

By:	Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills
To:	Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills
Subject	Decision No. 12/02017 - Proposed expansion of St John's Church of England Primary School, Sevenoaks
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary:	This report provides the results of the Public Consultation for consideration by the Cabinet Member and seeks agreement to expand the school.
Recommendations:	The Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills is recommended to expand St John's Church of England Primary School, Sevenoaks via the necessary first stage issue of a Statutory Public Notice and to put in place measures to continue with the proposal after that period has ended

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Sevenoaks district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan 2012 - 2017 indicates a need to commission additional primary capacity in the Sevenoaks 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 St John's Church of England Primary School.

1.3 This reports sets out the results of the Public Consultation which took place between Monday 19 November 2012 and Monday 14 January 2013. A public meeting was held on 22 November 2012.

## **2. The Proposal**

2.1 It is proposed to enlarge St John's Church of England Primary School by 16 Reception Year places taking their PAN to 30 (1 FE) for the September 2013 intake. Successive Reception year intakes will offer 30 places each year and the school will eventually have a total capacity of 210 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 section of the Kent Commissioning Plan indicates a need to commission additional primary capacity in the Sevenoaks planning area. This proposal is one of three in that district.

## **4. Outcomes of the Public Consultation**

4.1 The consultation document was distributed to parents/carers, school staff, nursery staff, governors and County Councillors, Member of Parliament, the Diocesan Authorities, local library, the Borough and Parish Councils, and others, in accordance with the agreed County policy. The document was also posted on the KCC website and the link to the website widely circulated via email.

4.2 Approximately 400 copies of the public consultation document were circulated, which included a form for written responses

## **5. Responses to the Public Consultation**

### *Written Responses*

5.1 10 responses have been received, of which 5 are in favour, 4 are opposed and 1 is undecided. The Cabinet Member has reviewed these responses and should have due regard for them before taking a decision.

## **6. Views**

### 6.1 Local Member

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

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

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

It is acknowledged that parking and access to the school may need to be considered as part of any redevelopment of the site and Property Group have factored this in to their feasibility studies.

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 which may result from this proposal. Once full information is available, the School Travel Plan will be updated.

The Bayham Road crossroads is recognised as particularly challenging for both parking and for children walking to school. The feasibility study will need to liaise with Highways and SDC to consider what could be done to make this area safer for children and local residents.

*(ii) Concerns about sympathetic building.*

There is a concern that any new build would not be congruent with the existing building, or that of the immediate local area. The planning process is inclusive and it would be expected that residents would be able to have their concerns and suggestions considered as part of that process.

A project manager would be appointed and the head teacher will maintain complete control over any work being done.

### 6.3 Area Education Officer

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

All primary schools in the Sevenoaks planning area were considered and proposals have been put forward for three schools, of which St John's is one. No other schools in the planning area can be enlarged without a full rebuild. Such rebuilds would be unaffordable using Basic Need funding, as well as a poor return on public funds. It would also likely take at least two years longer, by which time, the local authority would be at serious risk of failing in its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

### 6.4 Governing Body

The Governing Body of St John's Church of England Primary School are supportive of the proposal.

#### 6.5 Headteacher

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

#### 6.6 Parents

Half the parents who responded, support the proposal.

#### 6.7 Pupils

The pupils of the school were offered the opportunity to respond.

#### 6.8 Diocese

The Diocese of Rochester has been consulted and are happy to support the enlargement of church schools.

#### 6.9 Other Respondents

Local residents and the town council have responded and listed their concerns about the increase in traffic in the area and the difficulties in parking and movement in the Bayham Road area during drop off and pick up times.

### 7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 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.

### 8. Financial Implications

8.1 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 £386,000. 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 2013/16

### 9. Recommendations

9.1 The Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills is recommended to:

- (i) issue a public notice to expand St John's Church of England Primary School.

And, subject to no objections being received to the public notice

expand the school

### 10. Officer Scheme of Delegation

10.1 The Cabinet Member should be aware that no specific officer delegations are included within the formal decision as the Officer Scheme of Delegation; under Appendix 2 part 4 of the Council's Constitution, provides a clear and appropriate link between this decision and the actions needed to implement it. For information it is envisaged that the Director of Property & Infrastructure Support will sign contracts on behalf of the County Council in this instance

10.2 Officers performing tasks under the scheme of delegation are expected to keep the relevant portfolio holder informed of progress

## **11. Background Documents**

St John's Church of England Primary School consultation document

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

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](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-](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)

[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://kent690w3:9070/documents/g4880/Public%20reports%20pack%2012th-Sep-2012%2010.00%20Education%20Cabinet%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

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