

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

22/00077

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

Key decision: NO

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Whitfield Aspen Primary School (Dover) sports field.

Decision:

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

- I. Approve the progression of works and additional £275,000 of capital funding to deliver the sports fields requirement for this school.
- II. Authorise the Director of Education in consultation with the General Counsel to enter into any necessary contracts / agreements on behalf of the County Council.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background

The expansion of Whitfield Aspen Primary School from 2FE to 3FE on a Satellite site was agreed by the Cabinet Member in 2016. The expansion of the School being to support primary school places required within the Whitfield Urban Expansion (WUE).

The School expanded to 3FE from September 2017, initially offering additional places in temporary provision located on the Mayfield Road site. The intention was to open the satellite for the September 2019 academic year but occupation did not take place until September 2021.

The buildings and hard standing areas (e.g. playgrounds and car parking) were completed in May 2021 and handed over to KCC.

The sports field was not included in the handover as a revised design was required which required the contractor to complete a section 73 planning application amendment.

Whitfield Aspen is a Primary School across two sites; it is unique in the way that mainstream, and SEN pupils are fully integrated. It is essential for service delivery that adequate hard, soft, and grassed play areas are provided. Since occupation the school has been without a sports field or grassed play area. By the earliest date that is currently predicted the lack of grass play will have been in excess of two and a half years. The outstanding issues are having a significant impact on the efficient running of the school and the curriculum that can be offered.

The landscaping work must commence from the beginning of September to take advantage of optimal seasonal conditions. Works are expected to take 4 weeks. Delaying the contract until the

end of September would mean that the works will be deferred until April 2023 and the School will be without a sports field until Summer 2024 due to the required growing period.

Financial Implications

Due to the level of work required to ensure that the sports field is fit for purpose, specialist sports field contractors have been engaged to tender for the works. It is expected that the works needed to complete the sports field will be c£450,000.

There is £175,000 remaining in the current Record of Decision 16/00032 (£7,990,000). The contract sum for the landscaping is currently £450,000, which includes for provision of trackway to protect tarmac access & egress routes

The additional £275,000 requested will increase the funding allocated to the school to £8,265,000.

A Key Decision report (22/00064) will be taken to the CYPE Cabinet Committee on 13th September for further £1,225,000 funding to support the additional works required to complete the satellite site over and above the sports field contract and the initial ROD.

£3,500,000 has been secured in developer contributions.

Legal implications

KCC as the LA has a duty to ensure sufficient school places are available.

Equalities implications

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed prior to the initial funding being agreed. This assessment has been reviewed with no adverse impact on protected groups being identified. The additional funding enabling the completion of the sports field places will have a positive impact on all pupils in the locality, including those pupils with profound, severe, and complex needs.

Other Alternatives Considered and risks if decision isn't taken.

No alternatives were considered when the original decision was made as land and developer contributions were secured. That is still the case now as the satellites site is accommodated and seeing increasing numbers of pupils from the development joining the school. There is no alternative school provision on the development that can be considered. When there has been a need to vary from the plans and agreed contract, this has been robustly challenged and alternative solutions considered.

If the decision is not taken this will leave the school without the sports field until the summer of 2024.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The expansion of the school on to the satellite site was recommended by Members in May 2016 and approved by the Cabinet Member.

Stakeholders were consulted at that time and the expansion was supported.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

No alternatives were considered when the original decision was made as land and developer contributions were secured. That is still the case now as the satellites site is accommodated and seeing increasing numbers of pupils from the development joining the school. There is no alternative school provision on the development that can be considered. When there has been a need to vary from the plans and agreed contract, this has been robustly challenged and alternative solutions considered.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None



18 August 2022

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signed

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date