

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

14/00003/2

For publication

Subject: Proposal to relocate Tunstall CE Primary School and expand the school by 210 places from 1FE to 2FE.

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform I agree to:

- (i) Relocate and expand the school subject to planning permission being agreed
- (ii) Allocate £4,818,000 from the Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget.
- (iv) AUTHORISE the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council
- (v) AUTHORISE the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts

This decision is subject to planning permission being granted by 31st March 2015

Reason(s) for decision:

- 1.1 The district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 has identified a significant pressure in Reception year places. The district of Swale is forecast to have a deficit of up to 87 Reception year places in September 2016 and 2017.
- 1.2 Tunstall CE Primary School is located on a small restricted site. There are significant issues with parking and access and full compliance with DDA guidelines is not possible. The current school accommodation consists of the original Victorian building, two timber demountable classrooms and three mobiles. A key issue has been the renewal of planning for the three temporary mobiles, without which the school could not continue to operate as a one form entry school.
- 1.3 It is proposed to relocate and rebuild the school on a site owned by KCC located approximately 500 metres to the north east of the existing school. It is also proposed to enlarge Tunstall CE Primary School by 30 reception year places, taking the published admissions number (PAN) from 30 to 60 (Two Forms of Entry) for the September 2015 intake. Successive Reception Year intake will offer 60 places each year and the school will eventually have a total capacity of 420 pupils. The rebuilding of the school will provide the children and staff with buildings and facilities fit for 21st education and expansion will provide much needed places within the Sittingbourne South planning area.
- 1.4 On 27 September 2013 Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform that a consultation takes place on the proposal to relocate and expand Tunstall CE Primary School. The public consultation took place between 30 September and 15 November 2013 and a public meeting was held on 22 October 2013.

- 1.5 The Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform took the decision to issue a public notice on 20 February 2014. In the decision it stated that, should objections not already considered by the Cabinet Member when taking this decision, be received during the notice period, a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and expand the school to allow for proper consideration of the points raised. This decision is subject to planning permission being granted.
- 1.6 During the Public Notice Period 49 responses were received and in line with the Councils democratic process, a separate decision to continue the proposal must now be taken. A summary of the objections is attached in the report which accompanies this decision.
- 1.7 Many of the objections received referred to the proposed rebuilding and location of the new school, raising concerns about parking and traffic. I understand that these concerns were also raised as part of the planning process and will be taken into consideration as part of that process.
- 1.8 Objectors also felt that KCC should replace the mobiles on the current school site with a permanent structure to enable it to continue as a 1FE school. This option was considered in 2012 but was not considered viable as it would not represent good value for money and would still not provide the school with adequate facilities. This option would not provide the additional school places needed for the area. This option would also not deal with the considerable parking, access and traffic issues already been encountered on the current site. If KCC were not able obtain planning for the mobiles, the school would have to revert to a half form entry school over a period, further increasing the pressure on primary school places in the locality, causing children to have to travel further distances for their education.
- 1.9 Those in support of the proposal recognised the benefit for the community in ensuring good educational facilities for years to come.

In reaching this decision I have taken into account:

- the views expressed by those attending the public consultation meeting on 22 October, and those put in writing in response to the consultation;
- the views of the District and Parish Councils, the local County Councillors; The Diocese of Canterbury; Governing Body of the school, the Staff and Pupils;
- the Equalities Impact Assessment and comments received regarding this; and
- the views of the Education Cabinet Committee which are set out below
- the responses received to the Public Notice

Financial Implications:

It is proposed to enlarge Tunstall CE Primary School by 210 places taking the PAN to 60 (2FE) for the September 2015 intake and eventually a total capacity of 420 places.

- a. Capital – The school will be rebuilt as a 2FE school on a site owned by KCC located approximately 500 metres to the north east of the existing school. A feasibility study has been completed. The total cost is estimated to be in the region of £4,818,000. The costs of the project are estimates and these may increase as the project is developed. If the cost of the project is greater than 10% the Cabinet Member will be required to take a further decision to allocate the additional funding.
- b. Revenue - The school will receive increased funding through the Delegated Budget on a 'per pupil' basis.

c. Human – Tunstall CE Primary School will appoint additional teachers, as the school size increases and the need arises.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

27 September 2012

The Committee endorsed the Kent Commissioning Plan, which identified a need for additional places in the planning area of Swale District.

14 January 2014

The Cabinet Committee considered the proposed decision and discussed the concerns raised, and resolved to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform he agree to decision (1/00003) to

(i) Issue a public notice to relocate Tunstall CE Primary School and expand the school by 210 places from 1FE to 2FE.

And, following the expiration of the public notice:

(ii) Relocate and expand the school subject to planning permission being agreed

(iii) Allocate £4,818,000 from the Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget.

(iv) AUTHORISE the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council

(v) AUTHORISE the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts

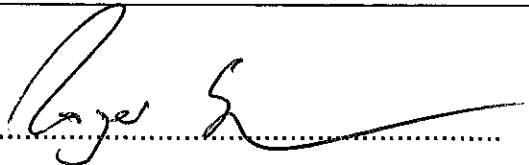
Should objections, not already considered by the cabinet member when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and expand the school to allow for proper consideration of the points raised. This decision is subject to planning permission being granted.

Any alternatives considered:

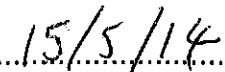
The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 explored all options and the expansion of this school was deemed the suitable option.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None



Signed



Date