

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

**To:** Shellina Prendergast, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

**Subject:** Notification of an increase in costs to install adequate water supply and hydrants for the proposal to expand Gravesend Grammar School, Church Walk, Gravesend, Kent, DA12, as previously determined by the Cabinet Member on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 by Decision No 19/00083.

**Decision Number:** 22/00066

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper** Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee, 19 July 2022

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

**Electoral Division:** Gravesend East, Jordan Meade and Alan Ridgers

**Summary:**

This report notifies the Cabinet Member of the increase in costs of £0.9m to the proposal to expand Gravesend Grammar School, Church Walk, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2PR, increasing the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 174 places to 210 places from September 2021.

**Recommendation:**

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

- (i) Agree to the increase in costs of the project of £0.9m making the total project cost £8.5m.
- (ii) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel 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. Kent County Council (KCC) as the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out our future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education

Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the plan can be viewed from this link:

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

- 1.2. KCC forecasts within the Kent Commissioning Plan 2019-2023, indicated a growing demand for Year 7 places in Gravesham from the start of the 2019-20 academic year. The Gravesend and Longfield Selective Planning Group was forecast to have a deficit of 36 Year 7 places (1FE) from 2019-20 that increased to a deficit of 62 places (2FE) for the 2021-22 intake and increases again to 99 places (3.3FE) by 2023/24.
- 1.3. Gravesend Grammar School had a Published Admission Number of 174, but has in the past, offered extra places through appeals.
- 1.4. KCC proposed an expansion of the school to take the PAN to 210 (7FE). Due to delays to the project, the school still only has a permanent infrastructure that can accommodate a PAN of 174. There is a temporary two storey block on site that offers additional accommodation, facilitating the extra 36 places. To permanently expand Gravesend Grammar School, KCC are proposing the removal of the temporary block and the building of a new block at the school, together with other infill and enhancement work to social spaces. This work was originally intended to be completed before the September 2021 intake, but the scheme is currently ongoing. This build will enable the school to permanently offer 210 Year 7 each year, in the future.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. Redevelopment works at Gravesend Grammar School are underway to construct two new buildings; a new Teaching Block and Canteen building, plus associated demolition of redundant buildings and new landscaping, as part of a £7.6m scheme. The works are being completed by Baxall Construction.
- 2.2. However, the need for two new fire hydrants at Gravesend Grammar School has been identified and advised by Kent Fire & Rescue. The existing School does not have any fire hydrants on site and the original tendered design and scope did not include any fire hydrants within the project as they were not deemed to be a requirement at that time.
- 2.3. When the specification was produced, consideration was given regarding sprinklers and water supply. An approach was made to the Fire and Rescue Service to get their view via building control (Sweco/MLM), with the advice that because a fire tender could reach the front doors of the teaching block there was no need for hydrants. A sprinkler assessment was also done and concluded they weren't required.
- 2.4. As the design evolved, the Fire Safety Act 2021 came into force in April 2021. As a result of this, Kent Fire & Rescue were asked again to confirm that there was no

need for hydrants. At the time of going to tender and despite numerous chases, no response had been received.

- 2.5. Given the fact that we have never been asked to make any such provision on any of our school expansion schemes, and that nothing had been received from Kent Fire and Rescue, this issue was omitted from the tender requirement. KCC started on site in August 2021, and then a response was received from the Fire Service, via Building Control in November 2021.
- 2.6. KCC Infrastructure now believe that this will be the position going forward for any major building schemes and therefore KCC Infrastructure will need to factor in provision for either a sprinkler system or hydrants in future.
- 2.7. Based on the flow rates stipulated by Kent Fire & Rescue Service (2100 litres/minute) and that the British Standard requires that enough water for 45 minutes is provided, this equates to a total of 94,500 litres of water must be provided for each building. The mains flow offered by Southern Water is not sufficient and so the only solution is the installation of static water tanks.
- 2.8. The largest tanks available are 46,000 litres, so to provide 94,500 litres each building will require 3 tanks.
- 2.9. Further works to Church Walk have also been identified related to the installation of water tank systems.

### **3. Proposal Details**

- 3.1. Without the installation of these tanks, the project will be halted by Building Control. Therefore, the original decision (19/00083) given on 22 July 2020 will not be able to be completed without an increase in the budget for this proposal.

### **4. Alternative Proposals**

- 4.1. Not Applicable.

### **5. Financial Implications**

#### **5.1. Capital**

- 5.2. The Cabinet Member decision of 22 July 2020 agreed the project cost of £7,600,000. The funds provided by this decision are fully committed. Therefore, an increase in the total budget is required to continue with this expansion project to accommodate the essential additional costs associated with the fire hydrants and Church Walk highways works.

- 5.3. The cost increase is £0.9m, broken down as follows:

Fire Hydrant Works	£590,529.46
Church Walk works	£221,217.71

Client-Side Contingency (10%)	£81,174.72
Rounded total	£900,000

## **6. Governance**

- 6.1. 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.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1. The works will be subject to a legally binding and enforceable contract being in place between KCC and the Contractor.

## **8. Kent Policy Framework**

- 8.1. The 'Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2019-23 identified pressure on selective places in Gravesham. This pressure has continued through subsequent commissioning plans.
- 8.2. 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".

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1. A Public Consultation was undertaken by the school which ran from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019, with a drop in event for stakeholders to raise issues and concerns on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019.
- 9.2. The consultation responses were discussed by the Governing Body and the Governing Body notified KCC that the Governors has voted in favour of progressing the proposal.

## **10. Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 10.1. The assessment highlighted the following positive impacts: more local families able to access good school places, more school places available to students of faith or no faith. This scheme will also provide additional places for students with SEN or additional needs, where appropriate.
- 10.2. There were no negative impacts identified.

## **11. Data Protection implications**

11.1. The school are the 'controllers' under the General Data Protection Regulation and will ensure that any personal information is processed fairly and lawfully within any consultation work completed as part of the fast-track business plan application.

## 12. Views

### 12.1. The Local Members

Jordan Meade and Alan Ridgers have been informed of the proposal.

### 12.2. The School

The leadership and governing body of Gravesend Grammar School are fully supportive of the proposal.

### 12.3. Area Education Officer:

The analysis of the demand for secondary selective provision in the area, indicates that there are immediate and future pressures and we urgently need the additional capacity provided by this proposed expansion. I therefore support the proposal.

12.4. The scheme had been considered and agreed by the RSC Headteacher Board on Wednesday 15 January 2020.

## 13. Conclusions

13.1. The Gravesend and Longfield Selective Planning Group was forecast to have a deficit of 36 Year 7 places (1FE) from 2019-20 that increased to a deficit of 62 places (2FE) for the 2021-22 intake and increases again to 99 places (3.3FE) by 2023/24.

13.2. Gravesend Grammar School is the only boy's selective school in the planning group. To continue to progress the project requires the budgetary increase notified in this paper.

## 14. Recommendations

### **Recommendation(s)**

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

- (i) Agree to the increase in costs of the project of £0.9m making the total project cost £8.5m.
- (ii) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel 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.

## 15. Background Documents

15.1. Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision

[www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision](http://www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision)

15.2. Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee Report - 19/00083 – Proposal to expand Gravesend Grammar School from 174 places to 210 places in September 2021.

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=894&MIId=8275&Ver=4>

15.3. Equality Impact Assessment

See decision 19/00083

## 16. Contact details

*Report Author:*

Ian Watts

Area Education Officer – North Kent

Tel number: 03000 414302

[ian.watts@kent.gov.uk](mailto:ian.watts@kent.gov.uk)

*Lead Director:*

Christine McInnes

Director of Education

03000 418931

[christine.mcinnnes@kent.gov.uk](mailto:christine.mcinnnes@kent.gov.uk)