

## EXECUTIVE DECISION

**From:** Shelina Prendergast, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills  
Matt Dunkley CBE, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

**To:** Children's and Young People's Cabinet Committee – 14 September 2021

**Subject:** Proposal to permanently expand Borden Grammar School, Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, ME10 4DB from 120 places to 150 places for September 2022.

### Decision Number and Title

**Proposal to permanently expand Borden Grammar School, Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, ME10 4DB from 120 places to 150 places for September 2022.**

### Key decision

- *It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions*
- *It involves expenditure or savings of more than £1m*

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of report: N/A**

**Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision**

### Electoral Division:

Sittingbourne South – John Wright  
Sittingbourne North – Mike Dendor  
Swale West – Mike Baldock  
Swale East – Rich Lehmann

**Summary:** This report sets out the need for additional Grammar school capacity in the Sittingbourne and Sheppey Grammar planning area. Forecasts indicate a deficit of up to 60 Year 7 places for 2021 and a continual need through the plan period of between 1.5FE and 2FE in additional selective school places. Discussions have been held with both grammar schools in Sittingbourne and each school has agreed to progress a 1FE expansion, delivering a total of 60 additional temporary places from September 2021 with a permanent expansion for September 2022.

### Recommendation(s):

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

- to provide £5.460m from the Children, Young People and Education Capital Budget for the permanent expansion of Borden Grammar School by 1FE for September 2022.

- ii. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts / agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- iii. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24 identified the need to commission additional capacity in the Sittingbourne and Sheppey selective planning group.
- 1.2 2021-25 forecasts indicate a deficit of up to -64 Year 7 places for 2022 and a continual need throughout the plan period of between 1.5FE and 2.5FE of additional selective school places.
- 1.3 The increase in the number of births from 2008 to 2012, inward migration and house building has increased the forecast need for both non-selective and selective school places in the Sittingbourne and Sheppey planning area. The peak pressure on year 7 places in Sittingbourne and Sheppey is the 2023 to 2024 academic year.
- 1.4 There are two Grammar schools in the Sittingbourne and Sheppey planning group: Borden Grammar School (Boys) and Highsted Grammar School (Girls). For several years both grammar schools have offered over their Published Admission Number, however they are no longer able to offer any additional places from September 2022 without additional accommodation that would enable them to expand by 1FE on a permanent basis. Discussions have been held with both grammar schools in Sittingbourne and each school has agreed to progress a 1FE expansion, delivering a total of 60 additional places from September 2022.
- 1.5 The tables below show the additional selective places required if no further action is taken across both the Canterbury and Faversham and Sittingbourne and Sheppey selective planning groups. These figures do not include any spare capacity required for in-year admissions, or growth related to housing from any new developments

### Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2019-20 capacity	2019-20 (A)	2020-21 (F)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2024-25 (F)	2025-26 (F)	2026-27 (F)	2026-27 capacity
Canterbury & Faversham Selective	605	-40	-33	-27	-30	-34	-30	-21	-23	605
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	270	-11	-46	-64	-47	-72	-66	-62	-49	240

## Years 7-11 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2019-20 capacity	2019-20 (A)	2020-21 (F)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2024-25 (F)	2025-26 (F)	2026-27 (F)	2026-27 capacity
Canterbury & Faversham Selective	2,905	-139	-152	-137	-140	-147	-140	-128	-121	3,025
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	1,260	-51	-73	-123	-157	-220	-275	-291	-276	1,200

## 2. The Proposal

2.1 This proposal will help to secure our ambition “to ensure that Kent’s young people have access to the education, work and skills opportunities necessary to support Kent business to grow and be increasingly competitive in the national and international economy” as set out in ‘Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council’s Strategic Statement (2017 - 2022)’.

2.2 A curriculum analysis and full feasibility has been undertaken to identify the requirements and scope of the 1FE expansion. The feasibility identified that there would need to be both internal reconfiguration to the current school buildings and a new block to accommodate additional sports facilities and classrooms. The feasibility indicated the following additional accommodation will be required to meet the needs of the additional students:

- Dining and kitchen expansion
- 1 x science room
- 4 x general classrooms
- 1 x IT classroom
- 3 court sports hall with changing facilities and toilets
- Additional office space
- Additional toilets
- 2 x temporary modular classrooms for September 2021.

2.3 Planning permission was submitted at the beginning of July 2021 with a decision expected by September 2021.

2.4 Borden Grammar School Academy Trust held an education consultation between 29 March 2021 and 24 May 2021. A total of 6 written responses were received and half were supportive of the proposal. A summary of the responses and additional comments can be found in appendix 1.

	Support	Undecided/Not stated	Against	Total
Parents/Carers				
Pupils				
Members of Staff	1			

<b>Governor</b>				
<b>Other Interested Parties</b>	2		3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>

2.5 The Headteacher and Governing body of Borden Grammar School are fully supportive of the expansion project.

2.6 Borden Grammar School is a well-respected and popular school in the local area. The Area Education Officer for East Kent fully supports the expansion of Borden Grammar School.

2.7 A meeting was held on 23 June 2021 with the Cabinet Member for Education and the KCC members for Sittingbourne to discuss the proposed project, including planning concerns raised by some residents, the interface with plans for the Avenue of Remembrance and developments for Sittingbourne town centre. Options for the siting of the required additional buildings were discussed.

### **3. Financial Implications**

3.1 The capital allocation of £5.460m is to deliver a programme providing the additional general and specialist classrooms plus a new sports hall to meet the additional pupil place need. The school's current published admission number (PAN) is 120. The £5.460m has been agreed based on a full feasibility and curriculum analysis against BB103 requirements for a 5FE school. This figure is in line with the DfE's benchmark figures for an expansion of a secondary school by 1FE.

3.2 The school will receive increased revenue funding through their Delegated Budget. The rising rolls will be protected in line with KCC Growth Funding Policy. Revenue funding will also be allocated to enable the school to resource each new classroom as they come online. At present this is at a value of £6,000 per classroom.

### **4. Legal implications**

4.1 Borden Grammar School will be required to complete a full Business Case to the ESFA regarding the expansion of the school by 1FE.

4.2 The provision of sufficient school places is a statutory duty and contributes to the Strategic Business Plan Priorities to ensure that "Children and Young People in Kent get the best start in life

### **5. Equalities implications**

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced and the assessment identified the following positive impacts:

- Sufficient year 7 places will be provided for September 2022 intake.
- Year 7 pupils will be able attend Grammar school provisions in their locality
- More pupils will be able to attend a good or outstanding school.

No adverse impacts were identified during the assessment.

## **6. Other corporate implications**

6.1 None identified.

## **7. Governance**

7.1 The Officer Scheme of Delegation; under Appendix 2 part 4 of the Council's Constitution provides a clear and appropriate link between this decision and the actions needed to implement it. The proposed decision will authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council. It will also authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

## **8. Conclusions**

8.1 Without the additional selective capacity created by the permanent expansion at Borden Grammar School, there will not be sufficient Year 7 grammar places available in Sittingbourne to meet demand. This would result in children having to travel to other districts or planning groups for their Grammar education and would further increase transport costs for KCC. The expansion of Borden Grammar School by 1FE also means that boys requiring a grammar school place will also be able to secure a place at their local grammar school alongside girls securing places at Highsted due to their expansion by 1 Form of Entry within the same timeframe.

## **9. Recommendation(s):**

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

- i. to provide £5.460m from the Children, Young People and Education Capital Budget for the permanent expansion of Borden Grammar School by 1FE for September 2022.
- ii. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts / agreements on behalf of the County Council
- iii. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

## 10. Background Documents

- 10.1 Consultation documents  
<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/borden-grammar-school>
- 10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision  
[www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision](http://www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision)
- 10.3 Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020.  
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/increasing-opportunities-improving-outcomes>

## 11. Contact details

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