

# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL - RECORD OF DECISION

## DECISION TAKEN BY

Roger Gough

Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

## DECISION NO.

13/00065

Unrestricted

**Subject: Partnership Working for grammar provision in Sevenoaks area.**

### Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform I agree to sign the agreement between Valley Invicta Academy Trust (VIAT) and KCC to work in partnership to devise and deliver a proposal, for the Secretary of State's consideration, for grammar provision in Sevenoaks.

### Reason(s) for decision

- 1.1 In 2012 at a meeting of the full council, Kent County Council took a decision to pursue proposals for grammar provision in Sevenoaks. The Council's decision was the result of a very well supported petition from parents expressing a clear view that they wanted Kent to establish grammar provision in Sevenoaks.
- 1.2 Sevenoaks does not have grammar provision at present. Instead every day 1150 Sevenoaks children travel to the six grammar schools in Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, a round trip of up to 25 miles.
- 1.3 In response to local demand, Kent County Council has been pursuing proposals to provide grammar provision for boys and girls in the Sevenoaks area. A number of options were considered and the County Council believes the best and most straightforward option is for one existing grammar school to expand to manage co-educational provision.

### Urgency

- 2.1 As there are a limited number of Cabinet Committee meetings and the contract had not been finalised by the last meeting the decision will need to be taken under the procedures outlined in the Councils constitution.
- 2.2 If the decision is not taken outside of the Cabinet Committee cycle, via the procedures outlined there may be a negative impact on the proposal to provide grammar school provision in the Sevenoaks area as the Valley Invicta Academy Trust could withdraw from the agreement.
- 2.3 In accordance with the procedures set out in the Council's Constitution the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, and other required consultees agreed that the decision could not reasonably be deferred until the Cabinet Committee in order to follow KCC's normal governance procedures. Comments were requested from those contacted and these are included within the report for consideration when taking the decision.

### Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation

- 3.1 On 29 March 2012, County Council agreed to pursue proposals for expanded grammar school provision in Sevenoaks. The Council's decision was the result of a very well supported petition from parents expressing a clear view that they wanted Kent to establish grammar provision in Sevenoaks.
- 3.2 On 19 March 2013, Education Cabinet Committee was verbally updated of the progress of the proposal on a grammar school in the Sevenoaks area and the interest of the Valley Invicta Academy Trust.

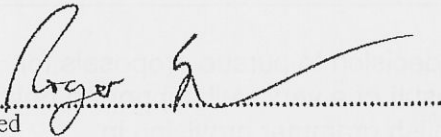
- 3.3 The views of the local member Mr Nick Chard have been sought, and as per the council's constitution, his response is included in the report to the Cabinet Member, to which he will have regard on taking the decision.
- 3.4 In accordance with the procedures set out in the Council's Constitution the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, and other required consultees were contacted. Comments were requested from those contacted and these are included within the report for consideration when taking the decision.

**Any alternatives considered:**

- 4.1 KCC received a petition with over 2500 signatures campaigning for grammar school provision in the Sevenoaks area. This petition prompted a full discussion by County Council on 29 March 2012, where the council agreed to pursue grammar school provision in the Sevenoaks area. After extensive talks with the grammar schools in the surrounding areas in 2012, Valley Invicta Academy Trust was the only interested party, at that time. If this decision is not taken as urgent there would be a negative impact on the proposal to provide grammar school provision in the Sevenoaks area as the Valley Invicta Academy Trust may withdraw from the agreement and not submit the bid to the Secretary of State.

**Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None**

signed



date

7 August 2013