KENT COUNTY COUNCIL - RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	**26/00048**

Executive Decision – key

26/00048- Proposal for KCC capital contributions to the DfE Schools Rebuild Programme for Water Meadows Primary school to include 2 forms of entry core facilities to the 1 form of entry rebuild

Decision:

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

1) APPROVE the allocation of £1.4m from the Schools Basic Need Capital Programme to provide 2FE core facilities at Water Meadows Primary School as part of the DfE Schools Rebuild Programme of the 1FE School;

2) DELEGATE authority to the Director of Infrastructure to take relevant actions including but not limited to negotiating, entering and finalising the terms of relevant contracts, contract variations or other legal agreements as required to implement the decision; and

3) AGREE for the Director of Infrastructure, to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements, with authority to enter variations as envisaged under the contracts.

Reasons for decision:

The DfE identified Water Meadows Primary School to be included in the Schools Rebuilding Programme and is rebuilding the 1FE School. As the school has been identified to be expanded by KCC in the Kent Commissioning Plan in response to new housing developments in the vicinity, KCC can contribute funding to enable the inclusion of 2FE core facilities within the rebuild. This will future proof the school site and provide infrastructure capable of supporting a future expansion should additional pupil places be required. Delivering these facilities as part of the rebuild represents better value for money and minimises cost, disruption and inefficiency for retrofitting the infrastructure later.

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

Aim 3: Supporting residents that needs help.
Aim 4: Building better communities. Ensure that the infrastructure needs of the county to support economic growth and quality of life are fully in place.

This project will ensure that there are sufficient school places in the local area and the school infrastructure is appropriate to mitigate the new housing developments in the planning area.

Financial implications:

The DfE are leading on this project to rebuild the school, with associated costs expected to be met directly by the DfE through the Schools Rebuilding Programme. The extension of the build to incorporate 2FE core facilities requires the Council to pay an estimated total capital contribution to the DfE of up to £1.4m which includes c£1.1m of base build costs and c£0.3m of external works and associated infrastructure. The project is at design Stage 3 with the planning application submitted to Canterbury City Council. The determination date is mid-August. The budget includes a risk allowance of 15%.

Capital costs for this contribution will form part of the Schools Basic Need Capital Programme. For this specific project, KCC currently holds banked developer contributions totalling **£1,020,300** towards Water Meadows Primary School 1 FE expansion. A CIL bid has been submitted to Canterbury City Council for the remaining **£379,700;** we are awaiting the outcome of the bid, and this is expected in October. If the bid is unsuccessful the wider Basic Need budget (currently £148m) will be required to fund the difference (which is funded from a range of sources including Basic Need Grant, Developer Contributions, Prudential Borrowing and other specific grants). This is expected to be manageable within the overall budget and will not be an additional budget pressure.

Further developer contributions are being sought for the future 1FE expansion (this may be subject to a separate key decision in line the governance process).

There is no additional KCC General Fund requirement expected from this decision. There are no expected revenue implications for this design and indirect costs, such as officer time, are expected to be met from within existing resources. However, there is a risk that if this project does not go ahead any abortive costs will need to be transferred to revenue. This risk has been assessed as low.

Legal implications:

Planning permission will be required for the 1FE rebuild and the planning application has been submitted to Canterbury City Council. The determination date is mid-August.

DfE require from KCC a signed s151 letter confirming the funding allocated to the project in October. This aligns with the anticipated delivery timescale for contract

award, subject to DfE's contract award processes in October/November and a proposed start on site in January 2027.

Local authorities must plan for and secure sufficient school places for their area in line with their duties under section 14 of the Education Act 1996.

Equalities implications:

An EqIA has been undertaken and no impacts are identified.

Data Protection implications:

There are no data protection implications.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation**:**

The proposed decision was considered by the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 15 September 2026

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Allow the DfE to rebuild the school as a standard 1FE school without the enhanced core facilities. Any future expansion would likely require additional works to a newly rebuilt school, resulting in greater cost, disruption and inefficiencies

---

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

02/10/2026

…….. ……

Signed Date