

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

---

### EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Education Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 18 January 2013.

PRESENT: Mr G Cooke (Chairman), Mr R B Burgess, Mr L Christie, Mrs P T Cole, Mr H J Craske, Mr J M Cubitt, Mr J A Davies, Mr K Smith, Mrs P A V Stockell, Mr R Tolputt and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M J Whiting

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Leeson (Corporate Director Education, Learning and Skills Directorate), Mr K Shovelton (Director of Education Planning and Access), Mr K Abbott (Finance Business Partner, ELS Directorate), Mr D Adams (Area Education Officer - Mid kent), Mr S Webb (Area Education Officer - West Kent), Mrs M White (Area Education Officer - East Kent), Mr J Reilly (Principal Policy Officer), Mrs Robinson (Principal Adviser Special and PRU), Mr Wood (Teacher Recruitment and Retention Manager) and Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### **54. Declarations of Members' Interest relating to items on today's Agenda** (Item A2)

Mr Davies made a declaration of interest advising that he was the Chairman of Kent County Council's Planning Application Committee. He wanted to make it clear that he would be considering the decision items on the expansion of schools across Kent as education issues.

#### **55. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2012** (Item A4)

1. It was agreed that the information requested by Members noted in the Minutes would be forwarded outside the meeting.
2. RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2012 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **56. Verbal update by the Cabinet Member and Corporate Director** (Item A5)

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills (ELS) and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)*

1. The Chairman invited the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills, Mr Whiting and the Corporate Director, Mr Leeson, to give their verbal updates. Mr Whiting began by advising Members of the following:-

- *Commissioning Plan* - Letters had been sent to each of the Districts making a request for their Locality Board or Local Member Panel to take an active interest in the Commissioning Plan that pertained to their individual district. The request was to the local District and County Council Members supported by the County Planning and District officers to familiarise themselves with the information of their local pressures including; new housing, developments, changes to migrations populations and feedback into this Cabinet Committee and to Mr Whiting to inform the interim review of the Commissioning Plan in April and the revised Commissioning Plan published annually in October. To date, Mr Whiting had met with seven of the Locality Boards and Local Member Panels all had agreed to participate. Further meetings were in the diary
- *Grammar School Provision in Sevenoaks* – The preferred site had been identified and named as the old Wilderness School site in Seal High Road, Sevenoaks owned by the County Council and currently leased by the Knole Academy. A detailed proposal would be submitted to the government in the near future in line with the County Councils mandate agreed at the County Council meeting in March 2012.
- *Kent Test* - A review of the Kent Selective process was undertaken by Headteachers at the request of Mr Whiting. The request was drive by The Cabinet Member wish to combat the increased level of coaching and to maintain the viable universal test across the County and where possible to align it better with neighbouring authorities. The Headteachers' Review Group wished to be included in any new test arrangements and Headteachers' were sent a survey for their views the deadline had closed and the feedback was being analysed. The proposal was for KCC in 2013 to tender for suppliers for tests for 2014 and onwards, the analysis would inform the tendering process.
- Secretary of State, Mr Gove, would be visiting two schools in East Kent and Local Members had been advised. Mr Gove would be visiting; the Castle Community College (Academy) to witness year 8 lessons and then Cliftonville Primary School.

2. Mr Leeson make the following comments:-

- *Development of Schools Partnerships and Collaboration* - A school to school collaborative support system was being developed. £5.2 million had been allocated to support the schools' improvements by the Schools Funding Forum. There were now 50 collaborative groups of schools in Kent covering more that 360 schools. As work was ongoing it was expected that those numbers would increase through the Spring. The aim was for every school that required improvement to be in a strong school partnership [the partnerships would be formal longer term partnerships] with good and outstanding schools in order to bring about rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and ultimately pupils learning and achievement. The partnership working included; maintained and academy schools, primary and secondary and mainstream and SEND schools working together.
- A report had been submitted to the School Funding Forum before Christmas 2012 and the decision of the Funding Forum was to allocate £2.5 million in the next financial year to support further collaborative work between schools to further embed and strengthen that work.

- *District Base Working* – Underpinning the partnership and collaborative work was the district base working. The majority of this work was taking place within districts. Work had been undertaken to strengthen district base working. The Education, Learning and Skills Directorate and the Families Social Care Directorate and Customer and Communities Directorate (where relevant) had intentionally set out to ensure that there were clearly identified staff appointed to each district for the particular jobs that they did. So that the schools were clear who the key managers were in each district. Those cross directorate teams in each district would work together in a coordinated way especially when dealing with vulnerable children and young people. The Area Education Officers were the overseers of coordinating that work under the direction of the Director of Planning and Access with the Managers within Social Care, the District Early Intervention and Prevention Team Manager and the Senior School Improvement Advisor for both secondary and primary schools within each District.

District based working was also being strengthened by service transformation. The special teaching services which supported children in need were devolved to a lead special school in each district from September 2012. This was moving forward well. There was a clearer relationship between the lead special school and other special schools in the district and other maintained schools to support pupils with special educational needs and a local executive group of headteachers oversaw that work.

- *Review of Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)* - A report would be submitted to the March meeting of this Cabinet Committee. The report would set out how the management of the PRUs would be better managed locally overseen by headteachers working together to manage the provision of children at risk of exclusion.

A pilot had been carried out on integrated adolescent support services in four districts; Thanet Ashford, Dartford and Tunbridge Wells which would now be rolled out to work in other districts in Kent.

3. Members were given the opportunity to made comments and ask questions which included the following:-

- a) A comment was made on the review of the PRUs that narrowing the gap must be the main objective of the County Council. It was encouraging to note that there would be closer working between the Directorates of Education, Learning and Skills and Families Social Care at a local. It was suggested that there also needed to be monitored at a local level and that the Locality Boards although in their early stages of development could do this work. The Chairman advised that the locality Boards may not be the right vehicle as they set their own priorities and it was for this Cabinet Committee to ensure that there was a strategic overview and monitoring role that was consistent.

Mr Whiting added that there was a Joint Working Group, which he and the Cabinet Member, Mrs Whittle, sat on, which oversaw the work educationally and within Social Services for young people. There were also discussions being held following the consultation regarding the restructuring of the Local Children's Trust Boards and realigning their responsibilities and the monitoring could be held there, feeding back to this Cabinet Committee.

- b) A further comment was made that there was a role for the Locality Boards. There was a distinctive role for the County Council to set the strategic agenda. Dover Locality Board was already looking at progression within the area and would be reporting its findings and progress in February/March. The Chairman advised that not all of the Locality Boards were as involved as Dover's was. The Locality Boards would be involved with the Commissioning Plan but any support would be welcomed from the Locality Boards. The monitoring role would be with the Cabinet Committee.
  - c) A comment was made on the Budget of the School Improvement Service and how improvements would be made if that budget was reduced. Mr Leeson advised that the County Council was challenged with making further savings following the reductions in the Central Government funding. The County Council had been able to significantly increase the amount of buyback from schools to sustain our services, which was welcomed. Mr Leeson was confident, looking to the future, that the Education Learning and Skills Directorate would be able to maintain a significant enough resource to support school improvement.
  - d) A comment was made that there was no indication within the Capital Investment Scheme for the provision of the Sevenoaks Grammar School within the meeting papers although there had been £1.5 million set aside in the recently published Budget Book and challenged whether this was a priority. Mr Leeson advised that there was an amount of money in the Capital Budget to support the development of accommodation on a site in Sevenoaks for new satellite provision for selective school education in Sevenoaks. This fund was not enough money required to build new accommodation or refurbish an existing building to accommodate 4 form or 6 form entry provision. The funding for this would be available through capital receipts and disposal and new money when it became available from the Capital Budget.
  - e) In reply to a question, Mr Whiting advised that the Free School that had been interested in the Wilderness School site was progressing with another site through the EFA.
4. RESOLVED that the responses to comments and questions by Members and the verbal updates be noted with thanks.

**57. Decision number: 02/02007 - Proposed change of status of Wateringbury Church of England Primary School from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided**

*(Item B1a)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton Director of Planning and Access and Mr D Adams, Area Education Officer, were present for this item)*

1. Mr Tolputt moved the recommendations, seconded by Mr K Smith that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member to approve the proposal from Watringbury CEPS to change status from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided School with effect from 1 April 2013 and authorises the notification of the change to the DfE.

2. The Chairman took the opportunity to pay tribute to the Area Education Officers for the work that they had undertaken in supporting the public meetings held in the evenings as part of the consultation on the proposed school expansions across Kent.

3. Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

- a) A Member commented that under the new governance arrangements the Education Cabinet Committee membership did not include Church Representatives which he considered would have been helpful to seek their views as seven of the decisions were about Church school expansions.
- b) In reply to questions, Mr Adams advised that he had had a number of discussions with Members of the Governing Body and they were concerned about being able to take all of the children from their community (Watringbury and Nettlestead) and being able to continue to serve the families from Teston. As a Church school they would ultimately like to have first; practising children who lived in the local Parishes and then children in the Parishes. This was why they viewed Voluntary Aided status as an advantage to them. The new status would enable the Governing Body to put in place arrangements in the school that they considered best served their community.
- c) In reply to a question, Mr Leeson gave his assurance that the Diocesan bodies were concerned about school improvement and the standards being provided in Church schools. KCC liaised with the Diocese effectively to ensure that all schools in Kent were supported to improve their standards. At present the Kent School Improvement Service worked with Church schools as much as it did with non denominational schools. The Diocese traditionally had not had a school improvement service of its own. School improvement services had always been with the local authority. Mr Leeson advised that there was a proposal by the Archdiocese of Southwark to create a Multi Academy Trust for all Catholic schools in Kent. The proposals would include providing school improvement support for those schools. The Archdiocese had confirmed to Mr Leeson the schools would be able to continue to be involved with Kent County Council's School Improvement activity and buy in services from the County Council. Mr Leeson added that the Anglican Dioceses of Rochester and Canterbury were also having discussions about their schools joining academy trust arrangements in the future.
- d) The local Member, Mrs Stockell, advised that she had not received any negative comments regarding the proposal.

4. The Chairman asked Members to vote on the recommendations. The vote was as follows: 6 votes for and 2 abstained, the vote was carried.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted;
- b) the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by that the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to change the status of Watringbury, Church of England, Primary School, Tonbridge from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided; and
- c) the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills sends notification of the change to the Department for Education.

**58. Decision number: 12/ 01975(a) - SEN Phase 1 Approval to Plan - The relocation of The Foreland School (Community Special)**

*(Item B1b)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director, Education Planning and Access and Mrs M White, Area Education Officer - East Kent, were present for this item)*

1. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education Learning and Skills on making a modification to the original decision (09-01292) made on 29 July 2009 by changing the location sited in the original decision as set out in the report and the recommendation to hold a public information sharing meeting.

**59. Decision number: 12/02024 - Proposal to expand Palm Bay Primary School (Community)**

*(Item B2a)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director, Education Planning and Access and Mrs M White, Area Education Officer - East Kent, were present for this item)*

1. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand Palm Bay Margate School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**60. Decision Number: 12/01961 - Proposal to expand Repton Manor Primary School**

*(Item B3a)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director, Education Planning and Access and Mr D Adams, Area Education Officer - Mid Kent, were present for this item)*

1. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand Repton Manor Primary School, Ashford, by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**61. Decision number: 12/02001 - Proposal to expand Hawkinge Primary School**

*(Item B3b)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton Director of Planning and Access and Mr D Adams Area Education Officer – Mid Kent were present for this item)*

1. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Committee Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand Hawkinge Primary School, Folkestone, by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**62. Decision number: 12/01962 - Proposal to expand The Discovery School, Kings Hill**

*(Item B3c)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr D Adams, Area Education Officer – Mid Kent, were present for this item)*

1. The Chairman invited the Director of Planning and Access, Mr Shovelton and Mr Adams to introduce the report. The following points were raised:
  - The proposal was to enlarge the Discovery School by 30 places thereby admitting 90 Year R pupils for September 2013 and each year thereafter.
  - The need for additional capacity in Kings Hill was generally accepted, however a number of the respondents to the consultation expressed a view that a third school was required in Kings Hill. The County Council's view was that if the anticipated expansion of housing in the Kings Hill area was realised a third school would be required and a firm proposal would be brought to this Cabinet Committee at that time.
  - Additional places were required for September 2013. If those places were not provided children living in Kings Hill would continue to travel to schools further away.
  - Whether the expansion was temporary or permanent was a technical issue. For the past 3 years The Discovery School had admitted 90 Year R pupils, and currently has a Published Admissions Number of 90, thus the Local Authority was legally bound to admit 90 children in 2013. Until September 2012, the additional Year R pupils had been accommodated within the

existing building, due to smaller cohorts further up the school. One cohort will be able to remain in the school as the use of an existing space has been changed to a class base. The School Organisation Regulations define a significant enlargement as expansion of the school's physical premises by at least 30 places and 25% or 200 places whichever is the lesser. To admit the cohort of 90 children in September 2013 three additional classrooms were needed. This will enlarge physical premises of the school by 21%.

- If the school is not significantly enlarged the admission number for 2014 would need to be reduced to 60.
  - There had been a considerable amount of debate within the community at Kings Hill about the need for more primary school provision, and many campaigns to this effect.
  - At the public consultation meeting a lot of parents who spoke had children already attending the Discovery School. They considered that there was not enough space to take three forms of entry.
  - Mr Adams confirmed that the hall was large enough for a three form entry. The traffic issues had been addressed by rearranging the car parking for a more effective drop off area. The County Council had been through the planning process when local residents had the opportunity to comment on concerns they had on access and highways issues. This had been signed off by the Highways Authority. Concerns regarding the capacity of the site being large enough to cope continued to exist, but planning consent had been obtained which would enable the expansion of the school to go ahead if agreed.
2. Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:
- a) In reply to a question, Mr Adams advised that there was currently temporary planning consent for modular accommodation and the school could equally have permanent accommodation. It would be possible to reduce the size of the school in the future. The mechanism would be to reduce the Published Admissions Number and start to scale the numbers back. Admissions arrangements are subject to public consultation, thus parents would have the opportunity to comment.
  - b) Members were given an assurance that Officers would continue to work with the Discovery School to ensure that there was adequate accommodation for children to eat their school and pack lunches.
3. RESOLVED that:-
- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
  - b) the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand the Discovery School, Tonbridge, by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**63. Decision number 12/02011 - Proposal to expand Stone St Mary's Church of England Primary School**

*(Item B4a)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr S Webb, Area Education Officer – West Kent, were present for this item)*

1. The Chairman gave Members the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

- a) Assurances were sought that there was a plan in place for increasing school places with the expansion of Eastern Quarry, Ebbsfleet Valley and Thamesgateway developments. Mr Shovelton advised that the plans for school expansions in that locality were within the Kent Commissioning Plan for the last year and proposals to expand schools in that locality were in the meeting papers and would be submitted to future meetings of this Cabinet Committee. Mr Webb added that within the Commissioning Plan there were projections that there would be new schools within those developments.
- b) The Local Member, Mrs Cole, advised that the Dartford Locality Board had discussed the Commissioning Plan and the Dartford Members were happy with the direction that was being taken. St Mary's School was heavily oversubscribed. Parents moving into the area from London were unable get their children into the local schools in East Dartford. There was a need for school places now. Mrs Cole considered that those opposed to the expansion of the school were parents with children already attending the school and enjoyed the two form entry. They questioned that if the school became three form entry would the standards be maintained. Mrs Cole was confident that the school standards would be maintained and improved by the Headteacher.

2. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand Stone St Mary's Church of England Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**64. Decision number: 02/02007 - Proposal to expand St Botolph's Church of England Primary School (Aided)**

*(Item B4b)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr Webb, Area Education Officer- West Kent, were present for this item)*

1. The Chairman invited Members to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

- a) The Local Member, Mr Craske, commented that St Botolph's was vastly oversubscribed and there was a need for places in the school now.
- b) The Local Member, Mr Christie, raised concerns that the non faith local children were the seventh criteria on St Botolph's School Admissions Criteria. The arrangements in the report committed the County Council to a 2 year permanent 2 form entry when there were plans to expand the neighbouring Community School, Dover Road [Dover Road was currently in special measures]. It was suggested that as a Community School, Dover Road did not have the restrictions a Church school had and would be a better solution than what was prescribed in the report before Members.
- c) A comment was made that whilst agreeing with the issues raised by the Local Member a pragmatic solution needed to be found now. It was advised that Rosherville, Church of England, Voluntary Controlled School would be another option but was in a poor state of repair.

2. The Chairman advised that he had chaired the public consultation meetings. He stated that the Church supported the proposals to expand the Church schools that were before the Cabinet Committee. The local authority would wish to expand good or outstanding schools and not put further pressures on schools that needed to improve their attainment standards.

3. Mr Shovelton advised that there were annual arrangements with the Dioceses authorities and with all other schools that were their own admission authorities to check their admissions arrangements for the year. This gave the County Council a strong working relationship with those schools.

4. Mr Webb advised that of the additional form of entry to be in place in September only 30% of the additional pupils were Church communicant. The additional form of entry supported the preferences of parents in Northfleet and the number of admission appeals would drop. Dover Road School was in special measures and the last monitoring visit showed that the school was making satisfactory progress to come out of special measures. The schools within that planning area had a multi ethnic dimension and the number of children admitted in those schools were not just Church of England but were multi faith. The Rosherville Church of England, Voluntary Controlled School was in a poor state of repair but there were plans to relocate the school and enlarge the school in 2016.

5. RESOLVED that:

- a) the responses to the comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education Cabinet Committee to expand St Botolph's Church of England Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**65. Decision number: 12/02006 - Proposal to expand Sevenoaks Primary School**  
(Item B4c)

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr Webb, Area Education Officer- West Kent, were present for this item)*

1. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand Sevenoaks Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**66. Decision number: 12/02008 - Proposal to expand Lady Boswell's Church of England Primary School (Aided)**  
(Item B4d)

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr S Webb, Area Education Officer - West Kent, were present for this item)*

1. The Chairman invited Mr Webb to introduce the report. Mr Webb advised that concerns had been raised after the local public consultation meeting by the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors and there was support educationally for the proposal. There were concerns raised by residents about the feeder road at the entry road of Lady Boswell's School and the traffic onto the main highway. Mr Webb suggested that a solution would be to include as part of the planning process, through the Highways Department, a full feasibility study. This would be carried out based on the transport options to ensure the expansion proceeded. The outcome of the feasibility study was not dependant on this part of the decision proposal before Members but would be part of the planning application.

2. Members were given the opportunity to made comments and ask questions which included the following:

- a) A Member referred to the Lady Boswell's School's Admissions Criteria and raised concerns that it stated that the school had a commitment to the surrounding Churches in Sevenoaks and not to the surrounding residents in Sevenoaks.
- b) A comment was made on the statement within the report that referred to the "forecast methodology being inaccurate". Mr Webb advised that the previous forecasting methodology for Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells was inaccurate as it did not show the growth of inward migration of parents coming from the London Boroughs. The Edge forecast software was now used and was showing a continuous upturn in the pupil numbers in Tunbridge Wells.
- c) In reply to a question, Mr Webb advised that there was no sustained evidence to say that a large number of parents had removed their children from independent and private schools. He confirmed that there

were no closures of private or independent schools in Tunbridge Wells to show that children were returned to Local Authority schools.

- d) The Chairman suggested that the Cabinet Committee endorses the recommendation and draws the Cabinet Member's attention to the local residents concerns regarding the access from the School to the highway when taking the decision.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand Lady Boswell's, Church of England, Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school taking into account the concerns raised in the consultation by the local residents on the road and traffic issues.

**67. Decision number: 12/02009 - Proposal to expand Southborough Church of England Primary School**

*(Item B4e)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr S Webb, Area Education Officer - West Kent were present for this item)*

1. RESOLVED that this item be deferred to the 19 March meeting of this Cabinet Committee.

**68. Decision number: 12/02010 - Proposal to expand St Mark's Church of England Primary School**

*(Item B4f)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr S Webb, Area Education Officer - West Kent were present for this item)*

1. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand St Mark's Church of England Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**69. Decision No.12/02005 - Proposal to expand St James' Church of England Infant School (Aided)**

*(Item B4g)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr S Webb, Area Education Officer - West Kent were present for this item)*

1. The Chairman suggested and Members agreed to discuss Items B4g and B4h together.
2. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills to expand St James' Church of England Primary School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**70. Decision number: 12/02004 - Proposal to expand St James' Church of England Junior School**

*(Item B4h)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Shovelton, Director of Planning and Access, and Mr S Webb, Area Education Officer - West Kent were present for this item)*

1. The Cabinet Committee agreed to take items B4g and B4h together.
2. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education Learning and Skills to expand St James's Church of England Junior School by issuing a public notice to expand the school.

**71. Education Learning & Skills Directorate Financial Monitoring 2012/13**

*(Item C1)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Abbott Director – School Resources and ELS Finance Business Partner, was present for this item)*

1. The Chairman invited Mr Abbott to introduce the report. Mr Abbott raised the following key points:
  - The report was an update on the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the monitoring report that was presented to the Cabinet meeting in January 2013.
  - At the time of publishing the report there were no significant changes to the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarters monitoring although in the extract that was presented to the Cabinet Committee there were anticipated emerging issues in School Transport. That position had now been confirmed by the Transport Team and there were now pressures within; SEND Transport and a significant underspend in Mainstream Home to school Transport. It was estimated that the SEND pressure would be £700k and the saving on Mainstream Home to school Transport was £950k as a result of less children being transported due to impact of the travel pass.

- There was a small increase in the schools facing a deficit. It was considered that eleven schools would be facing a deficit by the end of this year compared to seven last year. As discussed with the Cabinet Committee at its last meeting schools were expected to face greater pressures in the forthcoming years. In the third and fourth year the schools would be going into flat cash DSG funding and would incur the impact of the national funding changes. This would be monitored at various opportunities including through the School Bursars Groups and Headteacher meetings to remind schools of early action on their budget particularly if their school in the short to medium term was facing a falling roll or were losers under the new Formular [This information was share with each school in September 2012].
- A balance Capital and Revenue Budget was anticipated by the end of the year.

2. Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

- a) In reply to a question, Mr Abbott advised that some of the eleven schools were in receipt of significant pupil premium and other were not. The main reasons for them facing deficit was because generally they had a falling roll and they had not taken the necessary action early enough eg reducing teaching staff etc. The Pupil Premium was to target additional support for individual children.
- b) The Chairman questioned what measures had been taken to address the large sums of money transporting children around the County. Mr Leeson explained that this was not a cost issue but a capacity issue within schools. It was becoming more difficult to place children and when able to place children it was often requiring them to travel some distance. The fundamental issue was to expand the capacity for SEND in Kent and therefore cut down on transport needs and cost.  
An SEND Strategy would be presented at the March meeting of this Cabinet Committee that was designed to tackle the issue raised by Members. Mr Leeson advised that it would take a couple of years before we would be able to supply additional capacity to see that trend start to reduce.
- c) In response to a question, Mr Leeson advised that the increase in the SEND budget was because a crisis point had been reached. For the past 2-3 years additional pupils had been placed in many Kent Special Schools over their capacity which had now been exhausted. In the last year there had been a sudden impact of the capacity issues. There had also been an increase in demand especially with children with autism and complex emotional and behavioural needs. Mr Whiting advised that there was a demand and with greater demand there was a need to look at the Statementing process to ensure that it was work as well as it should. With regards the supply there was a need to look at the local independent suppliers to; ensure that we were receiving good value for money from independent placements from within the County. There was scope to reduce transport costs through engaging with parents suggesting personal budgets. Mr Whiting had recently met with Kent PEC who had useful

suggestions eg how we can improve relations some parents and ensure that the transport provision best suited their child's needs.

- d) Members paid tribute to the work of the work being carried out by the SEND schools.
- e) In response to three questions, Mr Abbott advised the following 1. *Ebbsfleet* – Mr Abbott agreed to check whether Ebbsfleet should be on the programme of large housing developments that required a school. 2. *Recoupment* - The County Council had a net gain receiving £656k which was more than the allocated budget of £650k in terms of the cost of children we pay for going out of the County and other local authorities placing a larger number of children in Kent schools. There was an income received by Kent from the other local authorities' children being placed in Kent Schools which gave the County a net gain. 3. *School Improvement Programme* – This was part of the trading plans set in the Budget last year and all that income target had been delivered for the year. Mr Leeson added that there were different elements of this budget. There was a very large workforce development Team which provided various types of training programmes that side of the business had not generated all of the business income that it was targeted to generate but on the core School Improvement activities itself there were schools buying back more of the core School Improvement Team.
- f) In response to a question, Mr Abbott advised that the current pressure in relation to legal fees this year was £285k but it was anticipated that the spend would be £365k on academy conversions. This had been an issue and the County Council had lobbied the government since the Academies Act 2010. The Governments view was that the legal cost was the County Councils responsibility. KCC could not avoid the legal cost [KCC's internal Legal Services was used but this did not negate the cost to KCC] because it required the legal advice due to the commercial agreements with academies; KCC could not be left exposed to a wide range of significant long term liabilities. Mr Whiting assured Members that he would continue to lobby the government regarding the legal costs with the government.
- g) In reply to a question, Mr Abbott advised that Goldwyn School ran a pilot scheme providing transport for some of its pupils at the school. There were no significant savings but there was improvement in the pupil's attendance and behaviour in the school and parents and teachers found it a better arrangement.

3. RESOLVED that:

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the revenue and capital forecast variances from budget for 2012/13 for the Education, Learning & Skills Portfolio based on the second quarter's full monitoring to Cabinet be noted.

**72. Ofsted Inspection Outcome - Progress of Schools in Kent Challenge in 2012 and their performance in an Ofsted inspection**  
(Item C2)

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mrs D Robinson, Principle adviser Special and PRU was present for this item)*

1. The Chairman invited the Corporate Director, Mr Leeson to introduce the report. Mr Leeson highlighted the following:-

- There were 19 schools in a category of concern either in special measures or with serious weaknesses (3% of all school). Nationally the current number of schools in an Ofsted category was 3%. This figure was being reduced over time.
- There was a steady improvement in the numbers of early years settings judged good or outstanding by Ofsted to 87% to 82% in 2011.
- Overall there had also been an increase in the number of schools judged good or outstanding by Ofsted from 57% to 62% overall. The national average for all schools as 70%.
- Presently, 73% of Secondary school in Kent and nearly all Special Schools were good or outstanding. 59% of Primary schools were good or outstanding. The Kent Primary Schools was still below the national average which was 69% and the Kent Secondary Schools were above the national average which was 66%.
- Ofsted published its annual report in the Autumn which included a league table on the percentage of primary pupils attending a good or outstanding school. In Kent there were 55% of pupils attending a good or outstanding school [This was based on pupil numbers]. The league table put Kent 10<sup>th</sup> from the bottom. There needed to be rapid improvement. 45% of pupils not attending a good or outstanding school in Kent was over 55,000 children of primary age.
- There were positive indications that schools inspections outcomes were improving. There were 45 inspections since the beginning of 2012 school year, 30 schools (66%) were rated as good or outstanding and among those 25 schools (55%) improved from a previous satisfactory judgement.

2. Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

- a) In reply to a question, Mrs Robinson advised that the academy solution was part of a set of options that would be considered for a school that required a serious remedy to significant underperformance. Academy status gave options including the ability to compose the staffing in a different way and the requirement not to have to conform to the national curriculum. Mr Leeson added that if a school failed its Ofsted inspection the Government's policy was that it was required to be sponsored as an academy in order to give it greater leadership and governance capacity. This had applied to twelve schools in Kent. The County Council would have no say on this matter.

- b) Members were pleased to note that there were improvements following the Ofsted inspections.
- c) Following a request, Mr Leeson agreed to provide a breakdown of the 25 schools; Primary and Secondary that had improved from a previous satisfactory judgement to Members outside the meeting.
- d) A suggestion was made that Kent's statistical neighbours should be used as comparators and well as national comparisons.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Member be noted; and
- b) the progress achieved to date in improving school results and Ofsted inspection outcomes be noted.

**73. ELS Bold Steps Business Planning 2013-14**

*(Item C3)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr J Reilly, Principal Policy Officer was present for this item)*

1. The Chairman invited Mr Leeson to introduce the report. Mr Leeson highlighted the following key points:

- The report and the revised Bold Steps document sets out a review of last years progress and a further development of the Education, Learning and Skills (ELS) vision, priorities and improvement targets from 2013-2016.
- The aspirations and level of challenge had been increased in a number of target areas.
- Mr Leeson stated that he would not rest until Kent was one of the best Education authorities in the country.
- The Bold Steps document was the overarching document setting out the ELS Directorates targets and priorities overall and was supported by detailed ELS action and business plans for every service areas within the ELS Directorate.
- There were clear milestones and targets detailed in the Bold Steps document for every year from 2013-2016.

2. Mr Reilly then highlighted the following key points:

- The Business Plans aimed to provide more consistency with performance management and risk management and consequently the updated Bold Steps "Vision and Priorities for Improvement" document which needed to be read in conjunction with the Bold Steps performance and targets Scorecard and the Directorate Risk Register.
- Mr Reilly sought Members comments on the Bold Steps Business Plan which would inform and develop the draft service plans. He advised that the final draft document would be presented to Cabinet for approval in April 2013.

3. Member were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

- a) A comment was made that information apprenticeships and advice needed to be included in the Business Plan.
- b) Consideration should be made that KCC Directorates and Cabinet Committees needed to be in alignment in what skills and jobs were required in Kent.
- c) It was suggested that in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Performance Framework there should be numerical targets for the gender gap.
- d) A comment was made that there was no indicator between children receiving Free School Meals and other Pupils.
- e) A request was made for consideration to be given to alternative ways of presenting the business plans to Members.
- f) Consideration needed to be given to the coordination of factual evidence rather than anecdotal with clear pathways from secondary school to employment and an awareness that the provisions did not meet the sector profiles.

4. Mr Leeson advised that there were issues with the consistencies of independent guidance and advice for young people. The responsibility for careers education and advice and guidance had passed to schools from September 2012. This was monitored by Ofsted as part of the school inspections. Mr Leeson gave an assurance that the County Council continued to monitor this. It was critical that young people received the right advice to choose the best pathway which was a key focus in the 14-24 Strategy. The partnership issues between providers, employers and the alignment of what ELS Directorate and Economic Development were doing was a key focus in the 14-24 Strategy as were the partnership arrangements in locality between FE base learning providers and Schools in order to get those issues right.

5. Mr Leeson said that he would be look again at the risk assessment but gave Members his assurance that those issues were set out in detail and were a priority in the 14 -24 Strategy.

6. RESOLVED that:

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted;
- b) the updated Education Bold Steps 2013-2016 document within Appendix A of the report, which sets out the priorities and target, with more detailed actions and milestones in the draft 2013/14 Education, Learning and Skills service area business plans be noted;
- c) the draft Education, Learning and Skills service area business plans set out in Appendix B be noted; and

- d) the key headline Directorate risk set out in Appendix C of the report be noted.

#### **74. 2013/14 Final Draft Budget**

*(Item D1)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr K Abbott, Director – School Resources and ELS Finance Business Partner was present for this item)*

1. The Chairman invited Members to make comments and ask questions which included the following:-

- a) In reply to a question, Mr Abbott advised that the School Improvement was referred to on page 65 of the Budget Book 2013-14, which indicated a reduction of £3 million to £2.4 million for 2014. This reduction would not change any staffing levels or take any resources out of School Improvement that was currently in place. This reduction had been made part way through the financial year rather than 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- b) In reply to a comment, Mr Abbott explained that the capital indicated for the satellite selective school in Sevenoaks, was written in italics in the Budget Book as an early estimate for the scheme. No feasibility study had been carried out.
- c) A request was made for a statement on the number of frontline staff in the School Improvement Service, their workload eg how many schools they looked after.
- d) Following a comment on whether the Cabinet Committee would need to revise its budget plans due to the £16 million savings that were required to be made by the County Council. Mr Abbott advised that at the last meeting of the Cabinet Committee there were concerns on the changes being made by the Secretary of State to the support for central funding of the Education Service. It was estimated that the County Council could lose between £8-12 million. The County Council had now refined this estimate. The estimated loss would be £10 million of the Educational Services Grant (ESG). That loss had been factored into the overall budget proposals across the County Council and not specifically passed onto the Education, Learning and Skills Directorate or Business Support Services. The final announcement on the ESG would not be made until the end of March 2013 and this would be adjusted quarterly downwards for any academy conversions
- e) The Cabinet Committee agreed that it did not require another meeting of the Budget IMG.

2. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted;

- b) the late announcement of the provisional local government finance settlement and the impact on the budget timetable be noted;
- c) the issues affecting the Education, Learning and Skills portfolio raised in consultation and the Cabinet response be noted; and
- d) It was agreed that a further Budget IMG meeting was not required to consider the final budget proposals affecting the Education, Learning and Skills portfolio in advance of the County Council meeting on 14 February 2013.

## **75. Education, Learning and Skills Performance Scorecard**

*(Item D2)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

1. The Chairman invited the Corporate Director, Mr Leeson to introduce the report. Mr Leeson raised the following points:
  - This report reflected the Bold Steps targets for Education, Learning and Skills (ELS) and was used on a regular basis to monitor then direction of travel and progress against the targets. The Directorate management Team consider and made changes for further action on any of indicators going in the wrong direction
  - The ELS Scorecard as also supported by the 12 District Scorecards so that conversations can be held on a locality basis.
  - Management Information also produced support for schools to have their own scorecards to address inconsistencies and aspects of improvement in performance.
  - The ELS Scorecard was a work in progress.
2. Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:
  - a) It was suggested that those areas indicated in red with a downward tread within the report should be considered at the Standards Monitoring Group meeting.
  - b) Following a request, Mr Leeson agreed to provide a breakdown of the information set out in the "Scorecard – District Comparison Grid" on page 382, district by district in a table format.
3. RESOLVED that the responses to comments and questions by Members and the current performance be noted.

## **76. Recruitment and Retention of Teachers and Headteachers**

*(Item D3)*

*(Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education, Learning and Skills and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills)*

*(Mr S Wood, Teacher Recruitment and Retention Manager, was present for this meeting)*

1. The Chairman invited the Corporate Director, Mr Leeson, to introduce the report. Mr Leeson advised that there was a great deal of activity within the County, lead by; the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Manager, Mr Wood and Mrs S Rogers, Director of Quality and Standards, and their colleagues, to improve the quality of leadership in Kent through better recruitment of Headteachers, succession planning, leadership training and development activities to ensure that there were good senior leaders and Headteachers in Kent. There were active programmes to recruit teachers especially in those key areas of English, Maths and Science.

2. Members raised the following points:

- a) A comment was made that the key issue in schools was the quality of leadership. Governors had a major role to play in selecting the schools leadership and should be included in the report.
- b) A Member expressed his surprise that any Headteacher and staff in public service in the present time would be experiencing a high level of life and work satisfaction described in the findings of the Wellness Programme. Mr Wood advised that the comments within the Wellness Programme related to a large number of Headteachers that gained satisfaction in the outcomes that they achieved when dealing with their staff, working with their pupils and parents. However, Headteachers had expressed a view that they were frustrated with the pressures put on them from external sources.

3. Mr Leeson explained that the greatest concern was supporting current leaders and securing future leaders for Kent. In the next three to four years nearly half of the Headteachers in the country would be retiring, which meant that Kent need to be in a good position to recruit good senior leaders into Headteacher and other senior leader roles in schools. It was important that Kent was able to provide programmes that supported people who were keen to move onto deputy headships too. Mr Leeson considered that it was encouraging that there were 119 applications to the Aspiring Leaders and Aspiring Headteachers Programme at the National College and 55 deputy Headteachers from Kent had responded to have a robust professional development conversation as part of their individual career consultation.

4. RESOLVED that the responses to comments and questions by Members and the actions taken to monitor and improve Headteacher and teacher recruitment and retention in Kent be noted

Chairman.....

Date.....