

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

Executive

DECISION TAKEN BY:

David Adams, Interim Deputy Director – Effectiveness,
Sufficiency and Skills

DECISION NO:

OD/26/00019

For publication (yes or no) – Yes

Subject matter/title: Cost revision for the Project to Expand and Relocate Rosherville Church of England Academy

Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:

Decision number 22/00009: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2572>

Decision number 24/00019: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2835>

Decision number 24/00106: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk:9071/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2942>

Decision:

As Interim Deputy Director – Effectiveness, Sufficiency and Skills, I agree to:

1. AUTHORISE the allocation of an additional £779,267 of external funding to the Basic Need capital budget for the expansion of Rosherville Church of England Academy, London Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 9JQ, thus creating a revised project budget of £17,742,267.
 2. CONFIRM that, this activity is necessary and appropriate to deliver the project in line with previous Cabinet Member decisions (22/00009, 24/00019, 24/00106).
 3. CONFIRM the Director of Infrastructure as the nominated Authority Representative for the project, acting under existing delegated authority to enter into and administer the relevant contracts and agreements, including authority to approve variations as envisaged under the contracts,
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Reason(s) for decision:

On 7 February 2025, through decision number 24/00106, the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agreed additional funding for the project based on robust cost estimates provided at that time.

This was due to the project experiencing several significant challenges resulting in significant delays and increased costs. However, for completely different and more positive reasons, further additional costs have now been notified to the Assistant Director North Kent, Ian Watts, that require this decision to be made.

The full rationale this project has previously been considered by CYPE Cabinet Committee and subsequently agreed by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills. The detail can be accessed through the previous cabinet decisions:

- 22/00009: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2572>
- 24/00019: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2835>
- 24/00106: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk:9071/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2942>

Cause of the uplift in the project's cost

The underlying cause of the previously forecast overspend was previously reported to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and to Members of the CYPE Cabinet Committee through exempt reports (not for publication under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972), associated with decision Number 24/00106 dated 7 February 2025.

Since that decision, the overall project cost has increased from £16,963,000 to £17,742,267, representing a variance of £779,267. However, in this instance, the increase does not arise from contractual overspend or project delays. Rather, it reflects additional, externally funded enhancements and improvements to the school site.

The enhancements include improvements to sports facilities, elements of the school rebuild, and other works necessary to ensure compliance with current Department for Education (DfE) standards. All additional expenditure (£779,267) will be fully funded through external grant contributions which would be included as part of the Basic Need Capital Programme, which comprises developer contributions, government grants, and approved provisions for prudential borrowing. As such, there is no impact on the Council's own resources.

The proposed budget uplift is therefore required to enable KCC to utilise these external funds in accordance with grant conditions, and to deliver a higher quality educational facility in line with national standards.

How the proposed decision supports the Council's Strategic Statement:

The proposed agreement to a cost revision for the project to expand and relocate Rosherville Church of England Academy directly supports KCC's Strategic Statement by enabling the continued delivery of key priorities relating to education infrastructure, community resilience and sustainable growth:

- Firstly, the investment ensures the provision of sufficient, high-quality school places in an area experiencing population growth and rising demand for primary education. By facilitating the timely delivery of expanded capacity, the project supports the Strategic Statement's objective of ensuring that "children and young people in Kent get the best start in life" through access to good local schools and improved learning environments.
- Secondly, the relocation element of the project provides a modern, fit for purpose educational facility that better meets current curriculum requirements and accessibility standards. This contributes to improving outcomes for pupils, supports inclusive education, and enhances the overall quality of the learning environment, aligning with the Council's commitment to improving educational attainment and reducing inequalities.
- Thirdly, agreeing the revised cost enables the project to remain deliverable within current market conditions, reflecting inflationary pressures in the construction sector and ensuring continuity of programme. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to robust financial

management while maintaining focus on delivering critical infrastructure that supports housing growth and sustainable communities.

- Finally, the project supports wider strategic aims by contributing to the creation of resilient, well-served communities. The provision of a suitably located and expanded school reduces travel distances for families, encourages sustainable travel patterns, and strengthens community cohesion in the locality.

In summary, the approval of the cost revision is consistent with KCC's Strategic Statement by supporting the delivery of essential education infrastructure, addressing demographic demand, and enabling sustainable community development while maintaining a perceptive and responsive approach to financial management.

Financial implications:

Capital

The revised capital cost of the project is £17,742,267, an increase of £779,267 from the previously approved budget of £16,963,000. This uplift is directly attributable to additional works required to satisfy the conditions attached to external grant funding and to ensure compliance with DfE standards.

Importantly, the increase in the overall project budget does not represent a call on the Council's own capital resources. The additional expenditure is fully funded through a combination of secured external grants, including an uplift in the DfE Schools Rebuilding Programme allocation and enhanced funding for sports provision from the Ebbsfleet development Corporation. These funding streams form part of the wider Basic Need Capital Programme, which is supported through government grants, developer contributions, and provisions for Prudential Borrowing.

The acceptance and deployment of these additional funds are contingent on the Council delivering the specified enhancements, including improved sports facilities and upgraded elements of the school rebuild. As such, the proposed capital budget variation is necessary to enable the authority to draw down and utilise the funding in accordance with grant conditions.

There are no additional borrowing requirements arising from this proposal, and no impact on the Council's revenue budget through financing costs. The project remains fully funded within the existing capital programme framework, with all cost increases matched by confirmed external income.

The financial risk to the Council remains low, as the additional works are grant-funded and aligned to funding conditions. Robust financial monitoring will continue to be applied to ensure that expenditure remains within the approved funding envelope and that all grant conditions are satisfied. The table below, shows the proposed revised funding for this project:

Revised project cost breakdown

Description/Funding Source	Value
DfE Grant estimated (RoD 24/00019)	£6,000,000
DfE Grant - actual over original estimate	£684,300
EDC Sports Grant (RoD 24/00019)	£420,000
EDC Sports Grant - actual over originally agreed sum	£94,967
S106 Dev Cons (RoD 24/00019)	£3,556,800
CYPE Capital Budget (RoD 24/00019)	£4,923,200
Basic Need capital (RoD 24/00106)	£2,063,000

Revised Total: £17,742,267

The Section 106 obligations relate to EDC requirements, including a 3G Pitch to enable wider community use of the site, enhanced public use facilities within the building and an entrance plaza. Given this project is more expensive than a standard 2FE primary school build, KCC Officers and colleagues from Aletheia Academies Trust have worked hard to maximise external funding to mitigate the impact on the Council's own Capital Budget.

Due to the condition of the buildings on the existing Rosherville Church of England Academy site, Aletheia Academy Trust, with the support of KCC submitted a bid to the DfE under the School's Rebuild Programme. This was successful and latest indications from Senior DfE Officers are that the allocation will now be c£6.7m.

The Developer Contributions sum represents what has been secured through signed agreements to date. Not all has been banked due to payment being linked to housing delivery triggers, but the developments they relate to are underway and receipts have started to come into the Council.

The EDC are currently consulting on other developments in the Northfleet/Ebbsfleet area. Where appropriate, any developer contributions derived from those new developments can be attributed to this project in addition.

The current Rosherville Church of England Academy site on London Road is not owned by KCC so no capital receipt can be received.

An allowance of up to £2,500 per teaching space is payable to the school; to outfit each new teaching room with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment. This will be met from the overall Capital allocation for this project.

Revenue

As the project has now progressed, funding has been allocated to support its delivery and operation in line with established KCC processes and grant conditions. A contribution of £6,000 per newly provided learning space will be made towards the cost of furniture and equipment, including items such as tables, desks, chairs, storage units, and learning resources, ensuring that the new accommodation is fully equipped.

In addition, the school will receive ongoing revenue funding for the additional pupils admitted as a result of the project. This funding will be provided in accordance with KCC's Schools Funding Formula and reflects the increased capacity delivered through the project.

Human

The school will appoint additional staff as required; utilising revenue funding allocated through the Schools Funding Formula for these additional pupils.

Legal implications:

The contracting for the project will be managed by the Director of Infrastructure. All works will be fully compliant with the building and planning regulations.

Equality implications:

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed and indicated that there are no issues to the proposal. This assessment was re-examined, and no further or new issues have been identified.

Data Protection implications:

Aletheia Academies Trust is the data handler. KCC will not handle any personal data relating to this decision.

Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted:

CYPE Cabinet Committee have previously considered and endorsed funding for this the expansion and relocation of Rosherville Church of England Academy.

Consultations were carried out by Aletheia Academy Trust and were reported on in the CYPE Cabinet Committee cabinet papers for decision numbers 22/00009, 24/00019 and 24/00106.

Local Members opinions were sought.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

If the addition of this external funding is not agreed, it would significantly delay the opening of the school, as the funding would need to be returned to the awarding bodies and urgent, late redesign of the final scope of the project would need to be undertaken.

KCC is also mindful of the health and safety implications of the issue of Rosherville Church of England Academy remaining on a small, constrained, cliff-top site, not least because of the recent chalk cliff collapse on nearby Galley Hill.

If the decision is taken to not agree the funding, then the expansion and relocation would encounter further delays. This will result in considerable reputational damage to both KCC and Aletheia Academies Trust, would lead to there being insufficient primary provision in the Northfleet area over the short/medium term and will leave Rosherville Church of England Academy on a highly unsuitable and constrained site.

Any conflict of interest declared by any executive member consulted by the decision maker and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None



David Adams

Interim Deputy Director for Education: Effectiveness, Sufficiency and Skills

4th June 2026

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signed

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date