a 9% increase and a 36% improvement. 2. This year our target is 40%+ A*-C and the year after over 50% A*-C. 3. The reason for this improvement has been the quality of data gathering and analysis of individual student performance. 4. If we receive students in Year 7 instead of Year 9 we can monitor even more closely and improve Minster College at a faster rate. 5. We can also have a greater impact on behaviour by receiving students early before bad habits are too ingrained. 6. One difficulty of managing Minster College is that the Key Stage 3 programme is split between ourselves and our middle schools. 7. Students transfer to Minster College at the worst possible time. 8. Ask any teacher what are the difficult years to teach – the response will be Year 9 and year 11. 9. To transfer to a new school during the most challenging stages of adolescence makes the settling in process very difficult. 10. If we can achieve 50% A*-C with the present system, and we can, with two more years of continuity Minster College should be achieving outstanding results in future years.

<p><u>Cheyne Middle School</u> Mr Peter Woollacott, Headteacher</p>	
<p><u>Danley Middle School</u> Mr Mike Meredith, Headteacher</p>	<p>I am proud of this school and rate it very highly, as did Ofsted.</p> <p>We currently have a hiccup and as a result Year 4 parents find themselves in a situation where they do not know what is going to happen. KCC has a Primary Strategy that says all children should have an all-through primary education.</p> <p>KCC's preferred option of an Academy now has a lot more detail. I have met Dr Mortimer, Principal Designate and was very impressed with what he had to say. It is helpful that members of the academy project board are present at this meeting and can give you information.</p> <p>The alternative option is 2 or 3 secondary schools. The option is there now and it offers an alternative for parents who would like their children to stay at the middle schools.</p> <p>We are being consulted; please respond to the consultation to help make the right decision for your children and your children's children.</p>
<p><u>St George's CE Middle School</u> Mr David Dyson, Acting Headteacher</p>	<p>Middle schools provide a unique environment. There is a need for change and I am not opposed. Schools continue to change and improve and the school feel able to provide an excellent primary school. Why is the island resisting £50m for an Academy?</p> <p>– It is a desire amongst parents to have a say in how it is spent. Parents also want choice. Teachers and pupils are leaving the island. The current Year 4 pupils are in an uncertain future. I hope that together we can provide a level of education that can be sustained for many years.</p>
<p><u>Eastchurch CE Primary School</u> Mrs Pauline Shipley, Headteacher</p>	<p>Agrees with the change from a three to a two-tier system. The children will benefit by staying at the school until they are 11. Concerned about accommodation and resources being in place in time but the Local Authority has assured their help. Comments from other schools regarding schools not being ready have been unhelpful, but the school does not have any control over the timescales. Some schools are in a falling roll situation and therefore have spare classrooms. Eastchurch is a popular school and does not have spare capacity. The school could not afford to appoint staff in</p>

	<p>advance of knowing the outcome of the changes. However, the school is ready for the challenge, is looking at curriculum development for upper Key Stage 2, the siting of temporary accommodation and the resources required. This is an exciting opportunity for the school and the island.</p>
<p><u>Halfway Houses Primary School</u> Mr Gerry Wetherell, Headteacher</p>	<p>The senior management team of the school fully support the proposal for a two-tier system and the changes proposed for this school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum – The school is planning and in a good position for retaining Year 5 • Staff – not a major concern as the school will be able to provide teachers for Year 5 from within the school • Funding – The LA has given the school assurances that the funding will be available. • Accommodation – The quality of the buildings is poor but the school has been assured by the LA that new build will be available in the future. • The school is fully prepared to become a primary school.
<p><u>Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School</u> Mrs Cath Foad, Acting Headteacher</p>	<p>It is time to move on and everyone has the right to give their views on the proposals being put forward.</p> <p>Fully supports the change to a two-tier system and confirmed that the school has enough space to accommodate the two extra year groups and will not need any temporary accommodation. Has a concern about finding high calibre teachers for the school due to the delay.</p>
<p><u>Richmond First School</u> Mrs Jean Ratcliff, Acting Headteacher</p>	<p>Thoroughly supports the proposal and acknowledges the benefits for the children if Richmond School becomes an all-through primary school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure environment and caring ethos • Pupils are known individually by the staff • Best experience for individual needs • Can continue education until age 11 with uninterrupted progress achieving higher standards. • Continual pupil assessment and tracking • No disruption to learning • Continued friendship groups • Year 6 would be roll models for the younger children <p>The school has the capacity to develop into an all-through primary school and has</p>

	worked on preparation and curriculum development.
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A summary of the views of the Chairs of Governors and Governing Bodies recorded at the public meetings

<u>Eastchurch CE Primary School</u>	The governors have discussed the proposal over a series of meetings and they welcome the further consultation linking with the secondary Academy consultation. All the governors are in favour for a change to a two tier system but not for an Academy because of concerns about local representation and accountability.
<u>Halfway Houses Primary School</u>	Following discussion at a full governing body meeting there had been unanimous support for the change to a two-tier system and the governors hoped that it would be implemented in September 2008. The governors are moving ahead with planning for the school to become a primary school.
<u>Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School</u>	Personal view and not necessarily the views of the governing body. Supports the proposed change to a two-tier system because the current system crosses the Key Stages. Does not agree with an Academy but wants choice for secondary schools. The school hall is too small and the school needs a Sports Hall.
<u>Queenborough First School</u>	The governors support the change to a two-tier system. The schools will need support of the LA during this period of uncertainty. Difficult for school to make plans, appoint new staff. The governors accept falling rolls and the reduction to a PAN of 45. The school does not want mixed age year groups and wants the facilities to offer two classes per year group.
<u>Richmond First School</u>	The governing body has discussed the proposal for Richmond First School at length and all agree that it is the best thing for the school and the whole island. The governing body is fully behind the proposals.
<u>Sheerness West Federation (West Minster / Rose Street)</u>	Vice Chair spoke on behalf of the governors. Fully support the proposals for change. From September 08 both Rose Street and West Minster will be ready to accommodate Year 5. A change to a two tier system will be a chance to get it right for all children.
<u>Cheyne Middle School</u>	
<u>Danley Middle School</u>	There are no traumas coming to the school at age 9. The island has been starved of investment for years. We do not have enough information about the Academy and there is uncertainty even after meetings. The Academy will be a private school

	<p>not financed by KCC and with only a couple of parent governors. The Board will not have anything in common with the Isle of Sheppey. We have good governors at our school and we won't have this with the Academy.</p> <p>The Academy will be too big. It is better to have competing schools – 2 or possible 3 secondary schools competing with each other with different curricula.</p>
<u>Minster College</u>	A written response from the Interim Executive Board is attached as Appendix 18.
<u>St George's CE Middle School</u>	The Chairman of Governors did not attend the meeting and sent his apologies.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey Labour Party

Education Provision on the Isle of Sheppey

Consultation on changing to a two-tier system

As far as the local Labour party is concerned there are four key issues facing the future provision of education on the Isle of Sheppey

1. The need to radically close the gap in performance levels between those young people who go through the current system from ages 5 to 16 and 18 and those on the Mainland of Swale and the rest of Kent
2. The importance of investing in and modernising the buildings, structure and learning environments of schools on the Island
3. The need to invest in and develop the vocational and prevocational options of young people on the Island
4. And the need to attract more teachers With specialist subject experience to better prepare Island youngsters for public examinations at, 16,17 and 18+ .

All these demand change and part of that change should be to reduce the three-tier system to two- tiers.

Having said that, we are very conscious of the need to be sensitive to people who have given much of their life's work to the three tier system and so there needs to be an emphasis on future progress not past failure.

In support of a two tier as opposed to a three-tier system we believe

- It will aid the learning, pastoral development and community development of Primary age children to continue their education from 5-11 in one, rather than 2, schools
- That in a National system of Education built around Key Stages at ages, 7,11,14 and 16, that it must be a disadvantage to Sheppey children to break those stages with school transfers at the ages of 9 and 13.
- School transfers by their nature lead to a slowing down of progress through a transition point. It is therefore very likely that Sheppey children suffer by making two transfers at 9 and 13, rather than one at the age of 11.
- In particular, the transfer to an Upper School at thirteen is a disadvantage to Sheppey youngsters. The Year 9 at the Upper School presents obvious problems in terms of continuity from three Middle Schools, and many youngsters slow down or go backwards.
- The challenge to continuity from Middle to Upper School has never really been solved since the system was set up in the 1970s. We believe that from a Pastoral point of view, whether in learning support, or social development or essentially in attendance standards, students would do much better if they were in the same school from 11-16.
- Equally in curriculum development terms students would do better across most subjects if they were in the same schools from 11-16, enjoying the support of some of the same teachers from 11-16, being monitored for progress by the same departments across the whole age range and being taught in the Lower Secondary age ranges by some of the teachers with the expertise to prepare them for examinations at 16+ and beyond.
- There are many reasons why Sheppey has found it difficult to attract teachers with appropriate expertise across the whole curriculum and for the whole Secondary age range. However, a factor has been the anomalous system on the Island, which for Middle School teachers has meant no opportunity to teach at

Public Examination level, and for Upper School teachers has meant limited experience at Key Stage 3. Sheppey is currently not an attractive career move for teachers.

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

Roger Truelove

Chairman Sittingbourne and Sheppey Labour Party.

ISLE OF SHEPPEY THREE TO TWO CONSULTATION

SUBMISSION BY THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARD OF MINSTER COLLEGE

The Interim Executive Board was appointed by the Secretary of State to provide governance for Minster College following the resignation of the Board of Governors in early 2004. We have considered the implications of the review of three to two educational system on the Isle of Sheppey and submit these as our considered views.

We believe it is fundamentally unhelpful for the Isle of Sheppey to have a different educational system from the rest of Kent. Not only does the difference in system encourage a sense of being “left behind” on the Isle of Sheppey, but it also makes choices at the different ages and stages particularly difficult for individual pupils and their families. It is in the best interests of all to have one standard system across the educational boundaries of the County. There is also more use of school clusters and grouping arrangements and with the building of the new Sheppey Bridge there should be much more exchange and interaction between the Island and the rest of Swale. Social differences and perception of disadvantage would be ameliorated by introducing a standard 2 tier system.

As the governing body for Minster College, we note that it is particularly difficult to take pupils in year 9 when their characters, relationships and patterns of learning are already well developed. We feel strongly that joining together in Year 7 as is standard across the County would help the ethos of the school and facilitate a better approach to learning. The disruption in what is effectively the mid-term of secondary schooling does not do the pupils any favours. Less change would be beneficial to all.

The change of school in Year 9 also seems to encourage a sense of disruption in behaviour and attendance. We believe that the poor attendance at Minster College is caused by many factors; one of them is the disruption in education at Year 9. It allows patterns of poor behaviour and poor attendance to be encouraged without restraint of peer groups having developed together from Year 7.

The three tier system shifts disproportionate burdens to the senior school in funding, exam requirements and focuses staff on the difficult exam years. We believe this creates more pressure on senior school teachers and less demand on middle school teachers with a consequent impact on recruiting and retention.

We believe there is a significant benefit in the continuity of learning from Year 7 onwards in the same institution with pastoral care arrangements, a familiar environment and the opportunity for continuity in teaching.

In conclusion, the Interim Executive Board strongly support the transition to a two tier system and an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey for the benefit of the pupils of current and future generations and feel confident that this will result in the raising of teaching standards, learning and student behaviour.

Trevor Minter OBE DL
Interim Chairman

Anne-Marie Nelson CBE DL

Geoffrey Dearing

Roger de Fougerolles

Alison Osborne
Area Education Officer (Canterbury and Swale)
East Kent Education Office
Clover House
John Wilson Business Park
Thanet Way
Whitstable
Kent, CT5 3QZ

Please ask for Barbara Thompson
☎Direct (01795) 417595
email
Our Ref BT
Your Ref
Date 11 March 2008

Dear Alison

Planning Sheppey Schools for the Future

Thank you for the recent update briefing on KCC's consultation proposals for improving the secondary education system on Sheppey. As you know, we are very concerned about the learning and skills outcomes on the island. With latest statistics showing the growing gap between the skill levels of adults on Sheppey compared to the rest of Kent, and indeed nationally, it is vitally important that we have an educational offer that enables our children and young people to achieve much improved outcomes that will equip them for entry into further education and a globally competitive economy.

The Academy proposals would seem both innovative and transformational. Such improved curriculum opportunities will support the future skills requirements both of Swale employers and national employers. I equally endorse the fact that the schools will be facilitating community access.

If, together, we are to make a significant step change in the learning and skills outcomes for Swale's children, young people and adults then we need initiatives that offer real change – I certainly consider the Academy offers us that opportunity.

I wish you well with your consultation, and look forward to working further with you and your colleagues on delivering a successful Academy vision for the communities of Sheppey.

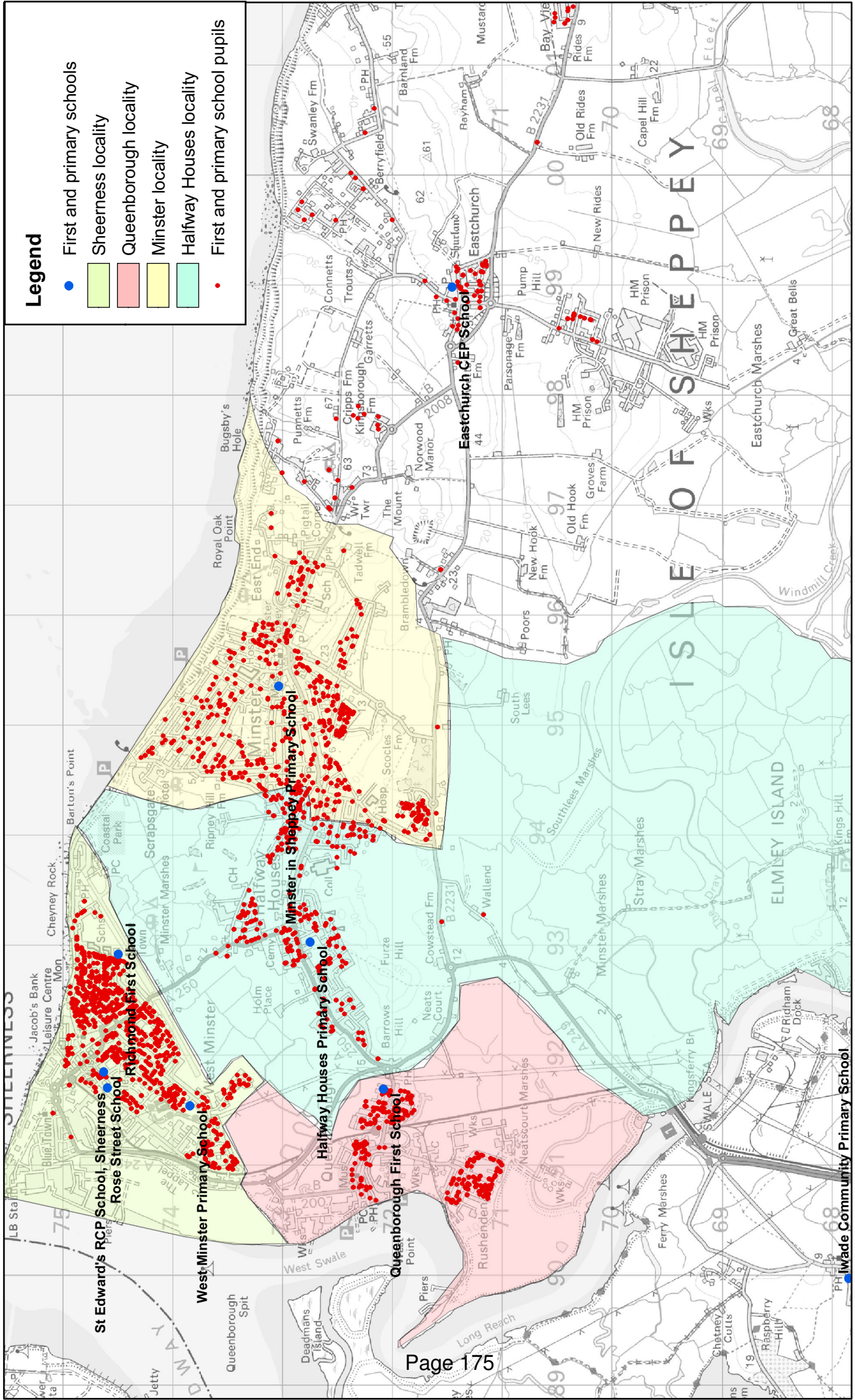
With best wishes

Mike Cosgrove

Cllr Mike Cosgrove
Portfolio Member for Learning and Skills
Swale Borough Council

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Isle of Sheppey (West) localities showing the home addresses of pupils currently attending first and primary schools



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Public Consultation Document

2008

**Planning Sheppey
Schools for the Future**



Photograph supplied by Carillion

Kent County Council would like your views on change from first, middle and upper schools to primary and secondary schools, with transfer at 11 years old. It would also like your views on the implications of this proposed change on individual schools.

How schools could be organised on the Isle of Sheppey

Present system													
Age	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16+
Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Sixth Form
National Curriculum	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2			Key Stage 3			Key Stage 4			
(3 tier)	First Schools				Middle Schools				Upper School				

Proposed system													
Age	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16+
Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Sixth Form
National Curriculum	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2			Key Stage 3			Key Stage 4			
(2 tier)	Primary Schools						Secondary Schools						

To All Members of the Sheppey Community

It is well known that Kent County Council wishes to support the regeneration of Sheppey by providing children and families with the best possible education opportunities.

We wish to continue our consultation with you to gain your views on proposed changes to the school system. We believe that these changes will improve the life chances for pupils in Sheppey schools.

We need your support to plan the future pattern of education. Please read the two leaflets and let us have your views.

On pages 14 and 15 of this document you will see how you can respond to this consultation. A response form is contained in the centre of this document for you to detach and return either by post to the East Kent Education Office as detailed on page 15, or by returning it to your school to be forwarded to the East Kent Education Office.

I can assure you that all comments received will be carefully considered before decisions are made.

*Dr Ian Craig
Director - Operations
Children, Families and Education Directorate*

Introduction

2004	We consulted you about a proposal to change the education system on Sheppey. At the early stage we talked with approximately 500 people, individually and in groups.
2006	We issued a consultation document and held ten public meetings to consider the idea of change from a three-tier to a two-tier system, and to ask for your views. Document available at: http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/
2007	We issued seven separate consultation documents and held seven public meetings on the detailed proposals for each first school and St George's CE Middle School, to gain your views and comments on the suggested primary phase. Documents available at: http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alteration of the age range of all the first schools on the Island as well as St George's CE Middle School. • Kent County Council's preferred option for the provision of secondary education is through an academy. If this proposal is agreed and implemented, Danley, Cheyne and Minster College would close and be replaced by an academy on two sites. If not Kent County Council would establish maintained secondary schools on some or all of the sites of these three schools. The age ranges would also be extended.

We now wish to continue the consultation by updating you on the details of the proposal for a two-tier system of education in Sheppey. In particular we would like your views on the implications of these proposals on each school as well as any further views you might have on the change from a three to a two-tier system of education.

The current school organisation

Currently on the Isle of Sheppey there is a three-tier system of education consisting of seven schools catering for children aged 4-9, three middle schools catering for children aged 9-13 and one upper school catering for pupils aged 13-18. There is also a Roman Catholic primary school catering for children aged 4-11.

First Schools:

- Eastchurch CE Primary School
 - Halfway Houses Primary School
 - Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School
 - Queenborough First School
 - Richmond First School
 - Rose Street School
 - West Minster Primary School
- } Sheerness West Federation

Middle Schools:

- Cheyne Middle School
- Danley Middle School
- St George's CE Middle School

Upper School:

- Minster College

Primary School:

- St Edward's RC Primary School

The Proposals

Kent County Council is proposing a two-tier system of education which would create primary and secondary phases. If this proposal is accepted and implemented there would no longer be a middle school phase. The first phase would be nine primary schools (including the current Roman Catholic primary school and St George's CE Middle School as a primary school) to cater for pupils aged 4-11. The secondary phase would provide for pupils aged 11-18 either through an Academy located on two sites, or through Kent County Council schools on separate sites. If an Academy were opened, two middle schools and the upper school would close. If an Academy were not opened, the age range of the upper school would be altered to provide for pupils 11-18. The middle schools used for the secondary phase would be altered to provide for pupils 11-16. Any middle schools not used for the secondary phase would close. Kent County Council's preferred option is the establishment of an Academy.

PRIMARY

- Eastchurch CE School (plus the addition of provision located at Warden Bay)
- Intake of 60
- Halfway Houses School - Intake of 60
- Minster-in-Sheppey School - Intake of 60
- Queenborough School - Intake of 45
- Richmond School - Intake of 60
- Rose Street School } Sheerness West - Intake of 30
- West Minster School } Federation - Intake of 60
- St Edward's RC Primary School - Intake of 30
- St George's CE School - Intake of 60

Total Intake of 465

Under these proposals all existing maintained nurseries will be retained and any future legal notice will reflect this.

SECONDARY

- An Academy located on the Minster College site (currently the upper school site) and on the Cheyne site (currently a middle school site). Within the overall Academy there would be three 'schools' on the Minster site and two 'schools' on the Cheyne site. Each school would be within the overall Academy and would offer learning to 490 pupils (including 6th form). Each school would also have the benefit of the size of the overall Academy. This would bring great opportunity for resources through economies of scale.

OR

- If an Academy was not opened, Kent County Council would retain and refurbish the buildings used for Minster College Upper School and for Cheyne Middle School and/or Danley Middle School and extend the age ranges in each school.

The options would be:

ONE

- Change the age range of Minster College Upper School from 13-18 years to 11-18 years so that it becomes a secondary school including a sixth form.
- Change the age range of Cheyne Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.
- Close Danley Middle School.

TWO

- Change the age range of Minster College Upper School from 13-18 years to 11-18 years so that it becomes a secondary school including a sixth form.
- Change the age range of Danley Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.
- Close Cheyne Middle School.

THREE

- Change the age range of Minster College Upper School from 13-18 years to 11-18 years so that it becomes a secondary school including a sixth form.
- Change the age range of Cheyne Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.
- Change the age range of Danley Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.

In any of these options there would be sufficient school places for all island pupils who want them. The total future intake into the secondary sector would be 390 at Year 7 onwards. All current pupils would be offered a place in the replacement school(s). The proposals involve a two year implementation. The change to primary schools would start in September 2008 and continue in September 2009. The secondary phase would start in September 2009.

Details of the proposals for the secondary phase can be found in the booklet entitled Public Consultation Document 2008 Planning Sheppey Schools for the future (Secondary Phase). Copies of this booklet are available from the KCC Website:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>

Hard copies can also be obtained from the schools or by writing to Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer (Canterbury & Swale), East Kent Education Office, Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ.

The reasons for proposing change to a two-tier system

- Kent County Council believes that there are many advantages in changing to a system of primary and secondary schools on the island.
- The current system of three types of schools (first, middle and upper) on the Isle of Sheppey is different from the rest of Kent, (except for one school) and from most of the country. The system cuts across the key stages of the National Curriculum (see page 2).
- A “two-tier” system would improve the education experience of pupils because they would make one change of school at 11 years instead of two changes.
- There is evidence that pupils make better progress when they have fewer changes of school.
- The present system does not fit with the Key Stages of the National Curriculum – children move schools in the middle of Key Stage 2 and again part way through Key Stage 3. Some pupils complete Key Stage 3 in the middle schools and others do not.
- A system of primary and secondary schools will be simpler and clearer for pupils and parents and will remove disadvantages like travel to middle schools at a young age.
- The opening of the new bridge offers easier links with schools in Sittingbourne. This will enable wider opportunities for pupils and staff and help to bring an integrated approach to education in Swale.
- It will be easier to recruit and retain school staff if the system is the same as the rest of Kent.
- Parents who send their children to school off the Island, because of the system operating now, will have the option of local schooling. (At present 600 leave the Island every day).
- The proposal to move to a two-tier system of education is educationally desirable whatever the precise organisation of the secondary phase.
- It is an opportunity to provide schools of the right size and type to improve education on the Island, and to deal with falling rolls.
- It could help to improve school attendance and pupil progress.
- The barriers to learning which the present system imposes could be removed.
- Kent’s Primary Strategy supports change from the current system to one of primary and secondary schools (Recommendation 16).

The next steps

From September 2008, pupils in Year 4 who would have transferred to a middle school would stay on at their first schools for Year 5. The first schools would change their age range from 4-9 to 4-11 years. The following three schools would change their intake number at Year R:-

Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School would change from 120 to 90 in September 2008 and would change from 90 to 60 in September 2009.

Halfway Houses Primary School would change from 90 to 60.

Queenborough First School would change from 60 to 45.

There are plans for Eastchurch CE Primary School to have provision at Warden Bay.

In September 2008, middle schools would not have a Year 5 and their age range would change from 9-13 to 10-13 for the 2008/09 Academic Year.

From September 2009, St George's Middle School would change its age range from 10-13 years to 4-11 years and become a primary school with an intake of 60. Pupils aged 11-13 would transfer to the secondary phase.

If an Academy were opened, Cheyne Middle School, Danley Middle School and Minster College would close. All pupils would be able to transfer to the Academy in September 2009.

If an Academy were not opened, pupils would be able to transfer to one of the secondary schools established by extending the age ranges of one or more middle schools and Minster College.

Kent County Council considers that all the options given in this document would better meet the needs of pupils than the current system.

Pupil Numbers

The forecasts show that we need to plan for the removal of a large number of surplus school places. We can achieve this as part of a move to a “two-tier” system. Otherwise, further discussions will be necessary with individual schools to reduce their entry numbers.

School capacities and rolls January 2008

School	Net CAP	Surplus/ Deficit	% Surp/Def	Total Roll
Eastchurch CE School	300	34	11.33%	266
Halfway Houses School	480	112	23.33%	368
Minster in Sheppey School	600	135	22.50%	465
Queenborough School	300	68	22.67%	232
Richmond School	300	25	8.33%	275
Rose Street School	150	16	10.67%	134
St Edward's RC School	201	31	15.42%	170
West Minster School	300	72	24.00%	228
Cheyne School	887	266	29.98%	621
Danley School	715	58	8.11%	657
St Georges CE School	421	-15	-3.56%	436
Minster College	1584	109	6.88%	1475

Note: Net Cap is the physical capacity of each school

The table below shows the current capacity and roll numbers in Sheppey Schools.

Phase	Total Net Capacity	Total Roll January 08	Current Surplus
First	2575	2097	478
Middle	2079	1755	324
Upper	1584	1475	109

* Note: Children attending St Edward's in Years 5 and 6 have been included in the Middle phase totals.

Using current roll data and taking into consideration known housing developments and existing patterns of movement of pupils it is estimated that there will be a need of 465 pupil places per year group at primary level and 390 per year group at secondary level.

Public Meetings

Kent County Council will hold meetings to hear views and comments on the proposals. Details are:

Date	Time	Venue
13 February 2008	7.00 p.m.	Danley Middle School
14 February 2008	4.30 p.m.	West Minster Primary School (for Sheerness West Federation)
27 February 2008	7.00 p.m.	Richmond First School
28 February 2008	4.00 p.m.	Eastchurch CE Primary School
28 February 2008	7.00 p.m.	Minster College
3 March 2008	7.00 p.m.	Queenborough First School
4 March 2008	4.00 p.m.	Halfway Houses Primary School
4 March 2008	7.00 p.m.	Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School
5 March 2008	7.00 p.m.	St George's CE Middle School
12 March 2008	5.30 p.m.	Cheyne Middle School

At these meetings copies of all previous consultation documents will be available. Copies are also available from the KCC website:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>

Hard copies can also be obtained from the schools or by writing to Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer (Canterbury & Swale), East Kent Education Office, Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ.

Copies of the consultation information on the proposal to establish an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey can be obtained by writing to:

Sheppey Academy Team, Mouchel, 307-317 Euston Road, London NW1 3AD.

Or information is available on the Isle of Sheppey Academy project website:

<http://www.theisleofsheppeyacademyproject.org.uk>

Officers from the Local Authority together with representatives from the Academy Consultants will be present at these meetings to clarify points of detail. An elected member of Kent County Council will chair these meetings at which interested parties will have an opportunity to put forward their views.

How do you tell us what you think?

- ◇ Complete and return the response form to:
Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer, East Kent Education Office
Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable,
Kent CT5 3QZ
By 17 March 2008.
(We will note your views but will not be able to reply individually.)
- ◇ Return your response form to your school who will forward it to the East Kent Education Office by 17 March 2008.
- ◇ Attend one of the public meetings listed on page 14.
- ◇ Email your views to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

Proposed Timetable

Timescale	Date
Period of further consultation on proposed changes	4 February to 17 March
Period of consultation ends and final date for written responses	17 March 2008
Cabinet Member decision whether or not to issue a Public Notice for the primary and secondary phases of education	20 March 2008
If a Public Notice is issued the period of the Notice would be	28 March to 9 May
Date on which a Cabinet Member decision could be made.	23 May 2008
Final date for statutory appeals	20 June 2008
Proposed implementation	Primary Phase September 2008 Secondary Phase September 2009

This document is available on:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>

If you require this document in another format, please contact your local school.

Further consultation on the proposed two-tier system of education on the Isle of Sheppey and its implementation

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 17 MARCH 2008

To: Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer, East Kent Office, Clover House
John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ
Fax: 01227 772290 (you may return this form to your school who will forward it to the Education Office)

Please let us know your views on the implementation of the change from a three-tier to a two-tier system of education.

Do you agree?

- Change to a two-tier system of education with one transfer at age 11. Yes No

Do you agree?

- with the alteration of age range of the first schools to change the schools to primary schools and the change of intake number of some of these schools from September 2008 (see page 10)
- the additional provision at Warden Bay for Eastchurch CE Primary School
- the alteration of age range at St George's CE Middle School to change the school to a primary school from September 2009

- Eastchurch CE Primary School

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school with additional provision to be build at Warden Bay.

- Halfway Houses Primary School

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

- Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School

From September 2008 the school becomes a three form entry primary school
And from September 2009 a two form entry primary school

- Queenborough First School

From September 2008 the school becomes a 1½ form entry primary school

- Richmond First School

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

- Rose Street School

From September 2008 the school becomes a one form entry primary school

- West Minster Primary School

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

- St George's CE Middle School

From September 2009 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

Yes No

Do you agree?

- The closure of Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School and from September 2009 secondary education is provided by means of an Academy

OR

Do you agree that secondary education is provided by one of the following options?

- the establishment of two maintained secondary schools on the Minster College (11-18) and Cheyne Middle School (11-16) sites. Yes No
- the establishment of two maintained secondary schools on the Minster College (11-18) and Danley Middle School (11-16) sites. Yes No
- the establishment of three maintained secondary schools on the Minster College (11-18), Cheyne Middle School (11-16) and Danley Middle School (11-16) sites. Yes No

I am:-

The parent/carer of a pupil

Name of school

.....

A pupil

Name of school

.....

A member of staff

Name of school

.....

A governor

Name of school

.....

Other interested party

Name of organisation if appropriate

.....

Name:

Address:.....

Kent County Council is a data controller under the Data protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. We will ensure that your personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and in this instance used only for the purpose of validation, which will enable a fair and just consultation.

Please let us have your comments on any aspect of these proposals that you feel are relevant across all phases of education on the Isle of Sheppey.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

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Public Consultation Document

2008

Planning Sheppey
Schools for the Future
(Secondary Phase)

Dates of Public Meetings:

Danley Middle School: 13 February at 7.00 p.m.

Minster College: 28 February at 7.00 p.m.

St George's CE Middle School: 5 March at 7.00 p.m.

Cheyne Middle School: 12 March at 5.30 p.m.

Kent County Council would like your views on proposals for the secondary phase of a two-tier system of education on the Isle of Sheppey. It would also like your views on the implications of this proposed change on individual schools.

INTRODUCTION

This public consultation document gives further details of the proposed secondary phase of a two-tier system. This document should be read alongside the public consultation document entitled 'Planning Sheppey Schools for the future 2008' which will be distributed to you by your school at the same time as this document. We consulted you with full details of our proposals for the first schools and St George's Middle School through seven separate documents in 2007. There is no change to the details contained in these documents which can be found at:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>

Hard copies can also be obtained from the schools or by writing to Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer (Canterbury & Swale), East Kent Education Office, Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ

THE PROPOSALS

The two-tier system would consist of a primary phase for pupils aged 4-11 and a secondary phase for pupils aged 11-18. If this proposal is accepted and implemented there would no longer be a middle school phase.

PRIMARY PHASE

School	Published Admission Number	Capacity
Eastchurch CE School *	60	420
Halfway Houses School	60	420
Minster-in-Sheppey School	90 Sept 08 60 Sept 09	420
Queenborough School	45	315
Richmond School	60	420
Rose Street School	30	210
West Minster School	60	420
St George's CE School	60 Sept 09	420
St Edward's RC School **	30	210

* Including provision at Warden Bay

** Note – there are no proposals to alter St Edward's RC School. It has been included in the table for completeness.

Impact on First and Middle Schools

- It is proposed that from September 2008 pupils in Year 4 who would have transferred to a middle school will stay at their first schools for Year 5. The first schools will change their age range from 4-9 years to 4-11 years.
- It is proposed that in September 2008 Danley Middle School, Cheyne Middle School and St George's CE Middle School will not have a Year 5 intake. Currently the age range for the three middle schools is 9-13 years and this would change for the 2008-09 academic year to 10-13 years.
- It is proposed that in September 2009, Year 5 will stay at their first school for Year 6, completing the change to primary schools.
- It is proposed that from September 2009 the age range of St George's CE Middle School will change from 10-13 years to 4-11 years and the school will become a primary school with an intake of 60.
- Pupils aged 11-13 attending a middle school would be able to transfer to the secondary phase in September 2009.

Secondary Phase

Academy

Kent County Council's preferred option for the secondary phase of the two-tier system is the establishment of an Academy for pupils aged 11-18. The Academy would be established on two sites, the current Cheyne Middle School and Minster College sites. Within the overall Academy there would be five 'schools', with three 'schools' on the Minster site and two 'schools' on the Cheyne site. Each school would offer learning to 490 pupils (including 6th form).

Each of the five schools within the Academy would be an individual unit managed by a Head of School. Children will remain part of their school within the Academy, with each school offering pastoral care, full curriculum, student assessment and learning support. However, from the age of 14, students will be able to choose from a wider range of subjects from across the Academy, in addition to those offered within their own home school.

The Education Brief sets out how the Academy will be organised, what the curriculum will be and the attainment targets the Academy sets itself for the first decade of its existence. Key components of the Academy Education Brief were publicised at the Academy Exhibition Events held in March 2007 and are available as follows:

http://www.theisleofsheppeyacademyproject.org.uk/acrobats/070209_Ed_Brief_Final_Draftv3_2.pdf

Information has also been made available on:

- Admission arrangements
- Governance
- Special Education Needs policy
- Behaviour Management policy

The establishment of an Academy is dependent upon the granting of a Funding Agreement from the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The Department's model funding agreement can be viewed at:
<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/academies/publications/>

Impact on Middle and Upper Schools

- Cheyne Middle School, Danley Middle School and Minster College would close on 31 August 2009, conditional upon the establishment of an Academy.
- All pupils attending Cheyne Middle School, Danley Middle School and Minster College at the time of their closure would be guaranteed a place in the new Academy from September 2009.
- From September 2009 pupils transferring from St George's CE Middle School to the secondary phase would be guaranteed a place in the new Academy.

Other Options

In the event that an Academy is not agreed for Sheppey, secondary education could be provided through the implementation of one of the options listed below.

Option 1.

- Change the age range of Minster College (upper school) from 13-18 years to 11-18 years so that it becomes a secondary school including a sixth form.
- Change the age range of Cheyne Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.
- Close Danley Middle School.

Option 2.

- Change the age range of Minster College (upper school) from 13-18 years to 11-18 years so that it becomes a secondary school including a sixth form.
- Change the age range of Danley Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.
- Close Cheyne Middle School.

Option 3.

- Change the age range of Minster College (upper school) from 13-18 years to 11-18 years so that it becomes a secondary school including a sixth form.
- Change the age range of Cheyne Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.
- Change the age range of Danley Middle School from 10-13 years to 11-16 years so that it becomes a secondary school.

SECONDARY PHASE

Academy on the Minster College and Cheyne sites		
Published Admission Number	Capacity 11-16	Sixth Form
390	1950	500 places

OR

OPTION ONE

School	Published Admission Number	Capacity 11-16	Sixth Form
Minster College	240	1200	500 places
Cheyne	150	750	-

OPTION TWO

School	Published Admission Number	Capacity 11-16	Sixth Form
Minster College	270	1350	500 places
Danley	120	600	-

OPTION THREE

School	Published Admission Number	Capacity 11-16	Sixth Form
Minster College	150	750	500 places
Cheyne	120	600	-
Danley	120	600	-

Why does Kent County Council prefer an Academy for Sheppey?

- The proposal will bring a transformation in learning to the Island's community. The range of subjects and activity offered will be unparalleled in Kent.
- The establishment of an Academy makes the best use of the national funding available for the secondary sector.
- No other option for secondary education will be able to access even refurbishment funding for several years. Kent could apply for Building Schools for the Future funding but this would not begin to materialise until 2012 and refurbishment would take place between 2012 and 2014.
- The opportunities offered by new models of teaching and learning in an Academy will greatly help staff recruitment and retention.
- If there were separate Kent County Council secondary schools there would be no economies of scale. Each would be a free standing school operating independently of the other(s). This risks a sliding scale of popularity.
- If two middle schools and the upper school were used this would create significant surplus capacity in Minster College. If only one middle school was used there would be disparity of size between the two schools.
- All sixth form provision would be on one site or there would be up to three small sixth forms giving a very limited curriculum offer.
- The range of subject and activity available at an Academy would be much greater. Separate schools would be much more limited in their curriculum offer than an Academy.

For further details on how to respond to this further consultation, a list of all public meetings and the proposed timetable, please refer to pages 13, 14 and 15 of the public consultation document entitled 'Planning Sheppey Schools for the future 2008'.

All consultation documents relating to these proposals are available on:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>

Hard copies can also be obtained from the schools or by writing to Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer (Canterbury & Swale), East Kent Education Office, Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ

Copies of the consultation information on the proposal to establish an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey can be obtained by writing to:
Sheppey Academy Team, Mouchel, 307-317 Euston Road, London NW1 3AD.
Or information is available on the Isle of Sheppey Academy project website:
<http://www.theisleofsheppeyacademyproject.org.uk>

Copies of the Education Brief can be viewed at:

http://www.theisleofsheppeyacademyproject.org.uk/acrobats/070209_Ed_Brief_Final_Draftv3_2.pdf

Copies of the Department for Children, Schools and Families model Funding Agreement can be viewed at:
<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/academies/publications/>

If you require this document in another format, please contact your local school.

Further consultation on the proposed two-tier system of education on the Isle of Sheppey and its implementation

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 17 MARCH 2008

To: Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer, East Kent Office, Clover House
John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ
Fax: 01227 772290 (you may return this form to your school who will forward it to the Education Office)

Please let us know your views on the implementation of the change from a three-tier to a two-tier system of education.

Do you agree?

- Change to a two-tier system of education with one transfer at age 11.

Yes No

Do you agree?

- with the alteration of age range of the first schools to change the schools to primary schools and the change of intake number of some of these schools from September 2008 (see page 10)
- the additional provision at Warden Bay for Eastchurch CE Primary School
- the alteration of age range at St George's CE Middle School to change the school to a primary school from September 2009

- **Eastchurch CE Primary School**

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school with additional provision to be build at Warden Bay.

- **Halfway Houses Primary School**

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

- **Minster-in-Sheppey Primary School**

From September 2008 the school becomes a three form entry primary school And from September 2009 a two form entry primary school

Yes No

- **Queenborough First School**

From September 2008 the school becomes a 1½ form entry primary school

- **Richmond First School**

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

- **Rose Street School**

From September 2008 the school becomes a one form entry primary school

- **West Minster Primary School**

From September 2008 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

- **St George's CE Middle School**

From September 2009 the school becomes a two form entry primary school

Do you agree?

- The closure of Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School and from September 2009 secondary education is provided by means of an Academy

Yes No

Do you agree that secondary education is provided by one of the following options?

- the establishment of two maintained secondary schools on the Minster College (11-18) and Cheyne Middle School (11-16) sites.
- the establishment of two maintained secondary schools on the Minster College (11-18) and Danley Middle School (11-16) sites.
- the establishment of three maintained secondary schools on the Minster College (11-18), Cheyne Middle School (11-16) and Danley Middle School (11-16) sites.

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

I am:-

The parent/carer of a pupil

Name of school

.....

A pupil

Name of school

.....

A member of staff

Name of school

.....

A governor

Name of school

.....

Other interested party

Name of organisation if appropriate

.....

Name:

Address:.....

Kent County Council is a data controller under the Data protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. We will ensure that your personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and in this instance used only for the purpose of validation, which will enable a fair and just consultation.

Please let us have your comments on any aspect of these proposals that you feel are relevant across all phases of education on the Isle of Sheppey.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.



*“To challenge young people to
achieve educationally and to contribute
to the regeneration of the Island.”*



INNOVATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIONAL

Small schools

- ☀ Five small schools within the Academy to allow all the advantages of ownership, security and belonging that the smaller organisation will bring

Stage not age

- ☀ A 'stage not age' approach, allowing early GCSE, GCE and Diploma entry where appropriate
- ☀ A curriculum structure that supports those students not yet ready for Key Stage 4 level work, but will allow them to continue their core studies, starting option courses as appropriate to them

Recovery programmes

- ☀ A specifically created programme for students in Years 7 and 8 who need additional support with literacy, numeracy and other skills
- ☀ Support will continue into Years 9, 10 and 11 through the learning support element in the option blocks

Innovative teaching and learning

- ☀ Continuing professional development of teachers will focus on supporting the widest possible range of teaching skills and an understanding of learning styles

Rich vocational curriculum

- ☀ The Academy will enhance student motivation by making the broadest possible vocational course offer, focusing primarily on the new specialist diplomas
- ☀ The Government's project aimed at students aged 14 – 19 will be embraced enthusiastically, including collaboration within and beyond the Island

Modern technologies

- ☀ Modern technologies will be incorporated into teaching and learning in a way that strengthens key ICT skills and supports good learning practice

Student engagement and personalised learning

- ☀ Regular monitoring of students, including setting targets and agreeing strategies for improvement and progress
- ☀ Ensuring students understand where learning is successful and are able to make decisions about improvement
- ☀ An in-school support team to manage assessment
- ☀ Assessment for learning will be a key focus of staff development

OVERVIEW

The proposal is for an Academy to be opened in September 2009 for students aged 11-18 years old on the existing Minster College and Cheyne Middle School sites. This publication provides you with the latest available information on the proposal that will shape the future of education in your local community.

The Academy would have places for 2450 students, including a sixth form, across the two sites. The proposal is that there will be five 'schools', with three on the East site (Minster College) and two on the West Site (Cheyne Middle School), subject to further surveys and design work. Each of these schools will have some 490 students (including sixth form) and will be based on a vertical tutoring structure with students from Years 7 to 13. Each school will provide the pastoral support for its students and will be the focus for inter-school competitions. Students will receive much of their education within their own school. In addition there will be shared specialist facilities for those students who choose to take subjects outside their school, such as sport, music or drama. The Academy will use state-of-the-art ICT not currently available in Sheppey schools.

Working in partnership, the sponsors want to create a relevant and stimulating learning environment with a curriculum offer that provides an exciting blend of core, academic and vocational provision. The aim is to embed excellence and success in the new Academy to help raise educational achievement on the Isle of Sheppey.

Subject to a Funding Agreement, the Government will invest some £46 million of capital funding to transform education for secondary age pupils on the Island. Significant additional funding will be invested by Kent County Council.

The proposed Academy will operate in existing buildings that will have undergone some refurbishment before moving into modern Academy buildings in September 2012. Students from Minster College and the three Middle Schools have begun the process of design development at the Sorrell Foundation, working with the Principal Designate, Dr Paul Mortimer, and members of staff from their own schools. Students will be involved at all stages of the process, so that the sponsors' vision for the buildings also reflects the students' vision and aspirations.

What is an Academy?

An Academy is a new type of secondary school, designed to meet the needs of young people in the 21st century. Academies were initially created in challenging inner city locations. Their success in transforming education in these areas has prompted the Government to expand the programme to all parts of England.

Academies aim to raise the achievement of all students to a level that will rival those of the best maintained schools in England.

Academies are independently governed, state-funded schools providing free education to all students. Academies are free of local authority control and have freedom to innovate in ways that are not readily available to maintained schools. For example, they may provide a teaching and learning environment that is comparable with the best in the maintained sector and offer a broad and balanced curriculum to students of all abilities, developing expertise in one or more specialisms which contribute to the way the diverse curriculum is delivered.

Academies, once up and running, receive equivalent funding to other secondary schools in the county.

Academies, like secondary schools, are subject to regular inspections by Ofsted and have a duty to ensure that students are supported in achieving the five 'Every Child Matters' (www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) outcomes and in promoting community cohesion. The Sheppey Academy will also seek to collaborate with other Swale primary and secondary schools, and further education providers to ensure the development of best practice in teaching and learning.

THE VISION AND ETHOS

The vision for your proposed Academy is to develop a values-based school underpinned by a Christian ethos, with an approach to teaching and learning that is reflected in the way the Academy is organised, develops relationships and promotes human values.

Students will benefit from a small school environment that will foster a greater sense of belonging, while benefiting from the economies of scale of a larger organisation.

The proposed Academy will have high expectations, transformational leadership and personalised curriculum pathways for students, leading to improved educational achievements and enhanced opportunities as they prepare for, and move into, adult life. This will be achieved through the offer of two pathways to success – the academic and the vocational – which will co-exist in order that students can change their pathways and still succeed, or may choose to follow elements of both.

Each student will be provided with an individual pathway to success. This will mean enrichment programmes in English or Mathematics for some students, while others, who want to, will be able to take early GCSEs.

The Academy will place a strong emphasis on providing high quality, personalised, relevant education, in order to equip young people so that they leave prepared to lead full, creative and responsible adult lives in the 21st century.

The proposed Academy will seek to be at the heart of the Island for all forms and styles of education, engendering high aspirations for both students and families. It will provide flexible learning routes into further study, whether through further or higher education, or work-based learning. Sponsors will ensure that the Academy plays a full part in the local community and operates as an extended school serving local needs.

To achieve these goals, a professional development programme for all staff will be put in place in the academic year before the proposed Academy would open.

Academy Specialisms

The Academy will have the joint specialisms of Business & Enterprise, and Sport, and the concept of a rich and varied curriculum will include additional specialisms.

ADMISSIONS

The Academy will operate in accordance with the national School Admissions Code of Practice within the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for maintained schools in Kent, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Education Act 2002 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006. As a member of the Admissions Forum, the Academy will have admission and over-subscription criteria consistent with maintained secondary schools in Kent.

There will be no faith basis for admissions to the Academy.

The Academy will actively promote inclusion, in line with Kent's policy, so that young people experiencing additional needs are enabled to succeed. The Academy will also work with local schools to contribute to the achievement of inclusive outcomes for potentially vulnerable or challenging pupils.

Children with special educational needs (SEN)

Children with SEN will be fully catered for and welcomed in the proposed Academy, which will ensure that every child had a full entitlement to the curriculum and that his/her needs are met.

The Academy will adopt the model policy for SEN required for all Academies as part of their funding agreement. Examples of funding agreements (usually Annex 3) can be viewed on the DCSF Freedom of Information website at www.dcsf.gov.uk/foischeme

The proposed Academy attaches considerable importance to a fully inclusive approach in the Academy and will embrace the 'Every Child Matters' agenda in its organisation. The model funding agreement sets out how Academies are required to follow admission law to cater for children of all abilities and must have regard to the SEN code of practice and statutory guidance on inclusion.

An Academy's independent status does not affect parents' rights to appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal. The rights of parents are protected. The Academy SEN Dispute resolution pack outlines details of a free and entirely voluntary service set up to facilitate timely and satisfactory decisions, made at a local level, about the naming of an Academy in a child's statement. The pack sets out information about the process of admissions to an Academy for a child with a statement of SEN, and details the roles and responsibilities of all parties, including the Academy, local authority, parents and child.

Buildings

The Academy is scheduled to open in existing buildings on the Minster College and Cheyne Middle School sites in September 2009, following some essential refurbishment and maintenance work.

It is planned that new Academy buildings will open in the Autumn Term of 2012. Students from Minster College and the three Middle Schools are contributing to work on the development of the design, along with the Principal Designate, Dr Mortimer, and staff from their schools.

In addition to funding the new buildings, the Government provides additional "start-up" funding for the Academy to ensure that it is prepared, from the outset, to deliver the curriculum as outlined in the Education Brief.

Staff

It is expected that the majority of staff will transfer to the new Academy under the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) arrangements.

Sponsors recognise that continuity with good teachers and strong associate staff is a key element of a successful school and are keen to develop a culture of continuous improvement that offers all staff the opportunity to improve their professional and personal skills. Along with the sponsors, the Principal Designate plans to develop an exciting and supportive environment that attracts, supports and retains the best people at all levels of the Academy organisation.

14-19 PROGRAMME

The Academy will provide students aged 11-18 years old with innovative opportunities supported through partnerships with local providers to deliver the 14-19 curriculum and to promote lifelong learning.

The proposed Isle of Sheppey Academy will develop a 14-19 programme that will raise aspiration, support progression and increase the number of young people in education post-16 through employment or training, offering a range of academic and vocational courses.

The Academy will offer young people access to the Government's new specialised diplomas; qualifications that provide an exciting, stretching and relevant programme of learning for young people from all backgrounds and of all abilities. Each diploma will contain pathways to accommodate a wide range of aspirations that will assist in preparation for the most demanding university courses as well as to entry into the workforce directly from diploma studies. They will be suitable for young people who enjoy the challenge and stimulation of developing knowledge and skills in a real world environment.

There will be four option blocks. Optional subjects will include both GCSE and the diplomas and will include a learning support element for those students not ready for a wide range of study options.

Students who achieve their Level 2 qualification at the end of Year 10 may negotiate a transfer directly to Year 12.

Extension and Enrichment

The proposed Academy will play a key role in the area by opening its doors to the local community to deliver a broader provision of courses for adults and enabling local groups to use its new facilities. The Academy will be a social and learning hub situated at the heart of the community, reflecting and serving its needs.

There will be an extensive co-curricular programme which will focus on two broad areas, Sport and General Culture (including performing arts, chess, debating, general knowledge) to take advantage of the outstanding facilities that will be offered and the staff expertise available.

The co-curricular programme will be supplemented by a wide range of study opportunities open to all students.

THE PROCESS

The process of opening an Academy on the Island is currently at feasibility stage, now scheduled to be completed by June 2008, when a submission for a Funding Agreement will be made. The feasibility stage has included wide public consultation with staff, governors, parents, students, local communities, nearby schools, local councils and other interested parties. Feedback from the consultation has informed the proposal throughout.

As part of the process of creating the proposed Academy, Kent County Council (KCC) must consult on proposals for the reorganisation of primary and secondary elements of a new two-tier education structure on Sheppey.

The issue of Public Notices confirming proposals for the primary and secondary phases of a new two-tier education structure on Sheppey will be subject to the outcome of this phase of KCC's consultation.

KCC will be leading ten public consultation meetings during the Spring Term 2008 to which they are inviting all members of the Island community. Representatives from the Academy project team will also be present at the meetings to provide information about the Academy proposal.

The Council's meetings will give you the opportunity to find out more about what the changes could mean for you. It is also your chance to ask questions and to contribute to the debate on educational transformation on Sheppey. All feedback received, including at the public meetings, will be fully considered by KCC.

Making your views known

March Academy Briefing Events

The Academy project team want to make sure that the latest information about the Academy proposal is made widely available, giving everyone the opportunity to feel that the decisions they make about the future education of their children are based on up-to-date information.

If you would like to find out more about the proposal, ask questions or make comments to us in person, please come to the Academy briefing events in March. These will also be advertised in the local press.

WHEN TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2008
WHERE EAST SITE (MINSTER COLLEGE)
TIME 4.00PM – 6.00PM

WHEN WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2008
WHERE WEST SITE (CHEYNE MIDDLE SCHOOL)
TIME 7.00PM - 9.00PM

The closing date for the formal period of Academy consultation will be: 17 March 2008

Please note that Kent County Council is holding separate public consultation meetings on the organisation of Sheppey schools in the future.

If you would like to discuss any issues or to make your views known, you may submit comments via the website, or directly by email to Rob McMenamin, Project Manager, at: rob.mcmenamin@mouchel.com or write to:

Rob McMenamin
Mouchel Group
307-317 Euston Road
London
NW1 3AD

Further information about the proposed Academy can be found at:

www.theisleofsheppeyacademyproject.org.uk



Other useful websites:

Every Child Matters www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
Academies website www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/academies
Partnerships for Schools www.p4s.org.uk
Kent County Council www.kent.gov.uk

.....so, what does this mean for my child

My child is currently in	September 2007	September 2008	September 2009	September 2010
Reception First School	Year 1 First School	Year 2 Primary School	Year 3 Primary School	Year 4 Primary School
Year 1 First School	Year 2 First School	Year 3 Primary School	Year 4 Primary School	Year 5 Primary School
Year 2 First School	Year 3 First School	Year 4 Primary School	Year 5 Primary School	Year 6 Primary School
Year 3 First School	Year 4 First School	Year 5 Primary School	Year 6 Primary School	Year 7 Secondary Phase
Year 4 First School	Year 5 Middle School	Year 6 Middle School	Year 7 Secondary Phase	Year 8 Secondary Phase

	Current First Schools
	Current Middle Schools
	Proposed Primary Phase
	Secondary Phase



Children, Families & Education Directorate

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.....so, what does this mean for my child

My child is currently in	September 2007	September 2008	September 2009	September 2010
Year 4 First School	Year 5 St George's CE	Year 6 St George's CE	Year 7 Secondary Phase	Year 8 Secondary Phase
Year 5 St George's CE	Year 6 St George's CE	Year 7 St George's	Year 8 Secondary Phase	Year 9 Secondary Phase
Year 6 St George's CE	Year 7 St George's CE	Year 8 St George's CE	Year 9 Secondary Phase	Year 10 Secondary Phase
Year 7 St George's CE	Year 8 St George's CE	Year 9 Secondary Phase	Year 10 Secondary Phase	Year 11 Secondary Phase
Year 8 St George's CE	Year 9 Upper School	Year 10 Secondary Phase	Year 11 Secondary	Year 12 (Post 16)

	First School
	St George's CE Middle School
	Upper School
	Secondary Phase
	Post 16



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PROPOSED CHANGE OF THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION ON THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents distributed: **7000 copies of each document**
 Responses received **536**

TABLE 1

Change to a two-tier system of education with one transfer at age 11.

	Support	Against	No view given	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school	328	60	5	393
Member of staff	75	15	1	91
Governor	20	1	0	21
Pupil attending a Sheppey school	19	9	3	31
Other	39	4	1	44
TOTAL	444	83	9	536

TABLE 2

The alteration of age range of the first schools and St George's CE Middle School
 The addition of provision at Warden Bay for Eastchurch CE School

	Support	Against	No view given	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school	312	58	23	393
Member of staff	74	16	1	91
Governor	20	1	0	21
Pupil attending a Sheppey school	22	6	3	31
Other	39	4	1	44
TOTAL	428	81	27	536

TABLE 3

The closure of Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School and from September 2009 secondary education is provided by means of an Academy

	Support	Against	No view given	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school	156	197	40	393
Member of staff	54	32	5	91
Governor	12	7	2	21
Pupil attending a Sheppey school	13	15	3	31
Other	31	13	0	44
TOTAL	243	247	46	536

TABLE 4

If an Academy is not built, which option do you prefer?
 Secondary provision to be provided by the establishment of two maintained schools
 (Minster College & Cheyne Middle School sites)

	Support	Against	No view given	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school	57	146	190	393
Member of staff	21	26	44	91
Governor	3	1	17	21
Pupil attending a Sheppey school	4	13	14	31
Other	4	23	17	44
TOTAL	82	202	252	536

TABLE 5

Secondary provision to be provided by the establishment of two secondary schools
 (Minster College and Danley Middle School sites).

	Support	Against	No view given	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school	47	141	205	393
Member of staff	9	28	54	91
Governor	3	2	16	21
Pupil attending a Sheppey school	5	11	15	31
Other	0	24	20	44
TOTAL	62	198	276	536

TABLE 6

Secondary provision to be provided by the establishment of three secondary schools
 (Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School sites)

	Support	Against	No view given	Total
Parent of a child in a Sheppey school	220	65	108	393
Member of staff	33	16	42	91
Governor	10	3	8	21
Pupil attending a Sheppey school	20	4	7	31
Other	7	21	16	44
TOTAL	266	108	162	536

Please note: The totals on the bottom line of each table refer to the number of individual responses received. Some of these responses fitted into more than one category and are counted separately in each category but only once in the total.

TABLE 7

Summary of tables 1 to 6 given as a percentage of total responses.

Proposal	Support	Against	No View given
Change to a two-tier system	82.8%	15.5%	1.7%
Primary phase proposals	79.9%	15.1%	5.0%
Secondary education provided by means of an Academy	45.3%	46.1%	8.6%
Option 1 - Secondary education provided by two maintained schools (Minster and Cheyne)	15.3%	37.7%	47.0%
Option 2 – Secondary education provided by two maintained schools (Minster and Danley)	11.6%	36.9%	51.5%
Option 3 – Secondary education provided by three maintained schools (Minster, Cheyne and Danley)	49.6%	20.1%	30.2%

In addition to the 536 responses received, as detailed in the above tables, a further 56 responses were disallowed. In the main these were duplicates, where individuals submitted multiple forms.

There was a range of responses from those connected with each of the schools in Sheppey. By far the largest number came from those associated with Danley Middle School (142).

There was clear support for the proposal to change to a 2-tier system, with the specific proposals for the First Schools and St George's CE receiving similar support. The majority of responses from each of the schools supported the proposals for change.

The academy proposal divided opinion almost equally. The largest group opposed to the proposed academy had a connection with Danley Middle school, the 114 responses against representing 46% of all of those opposed. Of the alternative options should an academy not be built, none attracted widespread support, the option of 3 secondary schools being most favoured by just under half of those who responded.

A petition signed by 78 pupils of Westminster School was presented to the chairman during one of the public consultation meetings. The document stated that the pupils wanted to stay in their primary school after Year 4. Another petition of 300 signatures in support of the change to a 2-tier system of education was subsequently received.

The following were received after the main body of the paper went to print:

- A communication was received from the school council of Highsted Grammar School in support of the proposals. “..Young people on Sheppey deserve the provision offered to those living in Sittingbourne and the implementation of an academy could help the reputation of schools..”
- Mr Rupert Bristow, Diocesan Director of Education send a response on behalf of the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education agreeing with the proposed change to a two-tier system, the proposals for the primary phase and that secondary education is provided by means of an Academy.

“These proposals hold the key to significant educational developments on the Island which will be challenging for all concerned but which can both accompany and spearhead lasting economic regeneration and community cohesion.”

- The Local member, Angela Harrison submitted the following:

"I wholeheartedly support the proposal to move from a three tier system of education to a two tier one. I genuinely believe this would be in the best interests of the children and really don't know why Sheppey did not get changed back to two tier when almost the rest of Kent did.

As far as the secondary phase is concerned, I am concerned at the misinformation that seems to be going round. The Government do not force Academies on communities. They have a fund for Academies which LEAs can apply to. This Authority, for its own reasons, decided to apply for funding for an Academy.

I have come to the conclusion that an Academy will give the impetus needed for first class secondary education on Sheppey. Our 3 Middle Schools have by and large been successful, but their students have been let down by Minster College (formerly Sheppey Comprehensive). Students have done well in spite of Minster College rather than because of it, but how much better could they have done if we had had a decent system of education? My residents believe that they have been let down by their Local Education Authority for over 30 years as far as the third tier of education on the Island is concerned.

I believe that the Academy vision expounded by Dr. Paul Mortimer (Principal-Designate) is the right thing for the Isle of Sheppey now and have no hesitation in giving it my support."

The following public meeting took place after the main body of the paper went to print

Cheyne Middle School

Public Meeting held on Wednesday 12 March, 5.30 p.m.

Approximately 40 people attended the public meeting.

A summary of the Acting Headteacher's views given at the public meeting:

- This school has been acknowledged as the school with the eighth best sustained improvements in KS 3 nationally.
- The debate has been dogged by misunderstanding and misinformation.
- I am not going to argue for the continuation of the middle schools despite the number of Ofsted reports that support the successful job they have done and are doing.
- The Academy must stand on its own merits and not be sold to Sheppey parents because it comes with £54m.
- One of the main things that Islanders have made very clear repeatedly and throughout both consultations is that they want a genuine choice of secondary schools at age 11.
- Parents should treat the choice of sending their children to a school in Sittingbourne with caution as there may not be places available.
- The Academy plans are currently too vague to earn the support of the Sheppey community.
- If there is not an Academy, Sheppey people are being asked to make choices with restricted and limited information.
- Personally I would like middle schools to remain and to carry on with their excellent work and Minster College to continue to improve.

- If the people want to change to a two-tier system, we must embrace the change and make sure that the secondary phase of education on Sheppey meets the children's needs and gains the support and involvement of parents and the community.
- The staff must be encouraged to remain in the system whatever it looks like.
- It is time to stop bickering amongst ourselves and show a united front to obtain the best possible option for the children of Sheppey.
- We must work hard to make sure Sheppey is offered what it has always asked for, a clear choice of schools with different specialisms at the secondary phase and of course it is not impossible for the Academy to offer this.

The Chair of Governors chose not to speak at the meeting.

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