

By:	Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills
To:	Education Cabinet Committee, 19 March 2013
Subject	Decision No. 12/02014 - Proposed expansion Manor Community Primary School, Swanscombe
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary:	This report informs members of the results of the Public Consultation
Recommendations:	The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills on the decision to issue a public notice to expand Manor Primary School.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Dartford district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan 2012 - 2017 indicates a need to commission additional primary capacity in the Dartford West planning area.

1.2 On 12 September 2012 the Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member of Education, Learning & Skills that a consultation takes place on the proposal to expand Manor Primary School.

1.3 This reports sets out the results of the Public Consultation which took place between Monday 12 November 2012 and Monday 24 December 2012. A public meeting was held on 15 November 2012.

2. The Proposal

2.1 It is proposed to enlarge Manor 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 Dartford section of the Kent Commissioning Plan indicates a need to commission additional primary capacity in the Darford West planning area.

4. Outcomes of the Public Consultation

4.1 A significant majority of respondents supported the proposal. The concerns 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 summary of the questions, comments and responses made during the meeting are given at appendix 2.

5. Views

5.1 Local Member

The Local Member is Mr Richard Lees. Mr Lees said:

Two Primary Schools in my Division are proposed for expansion; Manor Community Primary and Knockhall Community Primary.

I am in favour of both these expansions.

Even without the benefit of the commissioning plan and the pupil roll predictions, I am keenly aware, through my work as a local councillor, of the growing pressure on places in Swanscombe & Greenhithe.

Both Schools have shown a willingness and desire to expand but more importantly, they have the capacity to expand without adversely affecting teaching and learning standards.

I have gauged public feeling to the proposals and so far the majority of residents and other stakeholders in the community I have spoken to view the proposals very positively.

There are genuine concerns, which I share, about the impact on the surrounding communities, on the quality of the learning environment, the possible disruption to learning and increases in traffic but I am confident these will all be addressed at the design and planning stages, should the proposals be accepted.

I hope that the proposals will be accepted and that these two, popular, primary schools of choice can offer a quality education to even more children in Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

5.2 The following views were raised in the public consultation meeting:

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

The responsibility for maintenance of standards at the school is vested in the Head teacher, Mr David Lloyd and Mrs Trixie Ball, Chair of the Governing body. Both made it clear during the public meeting that they believed that neither performance standards nor ethos were at risk.

Mr Lloyd delivered a clear and focussed speech in which he assured parents that he would not let the ethos or standards of the school deteriorate and that the staff were fully committed to the proposal to enlarge the school.

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

Access to the school is via Keary Road, which is narrow. Keary Road and the surrounding roads are largely residential, and drop off and pick up parking can cause traffic issues. These issues would need to be considered in the wider planning, following a survey by Kent Highways.

The school mainly draws in pupils from Swanscombe village so most of the children will walk to school. There is already a one way system in and out of the school. Possible solutions include additional parking/stopping restrictions and walking buses.

(iii) Concerns about the design of any new build and disruption to learning during building.

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

(iv) Concerns over staff parking.

There is limited capacity on the site and an increase in car parking spaces is an issue. Part of the feasibility study will consider what options there are to increase the car parking capacity.

5.3 Area Education Officer

The AEO fully supports this proposal. This enlargement is one of three proposals for the Fleetdown/Greenhithe/Swanscombe area, due for September 2013. Demand in this part of Dartford district has currently outstripped capacity and forecasts indicate that this increasing demand is likely to continue.

The AEO 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 Manor Primary School are supportive of the proposal.

5.5 Headteacher

The head teacher of the school has been fully consulted and is supportive.

5.6 Parents

A significant majority of the parents who responded, support the proposal.

5.7 Pupils

The pupils of the school have been offered the opportunity to contribute.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 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. Financial Implications

7.1 Capital funding is required to complete this expansion. The funding available comes from an annual Government allocation, topped up, where eligible, with Developer contributions. The estimated cost for 2013-14 on this expansion is £750k. This has been included within the 2013-14 capital programme although we still await confirmation from the DfE of our 'basic need' capital allocations for 2013/15

8. Recommendations

7.1 The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills on the decision to issue a public notice to expand Manor Primary School.

9. Background Documents

Manor Primary School consultation document

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/Manor/consultationHome>

Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/priorities_policies_and_plans/priorities_and_plan/s/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 – Dartford District

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

Lead Officer Contact details

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Proposal to expand Manor Community Primary School, Dartford

Summary of Written Responses

Printed Consultation Documents distributed: 400

Consultation responses received: 28

A summary of the responses received showed that:

	In Favour	Undecided	Opposed
Governors			
Staff	2		1
Parents	19	1	4
Pupils			
Other			
Totals	21	1	6

Comments in favour of the proposal:

- Pleased local authority is expanding school.

Comments against the proposal:

- Concerned if school should expand, results will suffer.
- Standards are rising, fear expansion may jeopardise this.
- Traffic congestion.
- Authority should build new school not expand existing schools.
- Concerned class sizes might increase.
- Lack of space currently is health & safety issue.
- No area in school large enough to accommodate whole school, ie assembly.
- Buildings need to be fit for purpose.
- Difficult working on split site.
- Need covered walkway from lower to upper buildings.
- Better communication system installed between upper & lower school.

Proposal to expand Manor Community Primary School, Dartford Summary of Public Consultation

Panel	Gary Cooke	Chair of Education Committee & Deputy Cabinet Member
	Simon Webb	Area Education Officer, West Kent
	David Hart	Area Schools Organisation Officer
	Ann Drury	Public Meeting Recorder
	David Lloyd	Headteacher
	Trixie Ball	Chair of Governors

Introduction

Gary Cooke welcomed parents, staff and members of the public to the meeting.

Purpose of the Meeting

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

Kent County Council is proposing that the Manor Primary School increases its Year R intake to 90, taking the proposed total capacity of the school from 420 places to 630 places.

The proposal is to permanently enlarge The Manor Primary School by 30 Reception year places for the September 2013 intake. Successive Reception year intakes will offer 90 places each year with the school having a total capacity of 630 pupils.

Under the previous Government the school received £6m grant toward rebuilding the school.

A short presentation outlining the proposal for expansion was given by Simon Webb.

Statement from the Chair of Governors, Trixie Ball

School is now on the site of previous Swanscombe Infant and Sweyne Junior schools. The school was completely rebuilt and furnished to a very high standard, which hopefully can be duplicated with regards to the new proposals. The school was built to a 2FE specification and we had a dream to become a performing arts school, which I believe we have achieved. The headteacher and staff continue to provide high standards and quality of teaching to ensure the children receive the best. The staff, parents and children are very proud of their school and we feel best placed to accommodate an extra 30 children.

Statement from the Headteacher, David Lloyd

We are very proud at what has been achieved at the Manor and hope that by accepting these proposals we can support more children from the local community to achieve. I absolutely endorse what KCC is proposing and we will continue to do our best for the children.

Question	Response
I believe the Manor Primary School should be for local people and not foreigners – I don't mean that racially – just we shouldn't	More children in the school will attract more money from the Government, which means more staff and resources for the school to

<p>have to accept children coming to the school from other areas of Dartford otherwise what's the benefits for me and my children?</p>	<p>continue raising the standards of education the children receive. This proposal will enable this excellent facility to be extended to other children within the Dartford area.</p>
<p>I am really pleased with the nursery accommodation and am concerned that the new building works will not be of the same standard.</p>	<p>Unfortunately we are unable to repeat the standard of the amphitheatre or dance studio here but the basic need funding does allow for additional classes and provides what is minimum requirement.</p>
<p>I am in favour of moving to a 3FE primary school on the condition that it is done right. School currently is split across two sites and it does not work – we need to bring the whole school under one roof.</p>	<p>The two schools were amalgamated and accommodation increased sufficiently. The children have plenty of outside space to play and land is sufficient to sustain a 3FE primary school.</p>
<p>The school did lose some land when the Children's Centre was opened.</p>	<p>The footprint is more than sufficient to provide high quality accommodation and field space for children to use for a 3FE school.</p>
<p>I welcome the opportunity to extend this excellent school. I would like reassurance that the amphitheatre will remain and not be converted into classrooms.</p>	<p>I can confirm that nothing will be taken away from the school, only added. Additional classrooms will be required and it is up to the headteacher and governing body to decide how this is managed.</p>
<p>I feel local authority needs to look at improving the accommodation at bottom end of site. The school hall isn't large enough to accommodate all the children.</p>	<p>If the proposal goes ahead the contractors will look at what is required for a 3FE school, i.e. toilet facilities, school hall, kitchen etc. A feasibility report will be provided and basic need funding allocated accordingly.</p>
<p>The staff are working in separate buildings and it is very hard to feel as part of one school.</p>	<p>I appreciate it is very difficult to operate on split sites and it is easy to feel isolated. I am committed to continue to work as one team and hopefully things will get better.</p>
<p>Also the size of the school hall is not big enough to allow whole school worship.</p> <p>A split school site does not work – lower school unable to interact easily and so does not benefit from new building.</p>	<p>The facilities at this school are exceptional and so will show up the lower school site even more.</p> <p>The headteacher and governors will make final recommendations as to how the basic need funding allocated.</p>
<p>Parking and access onto the site is a real concern.</p>	<p>Parking and access are issues with most schools. These concerns will be raised with the planning and highways authorities. The local authority is well aware of the parking issues in Keary Road and Munford Drive and we will try to work together to resolve them.</p>
<p>Obviously I have deep concerns about the roads not being wide enough to take any increase in traffic. Is there any way that</p>	<p>Issue such as this will be considered by the Highways authority, however, may I suggest you lobby your local representative, Richard</p>

Keary Road can be one way?	Lees about this also.
The parking is appalling and how an accident hasn't happened I do not know. Munford Drive is at a standstill sometimes. Could yellow lines be painted to prevent people parking, or would traffic wardens be able to police it or even a lollipop lady?	With regards to your point regarding a lollipop lady, a survey is carried out during different times of the day to ascertain the levels of traffic. The results are then made know to the headteacher & governors.

Gary Cooke thanked everyone for coming along and for the questions that had been asked. He encouraged everyone to send in their comments by the closing date of 24 December and referred to the consultation document that gave all the details of how this could be done.

Approximately 45 people attended the meeting.