

By:	Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills
To:	Education Cabinet Committee, 18 January 2013
Subject	Decision number: 12/02006 - Proposal to expand Sevenoaks Primary School
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary:	This report seeks to inform members of the results of the Public Consultation
Recommendations:	The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to comment and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education Learning and Skills on the decision to expand Sevenoaks Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Sevenoaks District section of the Kent Commissioning Plan 2012-17 indicates a need to commission additional primary school places in the Sevenoaks Town area. This proposal is one of several in the area.

1.2 On 12 September 2012, Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills that a consultation take place on the proposal to expand the Sevenoaks Primary School.

1.3 This report sets out the results of the public consultation, which took place between 8 October 2012 and 26 November 2012. A public meeting was held on 9 October 2012.

1.4 It should be noted that Sevenoaks Primary School has been identified through the Priority School Building Programme to have a rebuild by 2016/2017.

2. The Proposal

2.1 It is proposed to enlarge Sevenoaks Primary School by 30 Reception Year places taking their PAN to 90 (3FE) for the September 2013 intake. Successive Reception year intakes will offer 90 places each year and the school will eventually have a total capacity of 630 pupils.

3. Bold Steps and the Kent Commissioning Plan

3.1 This proposal will help to secure our ambition "to ensure every child will go to a good school where they make good progress and can have fair access to school places" as set out in 'Bold Steps for Kent'.

3.2 The Sevenoaks District section of the Kent Commissioning Plan indicates a need to commission additional primary capacity in the Sevenoaks planning area.

4. Outcomes of the Public Consultation

4.1 Of the 18 responses received, a slight majority were in favour of the proposal. The comments and questions raised at the public meeting are explored in paragraph 5.2 below.

4.2 A summary of the comments received during the consultation period are given at appendix 1.

4.3 A copy of the questions, comments and responses made during the the public meeting are given in appendix 2.

5. Views

5.1 Local Member

The Local Member is Mr John London who has not yet indicated whether he supports the proposal.

5.2 The following issues were raised at the public consultation meeting:

Concern over the potential for a dilution in standards at the school.

The responsibility for maintenance of standards of the school is vested in the Head teacher and Chair of Governors. Mr Duffy, the headteacher delivered a very robust speech during the public meeting stating that he was completely confident that performance and standards would not be allowed to deteriorate and that the enlargement would be a source of enrichment for the school, providing additional flexibility and versatility to the teaching complement.

Concern over the potential for an increase in traffic or local parking issues.

The school is an old secondary school with two entrances. The roads that provide access are residential and off street parking is readily available, although busy during drop off and pick up.

A new traffic survey will be sought in parallel to the planning process in order to clearly define the impact (if any) of additional traffic resultant from this proposal. Walking buses become more viable as the school expands. Once full information is available from Highways, the School Travel Plan will be updated to incorporate recommendations from KCC Highways.

Concerns about disruption to learning during build.

Where possible, disruptive building work will be limited to times when the school is closed. A project manager will be appointed and the head teacher will retain complete control over any work being done, particularly if it is felt that health and safety may be compromised.

Concerns over staff parking

There is limited capacity on the site and an increase in car parking spaces is an issue. This will need to be incorporated into the planning for the new build.

5.3 Area Education Officer

Notwithstanding the above, the AEO fully supports this proposal and, having considered other commissioning options, is of the belief that this enlargement is not only necessary, but the most cost-effective and sustainable solution to increased demand in the immediate area.

5.4 Governing Body

The Governing Body of Sevenoaks Primary School are supportive of the proposal subject to certain conditions and caveats over building and funding. The school believes that there is a clear need for enlargements to infrastructure, with which, the local authority will largely concur.

The AEO believes that these conditions are reasonable and can be incorporated into the planning for the school, including incorporating the Priority School Building Programme requirement.

5.5 Headteacher

The head teacher of the school has been fully consulted and is supportive, subject to conditions and caveats listed above.

5.6 Parents

The majority of parents who responded, support the proposal.

5.7 Pupils

The pupils of the school have been offered the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

5.8 Other respondents

Local residents and the town council have responded and listed their concerns about the increase in traffic in Bradbourne Park Road and some of the surrounding private roads. Their comments also highlight the difficulties in parking and movement during drop off and pick up times.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the consultation. No comments were received and no changes needed to be made to the Equality Impact Assessment following the consultation period.

7. Recommendations

7.1 The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to comment and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education Learning and Skills on the decision to expand Sevenoaks Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

8. Background Documents

Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/priorities_policies_and_plans/priorities_and_plans/bold_steps_for_kent.aspx

Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2012-2017

[https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/education-and-learning/plans-and-consultations/strategic-plans/Commissioning%20Plan%20for%20Education%20Provision%20Kent%202012-17%20FINAL%20\(Sept-2012\).pdf](https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/education-and-learning/plans-and-consultations/strategic-plans/Commissioning%20Plan%20for%20Education%20Provision%20Kent%202012-17%20FINAL%20(Sept-2012).pdf)

Education Cabinet Committee report – 12 September 2012 – Primary Commissioning – Sevenoaks District

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/g4880/Public%20reports%20pack%2012th-Sep-2012%2010.00%20Education%20Cabinet%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

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Proposal to expand Sevenoaks Primary, Sevenoaks

Summary of Written Responses

Printed Consultation Documents distributed: 700
 Consultation responses received: 18

A summary of the responses received showed that:

	In Favour	Undecided	Opposed
Governors			
Staff			
Parents	8	1	5
Pupils			
Other	1	2	1
Totals	9	3	6

Comments in favour of the proposal:

- We support the increase in size because of the projected rise in requirements for places.

Comments against the proposal:

- Expansion of the school will only make the anti social problems that the residents are experiencing worse.
- School and facilities are already pushed, free space/playground etc. (clubs oversubscribed).
- The school buildings are dated and not designed with a primary school in mind, it is also currently at capacity.
- The infrastructure cannot accommodate the increase.
- Unless the buildings/school were to be expanded separately to the existing buildings we cannot see how this would not have a detrimental effect on the pupils at the time.
- Severe traffic problems will be exacerbated by further expansion.
- Without further details about how road safety issues will be managed, we cannot support these proposals.
- Smaller schools provide a better community feel and school experience for children.
- Other schools in the area could be used, close to the so called new developments, ie. Dunton Green.
- Successful schools should not have to expand, money should be offered to under subscribed schools to attract new teachers/facilities.

Proposal to expand Sevenoaks Primary School, Sevenoaks

Summary of Public Consultation Meeting

Purpose of the Meeting

- To explain the proposal to expand Sevenoaks Primary School
- To give members of the public an opportunity to ask questions and comment
- To listen to views and opinions

Simon Webb delivered a short presentation outlining the proposal for expansion.

Statement from Chair of Governors – Steve Collins

School expansion has been considered by GB for a number of years. The popularity of the school has grown – appreciate there are a lot of risks involved but also huge benefits and opportunities. The Governing Body are supportive of the proposals and seek the views of parents and staff.

Statement from Headteacher – Alan Duffy

School have not been forced into proposals by the local authority but see it as an opportunity to increase the facilities offered at Sevenoaks Primary School to the wider community. With the benefit of funding from the Priority Schools Building programme a new 3FE primary school can be built, hopefully addressing issues such as parking and access onto school site.

Question	Response
Projections on graph are significantly higher than previously forecasted so ask for clarification as to accuracy of figures.	There are discrepancies as a result of the old forecasting methodology used which was largely based on population and live birth data. New Edge forecasting is much more accurate as it takes residential base and projects forward.
What involvement will the school have with KCC Highways as Bradbourne Park Road is already heavily congested?	Full consultation with KCC Highways, Planners, and Sevenoaks District Council will take place before a formal planning application submitted.
As a parent I am excited about the proposals to expand the school but would like reassurances that funding is in place to see building work to completion.	Have a six week consultation period to allow for parents, staff, local residents, children to comment on the proposals. The consultation would not have reached this stage if funding not in place. Basic Need Funding comes from Central Government when there is indigenous growth. If the proposals are agreed, it is expected that the formal cabinet decision will be made around March 2013, after which a tendering process will begin.
Raised concerns about the safety of the children whilst construction works	The local authority understands parental concerns. It is hoped that most of the heavy

<p>undertaken and the impact it may have on their education.</p>	<p>construction work is carried out during the summer holidays but the local authority could not guarantee this.</p>
<p>Two other users on site, Bradbourne Pre School and ACORNs – how are they affected by potential changes?</p>	<p>Headteacher hoped that they could be incorporated into the master plan. The local authority confirmed the current provision would be maintained.</p>
<p>Have any studies been conducted comparing the academic achievements of children in larger schools? Also queried the suitability of temporary accommodation long term.</p>	<p>The local authority tends not to look at case studies as variables too great. The growth from 420 to 630 will be gradual, year on year and will be closely monitored. Proposed enlargements are only ever considered where school is good or outstanding.</p> <p>The planners and architects will determine the footprint for the school site. It is up to the headteacher and governors to be creative in using the space provided. In the meantime demountables of excellent quality can temporarily accommodate the extra children. They are steel framed, air conditioned, carpeted modular builds.</p> <p>Headteacher The headteacher added one of the benefits of going to 3FE was the potential to employ outstanding teachings to ensure teaching and learning standards maintained.</p> <p>Any improvements, temporary or otherwise will be better than what is currently in situ</p>
<p>Will any land be sold off to fund proposals?</p>	<p>No.</p>

55 people attended