

EXECUTIVE DECISION

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

To:

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: 22/00011

Key decision

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

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: Children's and Young People's Cabinet Committee - 1 March 2022

Cabinet Member Decision: 21/00069

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 reiterates the need for the expansion of Borden Grammar School from a PAN of 120 to 150. The rationale for the expansion was set out in the report to Cabinet Committee of the 14 September 2022. It requests permission to allocate an additional £1.515m. from the Basic Need capital budget to the build programme. This will take the cost of the build programme from £5.46m which was agreed in September 2021, to a total of £6.975m, required for the school to accommodate the additional pupils. 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. The expansion will ensure sufficient Grammar School places for students in Sittingbourne and Sheppey.

Recommendation(s):

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

i. increase the funding allocated to expand Borden Grammar School from £5.46m to £6.975m through providing an additional £1.515 million from the Basic Need capital budget.

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 to ensure sufficient Grammar School places.

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 areas. The peak pressure on year 7 places in Sittingbourne and Sheppey is the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

1.4 The tables below show the additional selective places required if no further action is taken Sittingbourne and Sheppey selective planning group. (KCP 2021-2025) 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
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
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	1,260	-51	-73	-123	-157	-220	-275	-291	-276	1,200

The tables below (KCP2022-2026) show the updated forecasts which include both the 1FE expansion projects at Highsted Grammar School and Borden Grammar School.

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

Planning Group	2020-21 capacity	2020-21 (A)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2024-25 (F)	2025-26 (F)	2026-27 capacity (F)	2027-28 capacity (F)	2027-28 capacity
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	270	-12	-65	13	-9	-4	4	13	-6	300

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

Planning Group	2020-21 capacity	2020-21 (A)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2024-25 (F)	2025-26 (F)	2026-27 capacity (F)	2027-28 capacity (F)	2027-28 capacity
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	1,290	-42	-97	-72	-73	-60	-44	34	16	1,500

2. Background

2.1 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.

2.2 The outcome of the consultation was reported to the September 2021 Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.

2.3 The report taken in September 2021 to the Children and Young People's and Education Cabinet Committee agreed to the allocation of funding of £5,460m and stated:

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.

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

2.4 The proposal was delayed going to planning until January 2022 and therefore the cost for the project has now been revised following detailed surveys and adjustments to the designs following feedback from planning officers. The cost

has increased from £5.460m to £6.975m. There are a number of reasons for the increase including.

- Increased market inflation costs over the delay period.
- Additional design options and investigations required as a result of questions and challenges to the original proposals which were required for the planning application to evidence chosen location as the best and only viable solution.
- Additional surveys and design for logistics routes required for Highways consultee for planning application
- Additional artwork to side of the new Sports Hall as part of planning condition to complement the environment of the Avenue of Remembrance
- Additional ecology conditions applied due to proximity to Avenue of Remembrance and building on green land.
- PV panels required to be installed to roof of new build as part of additional planning conditions (building had met (spirit of) very good BREEAM without PV, therefore only space and structural provision had been allowed for on the roof within the original design)
- Additional abnormal costs
 - Internal alternations to existing building
 - Kitchen extension
 - 3x low voltage electricity cable diversions
 - Gas line extension for kitchen extension
 - Piled foundations due to high water level
 - Increased drainage and soakaway provisions due to street and school drainage not being sufficient to facilitate new build
 - Re-design due to structural implications within existing building (original proposal was to retain additional science lab with current suite of science labs)

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The additional capital allocation of £1.515m, taking the cost of the build project from £5.46m to £6.975m, will enable the delivery of a programme that will provide the additional general and specialist classrooms plus a new sports hall to meet the additional pupil place need. Developer Contributions amounting to £3,079,650.77 have been sought towards Grammar expansions in Sittingbourne. Of this £313,229.77 has been secured and agreed with a total of £72,658.64 received. £2,725,561 has been requested but is currently unsecured. £40,860 has been refused.
- 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 and submit a full Business Case to the ESFA regarding the expansion of the school by 1FE now that planning has been secured.

- 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 Planning and Highways were consulted for the planning application and planning was agreed on 19 January 2022.

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 funding for this project the additional places will not be delivered and the permanent expansion at Borden Grammar School will not be able to progress, resulting in insufficient Year 7 grammar places 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):

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

- i. to increase the funding allocated to expand Borden Grammar School from £5.46m to £6.975m, providing £1.515m additional funding from the Basic Need capital budget.

- 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 Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee report for Borden Grammar School 14 September 2022 Decision Number 21/00069
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2522>
- 10.2 Consultation documents
<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/borden-grammar-school>
- 10.3 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision
www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision
- 10.4 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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